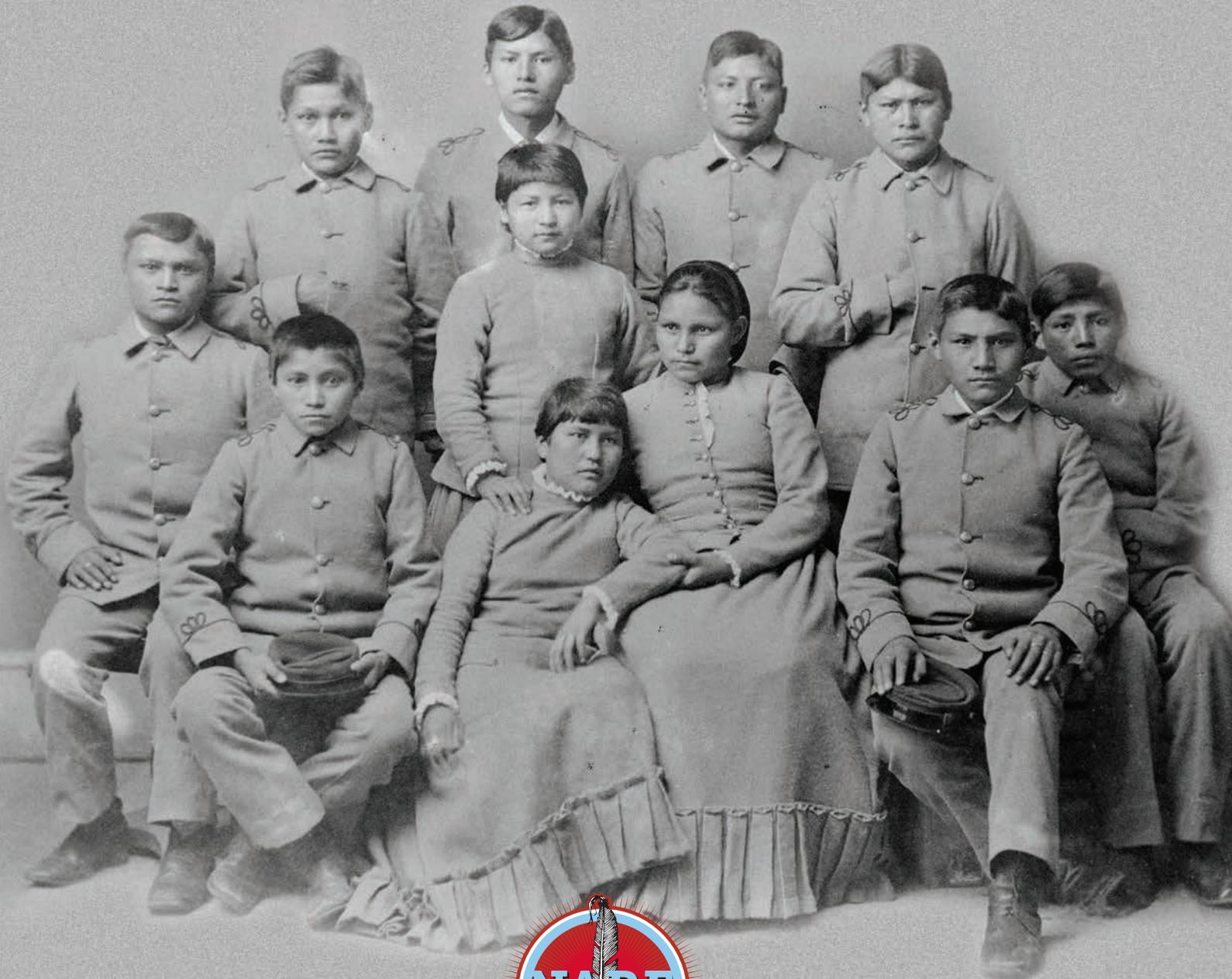


TRIGGER POINTS

Current State of Research on History, Impacts, and Healing Related to the United States' Indian Industrial/Boarding School Policy



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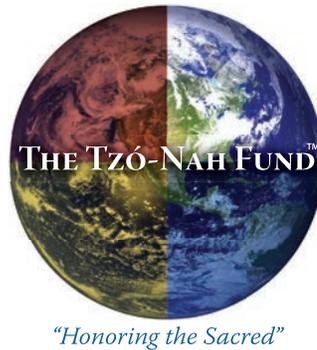
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Trigger Points

Current State of Research on History, Impacts, and Healing Related to the United States' Indian Industrial/Boarding School Policy

Presented by the Native American Rights Fund

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Letter from John E. Echohawk

For nearly 50 years, the Native American Rights Fund has been providing legal advice and representation to Indian tribes, organizations, and individuals on the most important Indian law issues facing them.

As the research compiled here has now shown, but as our tribal leaders and healers have known for a long time, the unique federal Indian Industrial (or Boarding) School policy, though instituted long ago, continues to have significant impacts today among our tribal communities and citizens. We repeatedly see some of those impacts in our legal work across many different fields of Indian law. Only in recent years, however, has the direct connection between the policy of decades ago and issues experienced today become so clear. Taking it one step further, the way tribal communities have developed legal and other systems to redress the more harmful impacts, has made it increasingly clear the preservation of tribal existence, one of the Five Priorities established for NARF by its founding Board of Directors, is as important as it has ever been.

We hope that by pulling together the research showing the links between the federal policy and modern impacts, as well as promising approaches to mitigate those impacts that are negative, we have provided a resource for use in many contexts, legal and perhaps beyond. We hope this work speaks authoritatively, because of the qualifications and talents employed by so many who helped put it together. Most of all, we hope that it can be used nationwide to meet all of NARF's Five Priorities:

- Preserve Tribal Existence
- Protect Tribal Natural Resources
- Promote Native American Human Rights
- Hold Governments Accountable to Native Americans
- Develop Indian Law and Educate the Public about Indian Rights, Laws, and Issues

In closing, I want to thank all of our funders for their partnership in defending Indian Country, and specifically the Tzó-Nah Fund for supporting this project and NARF over the years. It only through our strong partnerships and shared values that this long-needed document has been possible. We only hope that, with continued public support, we will be able to provide even more of the legal tools needed for all those helping Native Americans.

Sincerely



John E. Echohawk
Executive Director,
Native American Rights Fund

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the following: the Native American Rights Fund for its continued commitment to raise awareness and understanding of this critical issue, and ongoing efforts to helping tribes seek resolution, our funder Tzó-Nah, Kalee Salazar, Kevin Cheng, and Nicole Keller of the Native American Rights Fund legal support staff, retired NARF attorney Donald Wharton, for his untiring commitment to the issue and passionate early drafts of written materials, Dr. Clyde Ellis for his mentorship and guidance with the research team, Bonnie Bruno and Jenny Chapman from Elon University's Office of Sponsored Programs, Dr. Joseph P. Gone (consultant), Dr. Benjamin E. Frey (consultant), and of course our all of our family members, friends, and colleagues who volunteered their time to read and provide important feedback on this project. We would also like to thank our family members and friends who have shared with us their stories of attending the boarding schools. We carry these stories in our hearts, and we hope we have done justice to them here.

Miigwetch, Shu'-shaa-nin~-la, Wopila, Modzigadz, Wado,
Thank you.

An Important Message to the Reader

NOTE ON SELF CARE: Many of the topics discussed within this review recall painful memories for Native individuals, families, and communities. Feelings of anger, sadness, or disbelief in response to this topic are understandable and warranted. The authors caution readers that this document may trigger responses in you related to your own traumas and possibly painful family history. You may feel unease in general. While that is not the intent of the information contained here, we acknowledge the possibility to have a strong reaction to the information. If sections of this report bring up emotional pain for you, we encourage you to seek support or help from a trusted source. Thank you for taking this journey with us as we seek to uncover the truth, heal from the past, and create a better future for ourselves, our families, and our Native Nations.

Overview

In 2013, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) published a legal review about the history of the boarding schools for American Indian students. In the review, NARF notes that the schools were part of a federal effort to erase Native identities through a “deliberate policy of ethnocide and cultural genocide.” In the schools, the students were separated from their families, shamed, and abused for speaking their language or demonstrating any connection to their home cultures. Subsequently, on April 15, 2015, NARF challenged the major church denominations to begin to come forward with details about their own involvement and what actually happened.¹ The Friends or Quakers, partially in response to that challenge, held a conference with associated presentations of research papers in November, 2016, entitled, “Quakers, First Nations, and American Indians from the 1650s to the 21st century.”² Papers from that conference are to be published, including a presentation by NARF’s Executive Director John Echohawk.³

Besides the early Quaker efforts and to date, neither the U.S. government nor other major churches that worked on the government’s behalf have taken formal responsibility for the “indisputable fact that [boarding schools]’ purpose was cultural genocide.” This present publication is intended to help, in the words of NARF’s original report, “turn back institutionalized ignorance of what happened ... [and] simply begin to uncover the truth of what has happened.”⁴

In its legal review, NARF called for a commission to address the injustices committed in the boarding schools. There are various tasks NARF would have this commission address. In the spirit of NARF’s initial call to action, this review is intended to begin to gather the existing background research, to provide “accurate and comprehensive information to the United States government, Indigenous Peoples and the American public about the purposes and human rights abuses of boarding school policies,”⁵ as well as why those past abuses matter still today, and most importantly how recovery can and is being accomplished.

Though significant literature in Canada documents the long-term impacts of residential schools, less research has documented the long-term impacts of the boarding schools in the United States. NARF issued a call for researchers to “conduct a rigorous and thorough review of literature regarding the impacts of boarding schools on Native Americans” that would produce a “comprehensive summary of the state of knowledge of the present impacts of the Boarding School era and policies on Native Americans, and remedial measures known to address those impacts.”⁶ The present document is the response to that call.

ENDNOTES

1. Native American Rights Fund, “Call for Papers: Church Roles in the History and Continuing Impacts of the Boarding School Policy of the 19th and 20th Century,” dated 4/15/2015, and available at: <https://www.boulderfriendsmeeting.org/wp-content/friends9x4Q/2015/05/Call-for-Papers-On-Churches-Roles-in-Boarding-Schools.pdf> (accessed 2/7/2019).
2. A conference summary is available here: <http://www.mceas.org/quakersandamericanindians/overview.htm> (accessed 2/19/2019).
3. John Echohawk, “A Shared Vision for Healing,” Ignacio Gallup-Diaz and Geoffrey Planck, eds., *Quakers and Native Americans* (Leiden: Brill 2019), 312-320.

4. “Let All That is Indian Within You Die!,” Native American Rights Fund Legal Review, Summer/Fall 2013. <https://www.narf.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/nlr38-2.pdf> (accessed 2/7/2019).
5. “Let All That is Indian Within You Die!,” Native American Rights Fund Legal Review, Summer/Fall 2013. <https://www.narf.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/nlr38-2.pdf> (accessed 2/7/2019).
6. https://www.narf.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/201711boarding_school_rfp.pdf

The Research Team and Additional Authors

The research team consisted of four university researchers with combined skills in biomedical research, social sciences, and the humanities. Three of the four members of the research team are either tribally enrolled or descendants of Native nations. Two of the four members of the research team have family members who attended federal boarding schools. Two tribally enrolled employees of the Native American Rights Fund joined in as authors after initial drafts were completed by the research team. Both are descendants of federal boarding school survivors as well. In this work, the team sought to clarify the current

state of research on federal Indian boarding schools, provide a starting point for future research, and support existing healing efforts by Native advocates and educators.

The Native American Rights Fund contributed the primary content and writing for the Foundational information on the Boarding Schools section, and editing of the Historical Literature discussions. The research team contributed the primary content and writing for the literature review, consequences, and healing strategies sections.

Notes on Some Key Terms

There is a more extensive glossary at the end of this review. A brief introduction to the terms *historical trauma response* and *historical trauma event* will help the reader navigate this document. We also include a brief introduction to some of the terms used in this document to refer to the first peoples of North America.

We use the term *historical trauma event* to differentiate between the type of traumatic events that have led to harm in Native nations, communities, families, and individuals and the responses to those traumatic events. For example, the United States boarding school policy is a historical trauma event or set of events. A *historical trauma response* describes the set of responses—emotional, physical, overall well-being, and otherwise—that result from exposure to a historical trauma event or events. Historical trauma responses to historical trauma events can persist for generations and may accumulate over time, leading to continued impacts on the well-being of people today.⁷ Historical trauma responses also interact with contemporary stressors like discrimination and poverty.

Historical trauma events are “historical” in the sense that they originated in the past, but they certainly persist in the present.⁸ The impacts of boarding school attendance are

transferred from generation to generation and accumulate over time.^{9,10} Historical trauma responses are transmitted to later generations through physiological, genetic, environmental, psychosocial, and social/economic/political means, as well as through legal discrimination. In this review, we discuss physiological, genetic, environmental, and psychosocial mechanisms for intergenerational transmission of impacts from historical trauma events.

Not all responses to historic trauma events are negative. People respond to trauma with both constructive and destructive coping strategies. For some boarding school alumni, coping strategies have focused on *resilience*.¹¹ This topic is explored in the Consequences for Individuals Section.

Some Indigenous researchers and community practitioners have argued that the concept of healing is itself steeped in arbitrary Eurocentric notions of ill-health and recovery and that use of the word ignores the potentially lifelong process and struggle that some boarding school survivors experience.¹² They caution that “pushing the rhetoric of healing may have the potential to produce additional harm to at least some former students of [boarding schools]” by directing blame onto those who

have not or cannot heal.¹³ The term “trauma” similarly stems from a Western context, and its use may imply “that the individual is responsible for the response, rather than the broader systematic force caused by the state’s abuse of power. This enables government and society in general to circumvent responsibility and liability.”¹⁴ Instead, effective interventions with Indigenous populations must incorporate understandings of holistic physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being from an Indigenous perspective.¹⁵ The research which informs and supports these approaches are broadly considered to emerge from decolonizing methodologies, a movement originating in Indigenous resistance, which recenters power into the hands of those who have traditionally been “researched.”¹⁶ While we recognize the limitations of the term “healing,” we use

it throughout this report to broadly describe the process by which Indigenous communities, families, and individuals create meaning and grieve from boarding school experiences.

Throughout this review, we use the terms American Indian, Native American, Native, First Nation, Indigenous, and American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) to refer to the first peoples of the United States and Canada. Many Native people have specific preferences regarding these terms and may also use the terms interchangeably, depending on context. Whenever possible, we follow the lead of Indigenous nations and use the names that they give themselves, which includes specific names that recognize political, cultural, geographic, linguistic, and religious diversity.

ENDNOTES

7. A. Bombay, K. Matheson, and H. Anisman, “The Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools: Implications for the Concept of Historical Trauma,” *Transcultural Psychiatry* 51:3(2014): 320-338.
8. L. B. Whitbeck, M. L. Walls, K. D. Johnson,, A. D. Morrisseau, and C. M. McDougall, “Depressed Affect and Historical Loss Among North American Indigenous Adolescents,” *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research (Online)*, 16:3(2009): 16-41.
9. Bombay et al. “The Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools,” 320-338.
10. M. Y. H. Brave Heart, “Gender Differences in the Historical Trauma Response among the Lakota,” *Journal of Health & Social Policy*, 10:4(1999): 1-21.
11. T. Evans-Campbell, “Historical Trauma in American Indian/ Native Alaska Communities: A Multilevel Framework for Exploring Impacts on Individuals, Families, and Communities,” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23:3(2008): 316-338.
12. L. F. Lavalley and J. M. Poole, “Beyond Recovery: Colonization, Health and Healing for Indigenous People in Canada.,” *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* 8:2 (2010): 271-81; Carr, Chartier, and Dadgostari, “I’m Not Really Healed ... I’m Just Bandaged up,” 39-56.
13. Carr, et al., “I’m Not Really Healed ... I’m Just Bandaged up,” 52.
14. Linklater, *Decolonizing Trauma Work*, 22.
15. Lavalley, “Beyond Recovery,” 271-81.
16. A. Gerlach, “Thinking and Researching Relationally: Enacting Decolonizing Methodologies within an Indigenous Early Childhood Program in Canada,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 17:1 (2018): 1-8; Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Zed Books, 2012).

Literature Review Format

The review begins with historical information on the boarding schools as an introduction for any readers who may be less familiar with boarding school policies and history. It then provides a description of the types of research currently available and the methods through which this team vetted the available studies.

In summarizing the available research, the review proceeds through layers of impact, recognizing that historical trauma impacts tribal nations, communities, families, and individuals. Designating historical trauma

responses and impacts at specific levels (e.g., nation, community, family, individual) is challenging. There is considerable overlap between these levels since they are interrelated and mutually reinforcing in several directions. Impacts felt at the family level can reverberate through a community and nation. Similarly, nation-level impacts are also felt by individuals. While there are challenges with this organizational approach, we use it because it has been identified as a more Indigenously-aligned approach to thinking about the multiple impacts of historical trauma events and, more specifically, boarding schools.¹⁷

The review then proceeds to cover impacts felt by Native nations and communities, followed by impacts felt by Native families, and finally impacts felt by individuals, both immediately and over generations. We then discuss current tribally operated and controlled projects that aim to promote healing from a legacy of colonial policies and practices in the United States. While Canadian results may not be entirely generalizable to the United States, we believe that the experiences for Indigenous peoples of the two countries were similar enough that research conducted among First

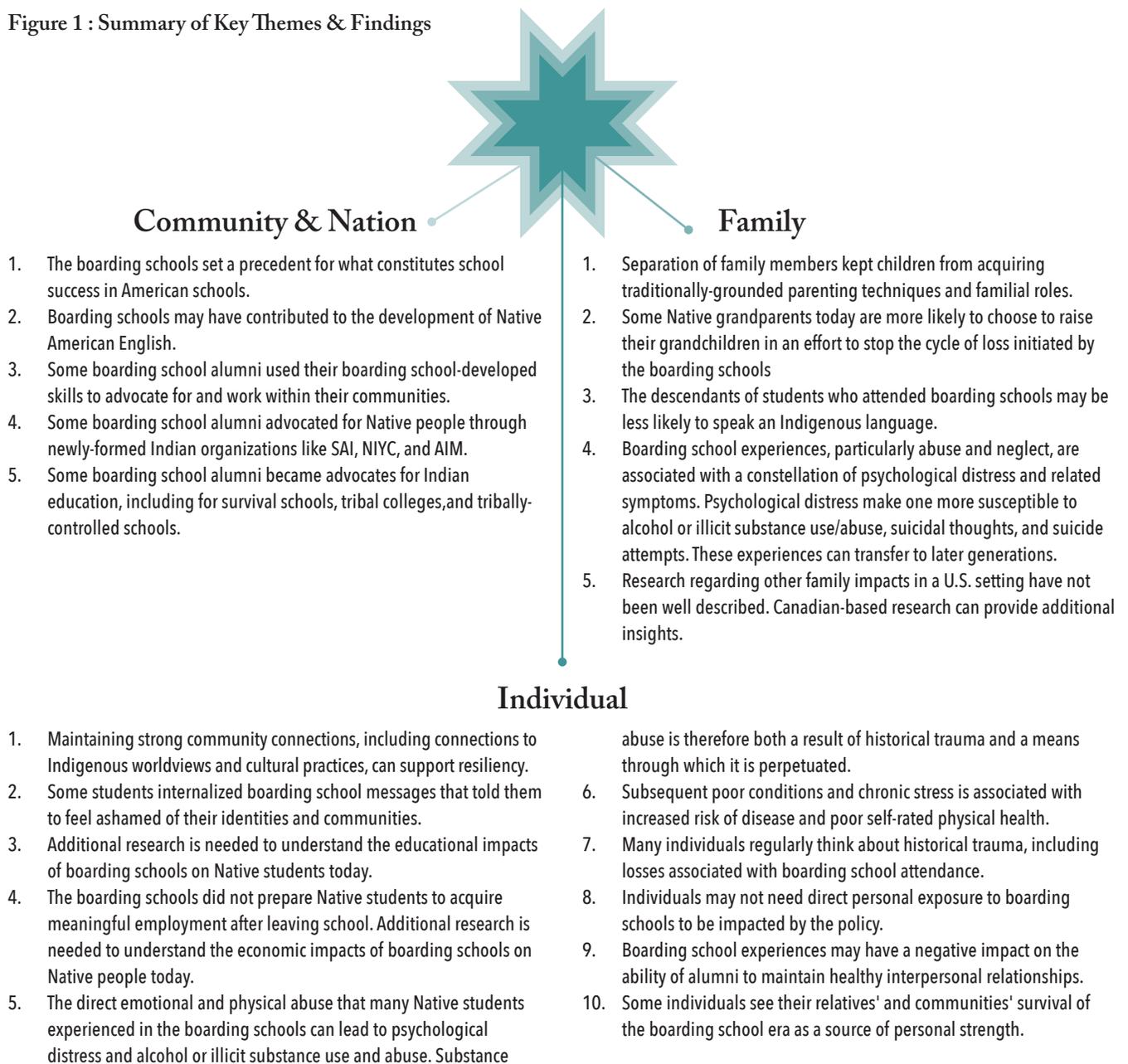
Nations, Inuit, or Métis individuals in Canada should not be discounted. We therefore present Canadian findings which we feel merit consideration throughout this document. Suggestions for future research and selected resources, including a glossary and appendices, conclude the review.

The graphic below is provided to graphically represent some of the major themes and findings, and their interrelatedness.

ENDNOTE

17. Evans-Campbell, "Historical Trauma in American Indian/Native Alaska Communities," 316-338.

Figure 1 : Summary of Key Themes & Findings



Foundational Information on the Boarding Schools

This section summarizes the larger history of the federal Indian industrial or boarding school system, which has roots that predate the Pilgrims' landing at Plymouth Rock. As early as the year 1618, the Anglican Church sanctioned the Virginia Colony to attempt assimilation of local Natives through education.¹⁸ William and Mary College was founded to serve as an Indian school in the latter part of the same century.¹⁹ Dartmouth College's earliest roots are in its Puritan founder's desire to establish a school for local native men.²⁰ This is the system that was assumed by the United States and its citizens, upon declaring independence from Britain. Since that time, federal policy towards schools for the original inhabitants of these lands has vacillated between preferences for assimilation and for self-sufficiency, in lock step with overall federal Indian policy.²¹

Formative Roots: Assimilation and Christian Saviors

The United States' federal Indian industrial or boarding school policy has been a collaboration of the Christian churches and the federal government since its earliest inception. Thomas Lorraine McKenney, a Quaker, started in 1816 as the first Superintendent of Indian Trade, and was "one of the key figures in the development of early American Indian policy."²² McKenney advocated for the federal policy of education and civilization through a network of schools to be run by the missionary societies under the supervision of the Superintendent of Indian Trade.²³ These efforts led to passage of the Indian Civilization Fund Act of 1819, which proposed to "encourage activities of benevolent societies in providing schools for the Indians... and authorized an annual 'civilization fund' to stimulate and promote this work." An 1818 House Committee Report on education's civilizing tendencies explains the predominant view of the time:

In the present state of our country, one of two things seems necessary: either that those sons of the forest should be moralized or exterminated....Put into the hands of their children the primer and the hoe, and they

will naturally, in time, take hold of the plough; and as their minds become enlightened and expand, the Bible will be their book, and they will grow up in habits of morality and industry, leave the chase to those whose minds are less cultivated, and become useful members of society.²⁴

Simply put, and as surprising as it may seem to those unfamiliar with this history, the federal government paid churches to run Indian schools, an instrument of cultural genocide. As Jesuit Father Francis Prucha explained further:

The goal of the rising Protestant missionary endeavors was to evangelize the world, to bring Christ's message to all mankind. And the instrument for that great work was to be the United States committed to Christian principles. Deeply imbued with a sense of mission, of carrying out God's commands of justice and compassion, active Christians reinforced the national policy of paternalism to the Indians. It was not enough to lament the past failings in regard to the Indians. A committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1824 condemned failures to improve the civil, moral and religious condition of the Indians, injustices in acquiring Indian lands and furs, and devastating wars against the natives. It viewed these acts as "national sins, aggravated by our knowledge and their ignorance, our strength and skill in war and their weakness; by our treacherous abuse of their simplicity, and especially by the light of privileges of Christianity, which we now enjoy, and of which they are destitute." The only way to avert the just vengeance of God for these wrongs – and to "elevate our national character, and render it exemplary in the view of the world" – was to speed the work of civilizing and elevating the Indians.

Of course, the thrust of "civilization" of Native Americans was to strip them of their ancestral traditions and customs and teach them the ways of the majority culture in missionary schools, i.e., transform them into Christian farmers or laborers. Ironically, and despite the 1824

condemnation described above, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was created within the Department of War in 1824, primarily to administer the funds to the churches from the Indian Civilization Fund.²⁶

Once the framework was in place, implementation moved at an urgent pace. In 1824, the Indian Civilization Fund subsidized 32 schools that enrolled more than 900 Indian children. By 1830, the Indian Civilization Fund supported fifty-two schools with 1,512 enrolled students.²⁷

Getting the Children Away from Home

During the 60 years between 1819 and 1879 most of the Church-run schools were on or near the reservations or homelands of the Native American children. The children would return home either daily or on weekends to be with their families and communities. The return of the children home was seen as a real problem. In 1886 John B. Riley, Indian School Superintendent said that:

If it be admitted that education affords the true solution to the Indian problem, then it must be admitted that the boarding school is the very key to the situation. However excellent the day school may be, whatever the qualifications of the teacher, or however superior the facilities for instruction of the few short hours spent in the day school is, to a great extent, offset by the habits, scenes and surroundings at home — if a mere place to eat and live in can be called a home. Only by complete isolation of the Indian child from his savage antecedents can he be satisfactorily educated.”²⁸

Mere education was not enough, then. Separating children from their family, their tribe, their culture, and their homes on the reservations was necessary to larger goal of assimilating them into the majority culture.

“Civilizing” the Native People

There was a serious debate about whether to exterminate the “wild” tribes that had not been confined to a reservation, or to seek their conversion to a “civilized” form of life – by which was meant to be Christian farmers

or craftsmen. The military and the frontier settlers were the primary advocates of the former, and the churches the latter. It wasn’t a serious debate in the sense of impending strategy. While there were examples of barbaric slaughter of native people—e.g. Wounded Knee, Sand Creek, etc.—it was, in fact, simply too expensive to enter into an extended campaign of genocide. It was estimated that the annual cost to maintain a company of United States Cavalry in the field was \$2,000,000. Whatever the standards of humanity, the economics augured for assimilation as the preferred alternative.²⁹

Among the frontier settlers with largely squatter mentality was the occasional person of conscience that could see past their own self-interest in acquiring land and riches to the incredible injustices visited on the native people in the process of their dispossession. John Beeson, likely a Quaker, was one such person who lobbied tirelessly to expose the erroneous depiction of the Indians as the aggressors, when it was the settlers who were in fact the transgressors against Indian lands and resources. In 1858, he argued that it was not civilization which was destroying the original inhabitants, “but the more highly energized Savagism that creeps under its mantle, usurps its prerogative, and does unspeakable wrongs ... in its name.”³⁰ Beeson met several times with President Abraham Lincoln and pressed upon him the idea that Indians should receive instruction in every phase of the culture which was displacing their own: Anglo-American economy, democratic self-government, and the Christian religion.³¹

A contemporary of Beeson was Episcopal Bishop of Minnesota Henry B. Whipple, who worked toward the same goal. In 1860, Whipple sent a letter to President Buchanan in which he lamented the evils of liquor and the failure and inability, and unwillingness, of the federal government to enforce the laws prohibiting its distribution among the Tribes. He also observed that the federal policy of treating the tribes as self-governing nations was mistaken; it would be better to regard Indians as wards and undertake their assimilation. Once the laws were enforced, practical Christian teachers could instruct them in agriculture and other arts of civilization. More important, he decried the corrupt patronage system of appointment of Indian agents that resulted in the looting of Indian resources, fraudulent contracts, and sham schools that accomplished

little more than to line the pockets of the Indian Agents. He sought a system that would allow for the appointment of “a commission of men of high character, who have no political ends to subserve,” to which should be given the responsibility for devising a more perfect system for administering Indian affairs.³²

Board of Indian Commissioners and the Peace Policy of 1869

In 1869 Congress adopted the Act of April 10, 1869, 16 Stat 13, 40 which provided that: “[The President] is hereby authorized ... to organize a board of commissioners, to consist of not more than ten persons, to be selected by him from men eminent for their intelligence and philanthropy, to serve without pecuniary compensation, who may ... exercise joint control with the Secretary of the Interior over the disbursement of appropriations made by this act.”³³

The Board of Indian Commissioners

The Boarding School Policy³⁴ was initiated as part of President Grant’s “Peace Policy” in 1869 and authorized the voluntary and coerced removal of Native American children from their families for placement in boarding schools run by the government and Christian churches. The stated goal of removal was to “civilize” the Indian by erasing Native identity and culture. This approach was thought to be less costly than wars against the Tribes or eradication of Native populations. The Boarding School Policy represented a shift from genocide of Indian people to a more defensible, but no less insidious, policy of cultural genocide; the systematic destruction of indigenous communities through the removal and reprogramming of their children.

Grant’s Peace Policy

Grant’s Peace Policy, adopted in 1869, was the adjunct anticipated by the creation of the Board of Indian Commissioners and was to fulfill two important goals:

1. the replacement of corrupt government officials, called the “Indian Ring”, with religious men,

nominated by churches to oversee the Indian agencies on reservations³⁵; and

2. Christianize the native tribes and eradicate their culture and religion, primarily through removal of the children from reservation settings.

Grant’s appointments to the Board were male Protestants. Although a clear and obvious violation of the principle of separation of church and state, none of the leaders of the day believed the principle applied to Native Americans. The Catholics, having been initially excluded from the Board, argued fervently that the children should have the freedom to choose their religion, saying in one statement:

The Indians have a right, under the Constitution, as much as any other person in the Republic, to the full enjoyment of liberty of conscience; accordingly they have the right to choose whatever Christian belief they wish, without interference from the Government.³⁶

Later, in 1902, Theodore Roosevelt appointed two Roman Catholics to the Board.

The Churches set about the task of spreading the Christian doctrine with a sense of urgent cooperation, overall. In 1872, the Board of Indian Commissioners allotted seventy-three Indian agencies to various denominations as follows:³⁷

- Methodists, fourteen agencies in the Pacific Northwest (54,743 Indians)
- Orthodox Friends, ten agencies, scattered (17,724)
- Presbyterian, nine agencies, in the Southwest (38,069)
- Episcopalians, eight agencies, in the Dakotas (26,929)
- Catholics, seven agencies (17,856)
- Hicksite Friends, six agencies (6,598)
- Baptists, five agencies, in Utah, Idaho, and the Indian Territory (40,800)
- Reformed Dutch Church, five agencies (8,118)
- Congregationalists, three agencies (14,476)
- Christians, two agencies (8,287)
- Unitarians, two agencies (3,800)
- American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in the Indian territory of Oklahoma (1,496)
- Lutherans, one agency (273)

Dedicated to forcefully eradicating Native cultures they considered inferior and unsalvageable, policymakers intended to destroy Indigenous ways and replace them with white, middle-class, Christian models. Assimilationists believed the crucial key to that transformation lay in education, and the most concentrated assaults came in the hundreds of reservation and off-reservation boarding schools built to strip Native children of their identities. To the bureaucrats and reformers who created the Indian boarding school system, education promised a systematic, uniform standard against which progress could be measured. As Superintendent of Indian Education John B. Riley put it in 1886, “[i]f it be admitted that education affords the true solution to the Indian problem, then it must be admitted that the boarding school is the very key to the situation.”³⁸

Because schools could be opened anywhere and everywhere, and could accommodate children of all ages, policymakers eagerly promoted them as the most effective tool for the cultural transformation that assimilationists demanded. To do this, they would seize children, deliberately separating them, in the words of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1879, “from all outside influence and contact with the tribe, which is positively necessary in order to teach them morality.”³⁹

Of course, all of this occurred in a broader context of dealing with an “Indian problem” and amidst a protracted period of “Indian Wars.” The most impactful drivers of policy met regularly, beginning in 1883, at Lake Mohonk, NY, calling themselves “Friends of the Indian”. Osage scholar George E. Tinker described the influence and focus of these meetings:

The growing extent of their influence is revealed ... in the fact that a range of high government officials, including three presidents, could soon be numbered among the participants. Also involved was Massachusetts Senator Henry M. Dawes, engineer of the 1887 General Allotment Act, under which individual rather than communal ownership of land was imposed on Indian reservations throughout the U.S., thereby undermining the integrity/cohesion of indigenous societies while providing a legal pretext for divesting native people of approximately two-thirds of the property still in their possession.

Three principle themes emerged early on in the Lake Mohonk conference and were thereafter regularly deployed as rationales guiding the formulation of federal Indian policies: 1) the “need” for inculcation of individualism among native people, 2) that to achieve this end Indians should be universally “educated” to hold eurowestern beliefs, and that, 3) all Indians, duly educated and thus individualized, should be absorbed as citizens into the U.S. body politic. ... Individualism, of course ... represented the very antithesis of the traditional communal values upon which all American Indian societies are based.⁴⁰

Following this leadership, in 1891 Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Jefferson Morgan introduced a ten-point plan for the Indian school system that he called “a settled Indian policy.” His summary went this way:

If we look to the schools as one of the chief factors of the great transformation, why not establish at once enough to embrace the entire body of available Indian youth? ... If there could be gathered by the end of 1893...nearly all of the Indian children and they be kept there for ten years, the work would be substantially accomplished; for ... there would group up a generation of English speaking Indians, accustomed to the ways of civilized life...Forever after [they would be] ... the dominant force among them.⁴¹

Morgan’s plan was notable for its uncompromising position on forcibly compelling Native parents to surrender their children and “bring the young Indians into a right relationship with the age in which they live, and put into their hands the tools by which they may gain for themselves food and clothing and build for themselves homes.” Morgan promised to incorporate “the Indians into the national life ... as Americans ... enjoying all the privileges and sharing the burden of American citizenship.” Convinced that Native communities would realize the stakes and come willingly, he nonetheless warned resisters that they would be ruthlessly “swept aside or crushed by the irresistible tide of civilization, which has no place for drones, no sympathy with idleness, and no rations for the improvident.” He saw Native people who refused to assimilate as “a perpetual source of expense of the Government ... a hindrance to civilization and a clog on our progress” and he argued that they should not

have “any right to forcibly keep their children out of school to grow up ... a race of barbarians and semi-savages.” Morgan went on to describe how he saw removing Native children from parents who resisted the schools as a moral responsibility, asserting that “We owe it to these children to prevent, forcibly if need be, so great and appalling a calamity from befalling them.”⁴²

The federal government’s goal was to get Native students in school and keep them there, regardless of the social and cultural wreckage sure to come. Indeed, wreckage was Morgan’s central goal: “If after this reasonable preparation, they are unable or unwilling to sustain themselves, they must go to the wall. It will be survival of the fittest.” This was ethnic cleansing, American style.

Morgan and his supporters intended for the schools to do much more than create literate, self-sufficient Indians. As David W. Adams has shown in his crucially important 1988 essay on the deeper meanings of Indian education, reformers understood schools to be the lynchpin in the plan to destroy the political, social, and economic institutions that bound Native communities together, and to replace them with values rooted firmly in Protestant, individualist, capitalist ideologies:

When policymakers turned to the third aim of Indian schooling – Americanization – they were primarily addressing the issue of the Indian’s future political status. ... In the minds of the reformers the two issues were inextricably linked: the elimination of tribal sovereignty would facilitate the individual Indian’s entry into citizenship. ... First, the Indians’ connections to their tribal unit and the reservation had to be severed if they were to be absorbed into the larger body politic; and second, the government had a special responsibility to prepare them for citizenship. In this matter, the schools would have a special role to play.⁴³

To accomplish these radical changes, the government plan culminated in a three-tiered approach, starting with the reservation day schools, augmented by the reservation boarding schools, and finally capped by the off-reservation boarding or industrial schools.

Three-Tiered Approach

Reservation Day Schools

Missionaries often administered the reservation day schools, located within easy distance of most reservation communities. Of course, their own history reached back to the mission-run schools that gained momentum during the Peace Policy years (1869-1876). These schools had an average capacity of thirty pupils and introduced Indian children to white values and institutions through rudimentary lessons in domestic arts, language, and white conceptualizations of proper discipline. As the OIA reported in 1898:

These schools bring a portion of the ‘white man’ civilization to the home of the Indian. As a rule, industrial training on a small scale is adopted for boys...whereas girls are taught in a simple way the adornment of the home and the purity of home life. Unconsciously the little one bears with her back to the rude tepee ... some small portion of the civilization with which she is in contact.⁴⁴

Reservation Boarding Schools

Day schools gave way wherever possible to reservation boarding schools, which became the bedrock of the government’s assimilation program. These promised, but rarely delivered, a sixth or seventh-grade education. Morgan promoted them tirelessly, calling them “the gateway out from the reservation.” Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz supported them over day schools precisely because they removed students from the influence of home and family. “Boarding schools are required,” he wrote in 1880, because “it is just as necessary to teach Indian children how to live as how to read and write.”⁴⁵ Or, as Indian School Superintendent Riley put it in 1886, “**Only by complete isolation of the Indian child from his savage antecedents can he be satisfactorily educated.**”⁴⁶

Like the day schools, the reservation boarding schools had multiple objectives. One was to impose ever stronger and substantive white, middle-class models of discipline and learning that were impossible in the day schools.

Thus, boarding schools kept students for an average of ten months a year, and attempted to control their day-to-day worlds in maddening, excruciating detail. This meant harsh disciplinary standards, schedules based on military models, and instruction according to strictly gendered values and roles. The regimen began immediately upon arrival when children were separated by gender, bathed, and had their hair cut. Their clothing were collected and usually destroyed, and then replaced with uniforms. In most schools, students were given new names, or at least first names to accompany family surnames. In some Oklahoma boarding schools, children were even given birth dates. Boys and girls were segregated every hour of the day, and school disciplinarians constantly surveilled them. William Collins, Jr., a Ponca who attended the Pawnee Boarding School in Oklahoma in the 1930s, recalled, “the most profound aspect of my sojourn at the Pawnee Indian School is the specter of discipline. Discipline in its most rigid, non-yielding, almost brutal, shocking and galling state. Non-Indian was the order of the day.”⁴⁷

A second objective was for the agency boarding school to serve as “the object lesson for the reservation.”⁴⁸ Thus, reservation schools were not always tightly segregated from surrounding Native communities. In many cases, boarding schools became the de facto distribution sites for annuities and lease payments. Parents and relatives were routinely invited to the grounds for concerts, athletic contests, and holiday celebrations intended to convey the importance and power of white values and institutions. Parents might see uniformed children marching to assemblies with military precision; meals of strange foods, boys plowing on the school’s farm or learning carpentry in its shop, girls sewing bed linens or working in the kitchen or laundry, basketball and baseball games, oratorical and handwriting contests stressing English language proficiency, or even compulsory church attendance. If they were overwhelmed by what they saw, so much the better, said policymakers.

*Programming in the Reservation Boarding Schools:
Lessons in Patriotic Meniality*

The OIA expected reservation boarding school students to achieve minimal English language fluency (in 1913 it cheerfully reported that, on average, students could learn 280 English words in one year), along with enough exposure to civics and social studies to make them pliant,

independent workers ready to scorn their tribal heritage in favor of private property and individualism. Indians, said one observer in 1902, simply needed “practical education”:

Teach the boys a trade of some kind, and teach them farming, which is, of course, the most important of all. ... Teach the girls to take care of their homes and make them attractive. Teach them cooking, teach them neatness, teach them responsibility ... do this, and I tell you you have solved the whole question of Indian civilization.⁴⁹

The standard boarding school regimen put students to work in one of the school’s support systems for half of each day and in classes for the other half. For girls, this meant the kitchen, laundry, dining hall, sewing room and other gendered spaces. For boys, it meant the farm, barn, blacksmith shop, and other industrial sites. Most schools offered music and sports, largely because of their Americanizing influences. Officials regarded Christian indoctrination as an essential component in the complete assimilation of students, and by 1890, the OIA required compulsory attendance at weekly Sunday services.

Academic training was uneven at best, hampered by language barriers, unqualified teachers, and limited instructional budgets. As Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca anthropologist and activist, wrote, “The government school is a very low grade school. ... Why do Americans expect the Indian to succeed in advanced life, when *there is no real preparation* for it?”⁵⁰ Henry Roe Cloud, a Winnebago education advocate, recalled in 1914, “I worked two years in turning a washing machine in a Government school to reduce the running expenses of the school. It did not take me long to learn how to run a washing machine. The rest of the two years, I nursed a growing hatred for that washing machine. Such work is not educative.”⁵¹

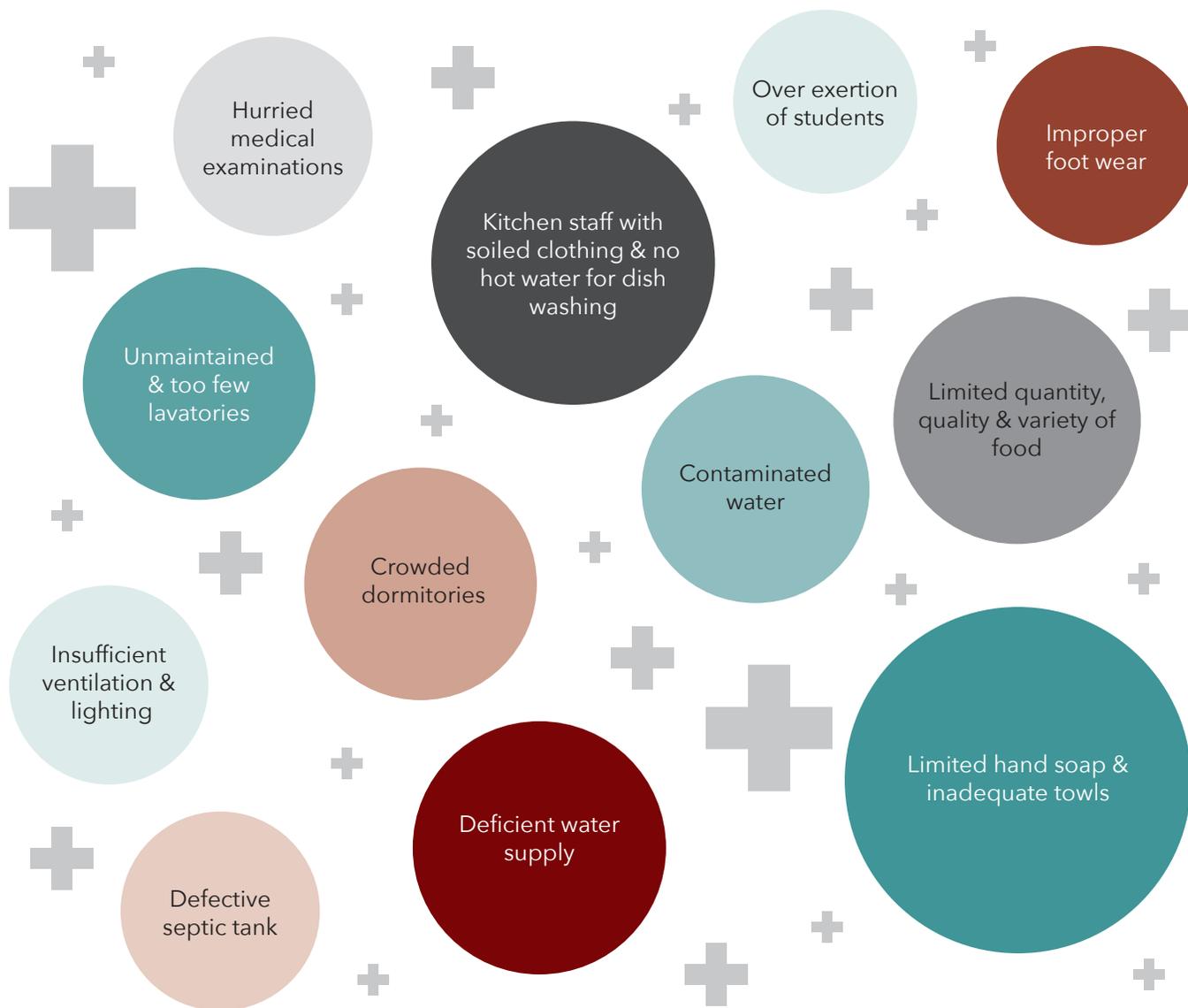
*Reservation Boarding School Living Conditions:
Somewhere Between Dungeons and Death Camps*

Despite their importance in the overall system, reservation boarding schools were routinely severely overcrowded, understaffed, and crippled by limited resources. Rainy Mountain Boarding School in southwest Oklahoma’s Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Reservation, for example, opened

in 1893 with a 50-student capacity. By 1913 enrollment reached 160, but without additional dormitory space. Annual turnover in the teaching ranks regularly approached 75% (close to the national average for those schools), and Rainy Mountain never adequately staffed its classrooms or programs. In 1912, for example, 110 of 146 students, ranging in age from 6 to 18 years old, were assigned to grades 1-3 with one teacher.⁵² Physical conditions in the school were often highly alarming throughout the years. In 1916, for

example, an astonishing 163 of 168 students were diagnosed with trachoma, and Rainy Mountain held the dubious distinction of the worst trachoma rates in the entire Indian school system, due mostly to the fact that OIA bureaucrats refused to repair the school's water system.⁵³ Sadly, these circumstances were not unusual for a reservation boarding school. It is simply impossible to believe that circumstances even vaguely resembling these would have been tolerated in any white school anywhere in the nation.

Figure 2: Living conditions contributing to disease development and transmission at boarding schools, Meriam Report, 1928



This figure provides a visual summary of living conditions at boarding schools in the 1920s. These factors were identified in the health section of the famed 1928 Meriam Report and are included to demonstrate the physical living conditions that today are known to contribute to the development and interpersonal transmission of disease. Source: Merriam Report, 11, 189-325.

Off-reservation Boarding or Industrial Schools

Note on terminology: While generally described as “boarding schools” in recent years, note that the federal off-reservation Indian boarding schools were almost uniformly named “Indian Industrial Schools” while in operation. That name is also more reflective of the intended purpose at the time they were in operation.

Up to the 1910s, the majority of Indian children who attended government schools did so at the reservation level. By the early 1880s, however, policy makers had placed increased emphasis on building off-reservation schools, where the lessons of assimilation could be implemented far from family influences. Between 1879, when the Carlisle Indian Industrial School opened in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and 1902, when the Sherman Institute opened in Riverside, California, the OIA built twenty-five off-reservation schools, with all but Carlisle located in the West.

Several things distinguished them from their reservation counterparts.

The off-reservation schools tended to have considerably larger enrollments than their reservation-based counterparts and most of them drew from a dozen or more tribal communities in their region. Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the first of the off-reservation schools (established in 1879) had average enrollments of more than 1000 students a year by 1900, and during its history more than 10,000 students came through the school. By 1926, the Chemawa Industrial School (1880) in Salem, Oregon enrolled 1000 students a year from a dozen Nations; at its height, the Genoa Indian Industrial School (1884) in Genoa, Nebraska enrolled 600 students a year; enrollment at the Phoenix Indian School (1891) reached 1000 students by 1900; by the 1920s the Chilocco Indian Agricultural School (1884) in Newkirk, Oklahoma had 895 students from 40 nations.

“KILL THE INDIAN... SAVE THE MAN”

Richard Henry Pratt and the Rise of the Indian Industrial Schools

Richard H. Pratt was the founder of Carlisle Indian Industrial School and one of the most prominent influencers of the formation of boarding and industrial schools. Pratt hailed himself as a lifelong advocate of the American Indian and their pursuit of education as a tool for survival, but his military career shaped how Carlisle would eventually be structured. Ultimately, it was his experience managing military prisoners that dictated his methods, rather than informed educational theory.

He began his military career during the Civil War, when he enlisted at age 21 in 1861. His initial term was spent as a soldier at Fort Sumter for four years.⁵⁵ In 1867, Pratt reenlisted and was assigned to the Tenth United States Cavalry as second lieutenant, and he was assigned a troop of 103 recently freed slaves known as “Buffalo Soldiers” and 25 Indian Scouts. The remaining eight years of Pratt’s direct military service were spent on the frontier in Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) and Texas.⁵⁶ During this time, he was stationed at Fort Sill, 60 miles east of the site of the Battle of the Washita where Cheyenne leader Black Kettle had been killed in 1867.

During this period of “Indian Wars,” many leaders of various tribes were taken as prisoners. Pratt was charged with selecting, from the various posts in Indian Country, prisoners who would be removed from their homelands and banished to Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida.⁵⁷ The prisoners selected, who came from the Comanche, Kiowa, Southern Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Caddo nations, were considered resistance leaders in their tribes and a threat to peace on the plains during westward expansion.⁵⁸ At Fort Marion, Pratt sought to train the prisoners in military fashion, and he put them to work building barracks. They were provided military issued clothing, and they were scrutinized in every aspect of their dress and possessions just as any soldier in the military would be. Eventually, the prisoners began policing themselves and even had a penal system implemented with a martial-court.⁵⁹ Pratt noted that they were quick learners and the training they received, “worked to the extent it resonated with native zeal for militarism.”⁶⁰ Of course, the historical records show that the collective goal of the prisoners was not to become model soldiers, but to be released and return home to their people.

By the end of their incarceration, in 1878, Pratt had convinced a handful of his prisoners to further their education at Hampton Institute in Virginia. Hampton was founded in 1868 as a government boarding school for African-American children designed to educate by training “the head, the hand, and the heart.” Its goal was to return the students to their communities to become leaders and professionals among their own people. With the exception of returning to their communities, this approach fit Pratt’s belief in equal opportunity for American Indians and the value of assimilation into American culture.⁶¹

The approach was also in line with President Grant’s Peace Policy of 1868, as well as the best thinking of a variety of Christian policy leaders in the East. By mid-1879, Pratt was approved to lead the establishment of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School at a deserted cavalry base in Pennsylvania. In September 1879, Pratt travelled with a teacher/interpreter to the Rosebud and Pine Ridge Indian reservations in Dakota Territory to recruit students,

as he had been directed to obtain 36 students from each reservation. While Pratt was engaged in recruiting among the Lakota, two of his former prisoners from Ft. Marion, Etadleuh (Kiowa) and Okahaton (Cheyenne) were recruiting students from their own tribes.⁶² As Pratt explained his mission later:

A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.⁶³

The quote rang a clear sentinel tone reflecting how, despite apparently well-meaning intentions towards their wards, the eventual goal of the Indian Industrial schools was unmistakably one of cultural genocide.

Because the majority of the Indian Industrial or off-Reservation boarding schools were often located adjacent to urban centers, they were designed to be more fully immersive than reservation schools. In addition to more intense instruction at higher levels and in a wider variety of subjects, one hallmark of the off-reservation program pioneered at Carlisle was the “outing.” This program placed students with white families, farms, and businesses for extended periods. During these “outings” the students were expected to internalize a wide variety of white, middle-class values and ideals, something that Pratt called “the supreme Americanizer.” However, this rarely occurred. More often, the consequences of what was essentially a sanctioned child labor arrangement were disastrous. Moreover, as K. Tsianina Lomawaima describes it, “federal boarding schools did not train Indian youth to assimilate into the American melting pot.” Instead, they were to “adopt the work discipline of the Protestant ethic and accept their proper place in society as a marginal class. Indians were not being welcomed into American society.”⁶⁴ In the end, argues Alice Littlefield, the word “proletarianization” better characterizes the efforts of the federal Indian schools than assimilation.⁶⁵

A More Fatalistic Racist Shift

While Pratt, Morgan, and other early influencers of U.S. Indian education policy may have expressed a hope that assimilation might lead to fuller participation in American society, that effort was hampered by culturally tone-deaf assumptions about Native people at the time. The discussion took an increasingly negative and racist shift at the turn of the twentieth century. A central figure in this assault was Commissioner of Indian Affairs William A. Jones. As early as 1901, Jones launched a barrage of criticisms of the off-reservation boarding schools accusing them of coddling students with experiences that were largely irrelevant for the lives they would lead after school days were over. “The fallacious idea of ‘bringing the Indian into civilization and keeping him there,’” he wrote in 1904, had become “too prominent.” By the time he left office in 1904, Jones had not reduced the number of off-reservation boarding schools, but he had significantly slowed their growth by demanding that reservation-based boarding schools take priority.⁶⁶

Jones’s immediate successor, William A. Leupp, continued the assault on the intellectual and moral capacities

of Native people. He shifted the educational emphasis even lower, from the reservation boarding schools to the day schools, noting that it made no sense to teach students about things like homes with electric lighting because such things were “beyond” Indians’ “legitimate aspirations.” What followed for the next two decades was essentially the abandonment of Native nations on the basis of racially-charged ideas that Native students were intellectually inferior.⁶⁷

The assault, which had many facets but was particularly focused on the Indian schools, arguably did as much to damage Native communities as anything that had preceded it. As a result, the meanings and goals of assimilation began to favor harshly and cruelly defined limits for Native students based on the pseudo-science of social Darwinism, which held that certain races of human were destined for success and others for failure. Social Darwinists like Jones and Leupp were deeply committed to their racially “informed” worldview and their actions were driven by their belief that Native people were intellectually inferior. They eagerly appealed to racially charged arguments about permanent inferiority.

By the 1920s, the Office of Indian Affairs embraced a much more limited interpretation of assimilation, intending it to mean only that students would not be a burden on the government. Half of all Native children in government-sponsored education programs were at off-reservation boarding schools by the late 1920s. However, by then support for the Indian school system overall had eroded and reliance on boarding schools as the engines of assimilation was waning. Damning evidence of government negligence and ineptitude emerged in the 1928 Meriam Report, which revealed a shocking litany of abuse, inept administration, and failed goals. “The most fundamental need in Indian education,” noted the report, “is a change in point of view,” and its stinging indictment of the boarding schools admonished “frankly and unequivocally that the provisions for the care of the Indian children in boarding schools are grossly inadequate.”⁶⁸ One year later, the report of the National Advisory Committee on Education described the Indian schools as a “tragic failure.”⁶⁹ In fact, the Meriam Report was in many ways the last straw, for by then critics of the boarding school system had already seized on the inefficiencies, the inability to deliver on its promises, and

most of all on a mounting wave of doubt from government officials and the general public that Native people could or should be educated beyond a minimal level necessary to encourage self-support.⁷⁰

Shifts towards the Humane

In the decades to come, other important shifts emerged, including a gradual but ultimately permanent policy of enrolling Native students in public schools and closing most boarding schools. Again, the 1928 Meriam Report was decisive on this count, assailing the cultural wreckage that had piled up in the wake of the OIA’s earlier turn to racially vicious language and policies. “The present plan of the government to put Indian children into public schools wherever possible,” it noted, “is commendable as a general policy. ... Any policy for Indians based on the notion that they can or should be kept permanently isolated from other Americans is bound to fail.” Native students “brought up in public schools with white children,” it continued, “have the advantage of early contacts with whites while still retaining their connection with their own Indian family and home.”⁷¹

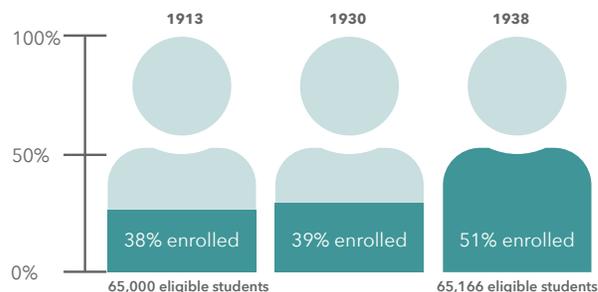


Figure 3: Percent of eligible American Indian students enrolled in government-sponsored schools

*Caption: The light blue color represents the percent of eligible Indian students who were enrolled in a government school. In 1913, the ARCLIA reported that of 65,000 eligible, school-age native students, 40,000 (62%) were not enrolled in any school, and at many agencies, more than half of all eligible children had no schools at all. In 1930, the federal Indian schools managed to enroll 39% of eligible children. By 1938, the data is reported a bit differently, but indicate that enrollments in any type of school (federal, public, mission, private, and state) had grown to 33,780, meaning that of the 65,166 students reported on government lists, about half were in school. Excluding those in mission, public, and private schools (6,975), the percent would drop to 41% (dotted line). Sources: 1913: ARCLIA, 1913, p. 3; 1930: ARCLIA, 1930, p. 51; 1938: Prucha, *The Great Father*, vol. 2, 983.*

By the 1930s, the heyday of government-sponsored, coercive off-reservation Indian boarding schools was fading away, but the threat they represented to Native cultures did not disappear. John Collier, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs whose 1934 Indian Reorganization Act profoundly shifted federal policy, worked to fundamentally revise the OIA's assimilation programs. Collier preferred public schools and day schools to the boarding schools, and he worked with Willard Beatty to reverse the suppression of Native culture and history in the federal curriculum. The 1934 Johnson-O'Malley Act, which authorized contracts between states and the OIA for schooling Indians, led to agreements with four states with large Native populations—Arizona, California, Minnesota, and Washington—and it confirmed a pattern that had already emerged in the early 1900s, when many reservation boarding schools closed and local public school districts were expected to bridge the gap. In 1934 alone, Collier closed ten boarding schools, meaning a total of 22 had been shuttered since 1928. Boarding school enrollments dropped from 22,000 to 17,000, and his 1935 budget funded only 13,000 students. “This decrease of 9,000 in two years,” he wrote in 1934, “means that the decline of the boarding school as the dominant factor in the education of Indian children is at last an accomplished fact.” However, as Prucha notes, Collier was too hopeful; in 1941, the OIA still ran 49 boarding schools with 14,500 students.

The World War II years seriously eroded support for Collier's reforms, and boarding school policies entered a new era as the federal Termination policy loomed in the early 1950s. Collier's day school plans were derailed and replaced by a renewed enthusiasm for the vocational training, in which boarding schools specialized. Support for public schooling continued at the same time, partly because placing Indian students in to public schools fit nicely with plans to seriously slash or liquidate entirely the Bureau of Indian Affairs (the OIA was renamed in 1947). Indeed, by 1956, there were no federally operated Indian schools in Michigan, Washington, Minnesota, Idaho, Nebraska, or Wyoming, all of which enjoy significant Indian populations and history. But there was renewed emphasis on assimilation, which had remained in play despite Collier's hopes. As one 1944 Congressional report put it, the educational goals for Native children remained inextricably bound up in “training the Indian children to accept and appreciate the white man's way of life.” Thus, the rising support for ending any kind

of forced assimilation notwithstanding, federal Indian education programs remained tethered to the problematic legacies of earlier eras.⁷⁵

The Rise of Tribal Control and the Kennedy Report

In conjunction with the early civil rights movement in the 1960s, Native leaders and their allies began to put into place the early steps of reform intended to undermine the problematic vestiges of past federal policies. The *Journal of American Indian Education* began publishing in 1961. Federal policies instituted new regulations to require parent committees and tribal consultation. The all-important 1966 Rough Rock Demonstration School on the Navajo Reservation anticipated subsequent developments that led to the transfer of substantive control of several Indian schools to Native nations. Native educators and activists created the National Indian Education Association in 1969. All of these events echoed a rising movement in Native communities that stoutly challenged the BIA's deeply entrenched paternalism, and as Prucha notes, “the drive for Indian self-determination was nowhere more pronounced than in education.”⁷⁶

The need for urgency in Indian education reform was loudly and clearly supported by a 1969 report entitled “Indian Education: A National Tragedy—A National Challenge,” commissioned by the Special Subcommittee on Indian Education within the Senate's Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Known as the “Kennedy Report”, the document revealed the lingering and disastrous effects of government-sponsored assimilation policies. It was a stunning indictment of federal Indian education that began with a searing critique of the government schools that had produced “a national tragedy and a national disgrace.” Citing an appalling litany of abuse, inefficiency, and fraud that had continued largely unabated despite recent policy shifts, the report called Indian education “a failure when measured by any reasonable set of criteria.” The document also assailed the BIA's inexcusable unwillingness to listen to tribal leaders:

...the 1960's began with a determined effort to seek a new policy which would alleviate Indian termination

fears and reorganize the Bureau of Indian Affairs so that it could effectively provide an exemplary educational program for Indians. The 1960's are ending with those same problems unresolved.⁷⁹

Deeply disturbed by the BIA's entrenched paternalism, the report noted that reform would be:

...relatively ineffective unless the basic relationships between Indians and white people can also be altered, and, specifically, unless the paternalistic relationship between the white power structure and the Indian community can be changed.⁸⁰

On the surface, the 1970s represented an era of enlightened progress in Indian education. The trend towards public schooling continued. By 1971 public school American Indian enrollments (103,000) exceeded federal Indian school enrollments (48,000) by a margin of more than 2 to 1. The passage of the 1972 Indian Education Act, followed by the creation of the Office of Indian Education in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to administer its provisions, marked a crucial shift towards Native control and direction of federal Indian education programs and initiatives. In 1974, the BIA overturned decades of paternalism when it published guidelines for student rights, including the right to freedom of religion and culture, the right of symbolic expression, and freedom from discrimination. The Education Amendments Act of 1978 further directed that the BIA's educational policy would "facilitate Indian control of Indian affairs in all matters relating to education." In the same year, the Tribally Controlled Community College Act confirmed the momentum of the movement for Native autonomy and self-determination with regard to education.⁸¹

Change was not immediate, however. Reverberations from prior policy eras continued to echo in the schools, as can be seen from personal histories of those students in attendance. Oral histories and anecdotal evidence from the authors' families who attended federal schools in the 1960s indicate that many students continued to experience significant trauma in the schools' later periods. One uncle was hidden until he was seven years old in an attempt to prevent his school attendance but he was eventually found and taken away to the school against his will.

Student letters and phone calls to families back home were closely surveilled—letters were destroyed and phone calls terminated when students attempted to tell their parents about difficult school conditions. Students' clothes were confiscated and their hair cut; they selected school-approved clothing each day out of a shared wardrobe. Students continued to experience physical and sexual abuse at the hands of school staff. One relative shared the recollections of a friend from another boarding school about ongoing sexual assaults from a school counselor. Yet another story comes from a relative who remembered that her brother, upon arriving at boarding school, was dunked in a vat of chemicals to "delouse" him. He had such a severe physical reaction to the chemicals that he was in the hospital for a week. Other stories from authors' relatives who attended boarding schools in the 1970s recall older students beating up younger students because staff compelled them to enforce English-only rules by physically assaulting their younger classmates. Siblings were often kept separate—at one boarding school, a fence separated the older and younger students, and communication between siblings across the fence was impossible.

Significant violence occurred between students as well, as fights broke out between students from different tribal communities. Racially motivated bullying, from both teachers and students, was a common occurrence.

A series of studies and congressional reports between the late 1960s and mid-1970s found that Indian education budgets, curricula, staffing, and achievement levels rarely reflected national averages. In a 1971 summary of recent findings on Indian education, for example, Estelle Fuchs noted that despite the official policy of enrolling Native children in public schools, two-thirds of the then 50,000 students in the federal Indian school system were attending one of the 77 boarding schools then in operation. Moreover, she continued, "Although official policy today does not seek to destroy Indian identity deliberately ... curriculum materials and programs incorporating tribal history and culture, contemporary issues including tribal government and politics, or concern for differences in learning or behavioral styles are generally absent in the schools." It appears that assimilationist tendencies do indeed die hard.

Even where change started to take root, the troubling legacies of the boarding schools did not end with policies designed to move, in Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder's telling phrase, "in the direction of Indianizing Indian education." Despite claims in the historical record that conditions in federal Indian schools improved by the 1960s and 1970s, one psychological study that interviewed boarding school alumni and staff who were associated with the schools in the second half of the twenty-first century found that, though the federal schools had improved over time, "there is a lot more to be done, especially in regard to the unobtrusive ghosts of identification and introjection of foreign values and beliefs which are directly connected to colonization." Today, the consequences of past cultural and linguistic suppression continue to reverberate. As Brenda J. Child has noted, "the boarding school experience remains a burning historical memory for American Indian people in the United States. This despite the fact that most federal Indian boarding schools closed in the 1930s, or had by then adopted policies that rejected assimilation."

Activists, reformers, and tribal governments had hoped for a new era in the Kennedy Report's wake, but relatively little was done in the 1970s and 1980s to address the report's main concerns. Indeed, judging from a 1989 report issued by the United States Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, Indian education continued to be hampered by policies and procedures that no public school district would ever condone. The report stated that the BIA never issued guidelines for reporting suspected cases of abuse or molestation (despite the fact that such reports had been standard for more than a decade in the schools of all 50 states) and it accused the Bureau of actively permitting "a pattern of child abuse by its teachers to fester throughout the BIA schools nationwide." At the time of the report's publication, the BIA did not require any background checks for job applicants in the Indian schools, and according to the report the Bureau had allowed known pedophiles to teach in the schools, and had been so lax in investigating reports of abuse that molestation went unreported and unpunished.⁸⁷

ICWA: Attempts to Thwart the Policy Continued in Another Form

Boarding schools were not the only means by which Native students were separated from their communities, as illustrated by the passage of the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act. Prior to the passage of the law, state governments and private adoption agencies removed between 25% and 35% of Native children from their families and placed them into state care. Of those removed children, 85% were placed with families outside of their tribal communities regardless of whether there were relatives able to care for the children.⁸⁸ The removal of Native children was part of a governmental assumption that Native families were unfit to care for Native children. As one legal scholar notes, "[t]his continued removal, whether in the form of boarding schools or involuntary out-of-home placements, operated to continue the destruction of American Indian people as such by further removing individuals from their families, their culture, and their language."⁸⁹ Today, Native children continue to be overrepresented in foster care, making up 0.9% of children in the United States but 2.1% of all children in foster care.⁹⁰

Snapshot: Indian Education Today

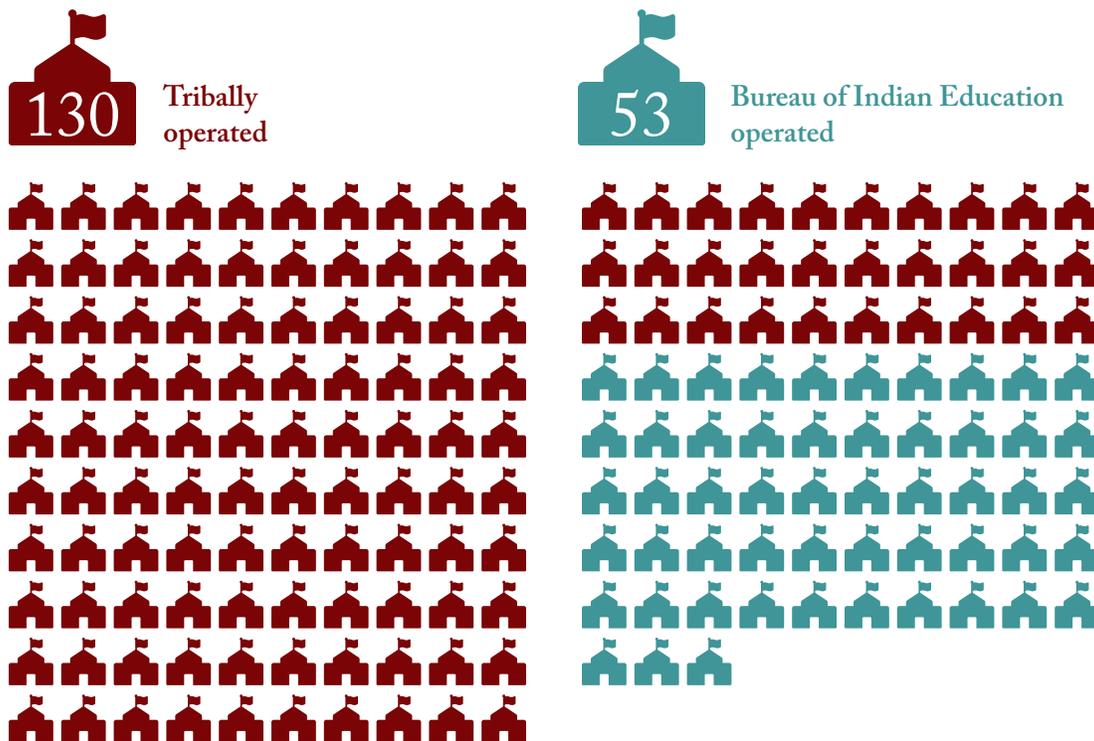
Nationwide, upwards of 10,000 Native students continue to attend federal boarding schools in 2018. But they do so in an environment that has largely moved away from an earlier era's paternalism and colonialism with a worldview that acknowledges the inherent rights of Native people to lay claim to their tribal and personal histories. Today, many Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) school mission statements discuss preparing students for a multicultural world. Some specifically discuss grounding students in their own tribal values. As the vision statement for the BIE school *Tasunka Witko Owayawa* (Crazy Horse School) in Lakota Territory affirms,

The vision for Crazy Horse School (*Tasunka Witko Owayawa*) is for our sacred (*Wakan*) children to learn and practice Lakota language, culture,

spirituality and values (wisdom (*Woksape*), respect and humility (*wowahwala*), generosity (*wacantognaka*), compassion (*waounsila*), courage (*woohitika*), fortitude (*wowacantanka*), spirituality (*wowakan*), patience (*wowacintanka*), and honesty (*woowothanja*)) in order to pass them on to future generations. High Expectations from Crazy Horse School Stakeholders will lead to

high achievements, helping students realize their capabilities, and allowing them to grow to their full potential so that they may be positive leaders in their receptive communities. It is essential that students become life-long learners which will empower them to lead healthy and productive lives in the global society.⁹¹

Figure 4: Tribal and Bureau of Indian Education operated elementary, secondary, and residential schools, 2018



As of 2018, the US Bureau of Indian Affairs, in partnership with tribes, operates 183 elementary, secondary, and residential schools in twenty-three states. One hundred and thirty of these are tribally controlled under the auspices of the Indian Self-Determination and the Education Assistance act of 1975 and 1953; the Bureau of Indian Education operates the rest. Data Source: Bureau of Indian Education, Schools, Retrieved July 12, 2018 from <https://www.bie.edu.schools/index.htm>; Icon source: Dolly Homes, Simple School, from <http://thenounproject.com>.

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A Brief Comparison of Canadian and American Residential Schools

The United States was not unique in using government-sanctioned schools to assault Indigenous cultures. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many colonial and imperial powers believed schools were essential for controlling Native peoples.⁹² The 2015 Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) observed that the Canadian residential schools were "part of a growing international trend" in Europe, Africa, South America, and other heavily colonized regions of the world where subduing Indigenous populations was crucial to imperial stability. The TRC highlighted mid-nineteenth century French and British examples as important precursors to the Canadian system, and noted that a wide range of factors shaped the Canadian decision to build a residential school system. It also includes American boarding schools in a broadly constructed analysis of various nineteenth century colonialist and imperialist assimilation schemes. The groundwork for the Canadian residential schools was laid in the early 1800s, when the 1842 Bagot Commission proposed building "as many manual labor and Industrial schools as possible." By the time Canada achieved Confederation status in 1867, "an Indian civilization program based on land cession treaties, reserves, education, religious conversion, and agricultural instruction was firmly entrenched and operational."⁹³

The Canadian and American systems reflected very similar approaches and goals with regard to their respective "Indian Problem," though Canadian schools were open until more recent times than their American counterparts were. Canadian leaders' racist beliefs about Native intellectual inferiority often paralleled those of their American counterparts. The first Canadian Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, once argued, "[w]hen the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents [sic], who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write, his habits and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read or write."⁹⁴ Canadian scholar Sean Carleton notes:

Macdonald dreamed of creating an organized system of federal schools for Indigenous children that could be used to disrupt Indigenous lifeways and control over the land to accelerate successful settler colonialism. As such, he appointed a friend, Nicholas Flood Davin, to investigate the success of boarding schools for Indigenous peoples in the United States and determine how it could be replicated in Canada ... Beginning shortly thereafter, Macdonald adopted Davin's recommendation to create residential schools to help eradicate Canada's so-called "Indian problem."⁹⁵

When Davin arrived in the United States, he called on Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz and Commissioner of Indian Affairs Ezra Hayt to discuss “the principal feature of the policy known as ‘aggressive civilization,’” and he visited the government school at Minnesota’s White Earth Reservation.⁹⁶

Framed by the same social, cultural, economic, and religious values as their American counterparts, the Canadian residential schools naturally also used education as their primary agent of cultural genocide. One very significant difference between the Canadian and American systems, however, involves the movement for reparations and reconciliation. The most well-known of these is the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), formed in 2008. The TRC originated among members of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), which had been founded in 2006 to press for official acknowledgement and compensation for children forced to attend Canada’s residential school system between the

1879 and 1996. The IRSSA successfully campaigned for a \$2 billion compensation package, and the TRC’s final report in 2015 roundly condemned the Canadian government for cultural genocide.⁹⁷

In contrast, while federally sanctioned investigations like the 1928 Meriam Report and the 1969 Kennedy Report revealed clear and ongoing patterns of abuse, negligence, and ineptitude on a staggering scale, these reports never triggered anything even remotely like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the United States. Indeed, unlike the Canadian report, Meriam and Kennedy were never intended to examine student claims of abuse; instead, “both reports were only concerned with acknowledging students’ experiences to the extent that they identified trends that should be fixed for future Indians.” Unlike the Canadians, United States officials have been concerned only with preventing future abuse, not with ameliorating or even addressing long-term traumatic effects of previous federally-sponsored abuse.⁹⁸

ENDNOTES

92. For a succinct explanation of education as a tool of various colonizing efforts, including those in India, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, as well as the United States, see George E. Tinker, “Tracing a Contour of Colonialism: American Indians and the Trajectory of Educational Imperialism,” in Ward Churchill, *Kill the Indian, Save the Man*, xiii-xiv.

93. The Truth and Reconciliation Report is here: <http://caid.ca/DTRC.html> (accessed 2/7/2019). For the relevant discussion, see pp. 133-168. See also John L. Tobias, “Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada’s Indian Policy,” *The Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology* 6, no. 2 (1976), 13-20.

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96. Nicholas Flood Davin, *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds*, Ottawa, 14th March 1879 available here: <http://bcmetis.com/wp-content/uploads/IndustrialSchoolsReport.pdf> (accessed 2/7/2019). See also J. R. Miller, *Shingwauk, Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). A bibliography of works on the residential schools is here: <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/Pages/residential-schools-bibliography-2009.aspx> (accessed 2/7/2019).

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98. Two lawsuits have been filed in the United States with regard to abuse in the boarding schools; neither was successful. But as Andrea Curcio notes in a 2006 essay, United States legal codes severely limit the ability of complainants to even file a case. See Curcio, “Civil Claims for Uncivilized Acts”; The two cases filed were *Begay v. St. Joseph’s Indian School* (1996); *Sherwyn B. Zephier, et. al., Plaintiffs And Appellants, V. Catholic Diocese Of Sioux Falls; Blue Cloud Abbey; Sisters Of The Blessed Sacrament; And Oblate Sisters Of The Blessed Sacrament, Defendants And Appellees* (2008).

Historical Literature on Boarding Schools

The following section surveys a selection of the most significant historical studies on boarding school policy, history, and experience from the 1870s to the present day. The list is not exhaustive, and focuses on selected texts we regard as important for an understanding of the complicated mix of policies, experiences, and consequences that frame these schools. Those wishing to read more deeply may consult the references and appendix at the end of this review for a more substantive list. The sources discussed here assess the boarding schools from a number of perspectives, and as a group they offer a complex mosaic of lived experiences that reveal an extraordinary range of meanings and consequences. They remind us of the appalling realities of the boarding schools, and they do not flinch from describing the original system for exactly what it was: government-sanctioned indoctrination that deliberately removed children from their families and communities in order to solve the nation's so-called "Indian Problem." Nor do they accept uncritically the shift that began in the 1940s towards Native control of the schools. As Native scholars like Brenda J. Child and K. Tsianina Lomawaima note, those shifts have not erased the nation's long-standing commitment to the marginalization of Native cultures.

Even by the standards of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the original boarding school policies were shortsighted, cruel, and vindictive—Historian David Wallace Adams calls the schools "Yet another deplorable episode" in Indian-white relations:

For tribal elders who had witnessed the catastrophic developments of the nineteenth century—the bloody warfare, the near-extinction of the bison, the scourge of disease and starvation, the shrinking of the tribal land base, the invasion of missionaries and white settlers—there seemed no end to the cruelties perpetrated by whites. And after all this, the schools. After all this, the white man had concluded that the only way to save Indians was to destroy them, that the last great Indian war should be waged against children. They were coming for the children.⁹⁹

It is impossible to know the full depth of the grief and pain caused by forcing children into what Kiowa author N. Scott Momaday has described as "effectively prison." But we can be sure that for many of them, their families, and their communities, the consequences were catastrophic; and we can be equally certain that the consequences continue to be felt in Indian country to this day. The pain rose from so many sources and in so many ways that fully comprehending its qualities and consequences is both daunting and horrifying. As Clifford Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc write in the introduction to their 2006 anthology *Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences*, "in the first years of the twenty-first century, interpreting the American Indian boarding school is both difficult and dangerous."¹⁰⁰ But we neglect it at our peril because it remains abundantly clear that the cultural genocide at the core of the boarding schools did lasting harm to people and communities and that the consequences reverberate to this day.

Accounts from students in schools across the United States and over multiple decades report both positive memories of friendships and achievement, both athletic and academic, as well as traumatic memories of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse in addition to hunger, neglect, inadequate nutrition, and inadequate health care, among others. The difficulties were not only experienced by students at school, either—back home, government officials sometimes withheld rations from parents and grandparents who attempted to avoid sending their children to school.¹⁰¹

The boarding schools were deeply contested experiences, and how students remember their experiences at the boarding schools depends upon a complex interaction of what they knew before attending, why they believed they were attending, the age at which they entered the schools, and whether they had siblings attending boarding schools, among other factors. As Colmant et al. note in their study of current and former boarding school students, alumni and students "construct meaning to their boarding school experience through an interaction of personal circumstance and coping." For their study, they conducted

46 interviews with current students and staff at a boarding school in Oklahoma and with former students and staff from boarding schools in Oklahoma, California, and Kansas who were associated with the schools between 1950 and 2004. They found that students demonstrated a variety of both constructive and destructive coping mechanisms while attending boarding school, including creating peer groups, finding emotional or physical outlets, and running away, among others. Alumni reported significant impacts on their lives in what the authors refer to as a type of “posttraumatic growth.”¹⁰² Alumni reported a range of coping mechanisms and consequences associated with their time in the schools, including an inability to maintain healthy relationships, engaging in substance abuse, lifelong friendships, increased internal fortitude, depression, and professional preparation, particularly for the military. Many were conflicted about their memories and felt a mix of both positive and negative emotions about the schools. As Colmant et al. discuss, memory construction is an ongoing process and people may shift their interpretation of their experiences throughout their lives.

Since the 1980s a large body of scholarly work, often work by Native scholars whose families attended the schools, has examined both the long-term consequences of dislocation and trauma and the resistance and negotiation that occurred in every school. Despite harsh school environments, Native students, parents, families, and communities always looked for ways to make the schools work for them. Indeed, a web page curated by the National Museum of the American Indian highlights the schools’ harshness while also noting that not all boarding school alumni memories were negative: “Many of the Indian students had some good memories of their school days and made friends for life. They also acquired knowledge and learned useful skills that helped them later in life.”¹⁰³ Some students were able to maintain their own cultural and linguistic identities, as well as make connections with the shared experiences of students from other Native nations. As K. Tsianina Lomawaima notes in her acclaimed work *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of the Chilocco Indian School* (1994), “we need to understand the reality of school life in order to understand outcomes that policy did not foresee, for instance, that tribal and pan-Indian identity were reinforced, not diluted in Indian schools.” Arguing for a multi-faceted understanding of individual and community agency,

Lomawaima writes that grappling with the messy contours of boarding school experiences reveals “student life was more richly textured than a simple opposition to non-Indian authority.” As Lomawaima has shown, many students and their families believed that the schools could provide shelter, food, clothing, job training, and isolation from disease in times of community need.¹⁰⁴

Histories of off-reservation schools and smaller reservation boarding schools alike have revealed strikingly similar and often surprisingly complex experiences, consequences, and legacies. As Julie Davis observed in a 2002 essay on Native perspectives and the boarding schools:

Perhaps the most fundamental conclusion that emerges from boarding school histories is the profound complexity of their historical legacy for Indian people’s lives. The diversity among boarding school students in terms of age, personality, family situation, and cultural background created a range of experiences, attitudes, and responses. Boarding schools embodied both victimization and agency for Native people and they served as sites of both cultural loss and cultural persistence. These institutions, intended to assimilate Native people into mainstream society and eradicate Native cultures, became integral components of American Indian identities and eventually fueled the drive for political and cultural self-determination in the late 20th century.¹⁰⁵

Brenda J. Child writes that learning about her grandmother’s 1920s boarding school life:

...made it impossible to view this history as one of simple victimization. In the end, what impressed me most about the boarding school story was the *strength of Ojibwe family and community life*, a deep and abiding commitment to children, demonstrated time and time again by parents and others at home, that outlasted and outmaneuvered a failed educational idea.¹⁰⁶

Indeed, the fact that so many were able to survive, and many thrive despite, their industrial school experience is a testimony to the strength and adaptivity, both of individual Indians and of residual support systems rooted in their tribal cultures.

Findings from historians describe the harshness and cruelty of the boarding schools, and it is abundantly clear that the abuse did not end when policies began to slowly shift away from officially sanctioned assimilation in the 1960s. Non-Native cultural values continue to assault Native communities, and even now, in 2019, there is enormous pressure to obey white norms and a general tendency to think of Native cultures as examples of an exotic but dead past. The historical continuity of this trend is impossible to ignore. As Child has noted,

While scholarly studies have espoused resistance and resilience in the historical record of students who survived an assimilationist education, boarding school is increasingly conceptualized by many American Indians as a uniquely Native usable past that links tribal people

of diverse backgrounds today to a devastating common history, one that must be evoked, many argue, to understand our present conditions and social problems. Boarding school is now the ancestor in a direct genealogical line of terrible offspring—alcohol abuse, family and sexual violence, and other social dysfunction. It is not necessarily the job of the historian to explain how Indian people today remember the past. But the intensity with which Indian people in the present day explain and respond to the role of boarding school in the broader history of their families and communities suggests that for many, boarding school is also a useful and extraordinarily powerful metaphor for colonialism. **Perhaps, like the Trail of Tears or Wounded Knee, the boarding school as an institution is symbolic of American colonialism at its most genocidal.**¹⁰⁷

ENDNOTES

99. Adams, "Education for Extinction," 336-337.

100. Clifford Trafzer, Jean Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds., "Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences" (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 2.

101. The withholding of rations occurred mostly prior to 1917; Denise K. Lajimodiere, "American Indian Boarding Schools in the United States: A Brief History and Legacy," in "Indigenous Peoples' Access to Justice, Including Truth and Reconciliation Processes" (New York: Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, 2014): 256.

102. Stephen Colmant, Lahoma Schultz, Rockey Robbins, Peter Ciali, Julie Dorton, and Yvette Rivera-Colmant, "Constructing Meaning to the Indian Boarding School Experience," *Journal of American Indian Education* 43:3 (2004): 26, 36; Donna L. Feir, "The Intergenerational Effects of Residential Schools on Children's Educational Experiences in Ontario and Canada's Western Provinces," *The International Indigenous Policy Journal* 7:3 (2016): 3.

103. <http://www.nmai.si.edu/education/codetalkers/html/chapter3.html> (accessed 2/14/2019).

104. Lomawaima, "They Called It Prairie Light," 129.

105. Julie Davis, "American Indian Boarding School Experiences: Recent Studies from Native Perspectives," *Magazine of History* 15:2 (2001), 20.

106. Brenda J. Child, "The Boarding School as Metaphor," *Journal of American Indian Education*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (Spring 2018), 39 (emphasis in original) (originally published in Brenda J. Child and Brian Klopotek, eds., "Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education," Santa Fe Press 2014, at 267-284).

107. Brenda J. Child, "The Boarding School as Metaphor," 38.

—— Recommended Histories of the Early Boarding Schools ——

The essential source on the history and complex meaning of the boarding schools themselves is David W. Adams' *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (1995). This is the most comprehensive assessment of the policies, institutions and experiences that framed the boarding schools in the all-important era between the 1870s and the 1930s, when the schools were at their height. Adams assesses the boarding

school system through four lenses: "Civilization" lays out the cultural, social, and policy foundations of the schools. "Education" examines pedagogy, classroom experience, and rituals, a category that includes gender, sports, and American holidays—a process he describes as "victorianizing" Native students. "Responses" discusses the complex mix of resistance and accommodation that characterized every boarding school. Adams sees clear patterns of resistance

that reveal a nuanced understanding by Native people of the schools' larger cultural agendas. He identifies "escape, arson, passive resistance, nicknaming, and cultural maintenance" as the primary forms of resistance among students and families.¹⁰⁸ "Causatum" addresses the schools' long-term consequences. Though Adams argues that the schools were so routinely crippled by unrealistic expectations and by the determined resistance of Native people that they generally failed to erase Native cultures, he also notes that the wreckage they left in their wake proved to be disastrous for many former students, their families, and communities.

In the same vein as Adams, by being a comprehensive critique and rigorously annotated, controversial author Ward Churchill's *Kill the Indian, Save the Man: the Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools* (2004) provides a clear and rigorous critique of the policy and implementation system. This book found popular success among native communities and families nationwide. Prof. Tinker's forward to this book provides a telling background as well, placing the policy within a long line of federal and other attempts to "deal" with an "Indian problem," as well as an international pattern common to practices of the colonizing nations.

At least two groundbreaking books were published by Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father* (1984) and *The Churches and the Indian School* (1979). The books provide solid research and critical theory previously not provided, and continue to serve as cornerstone references today.

In the 1990s, two especially important studies considered the lived experiences of students in a way that scholars had not yet attempted. K. Tsianina Lomawaima's *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (1994), and Brenda J. Child's *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (1998) reveal a wide variety of experiences, meanings, and consequences that often confounded the narratives of trauma that had by then become the field's central interpretive thread. Lomawaima's account of her father's years at the Chilocco School in Newkirk, Oklahoma in the 1920s and 1930s was hailed for its understanding of how student voices and experiences revealed more than a straightforward narrative of loss and deprivation. "One of the astonishing results of boarding-school life," she writes, was that although students were

clearly hemmed in by Chilocco's discipline, work, and school culture, there were limits. In the end, girls and boys alike showed a "stubborn refusal to jettison their Indian identity." Examining the strategies through which students confronted assimilation's demands, Lomawaima concludes that gender, labor, and cultural worldviews proved more malleable and dynamic than policymakers could have imagined. Despite its assimilationist mission, the "institution founded and controlled by the federal government," she concludes, "was inhabited and possessed by those whose identities the institution was committed to erase.... Chilocco was an Indian school."¹⁰⁹

Child's *Boarding School Seasons* reveals similar patterns. She acknowledges the debilitating agony of losing children to the boarding schools, and she is extraordinarily effective at demonstrating how the consequences played out across generations, spanning the entire twentieth century. In her book, the disruption and dislocation suffered by students strikes home with a kind of clarity that other accounts rarely manage to show. Like Lomawaima, Child also discerns complex lived experiences that reveal an inter-tribal, student-made world that assimilationists had not "had in mind when they founded the institutions." Based on letters written between Ojibwe families and students at Haskell Institute in Kansas, and the Flandreau Boarding School in South Dakota, Child's book reminds us that boarding schools represent, in part, "the history of people who experienced forced assimilation, and who to varying degrees lost control over important aspects of their own lives." She also shows us how "Native students and their families resisted and frequently triumphed over that bureaucracy, and they used government boarding schools for their own advantage." Their letters reveal a commitment to familial connection and a persistent understanding of both Ojibwe and inter-tribal identity. "The boarding school agenda did not triumph over Indian families or permanently alienate young members of the tribe from their people," she concludes. "Descendants of boarding school alumni at Red Lake and other Ojibwe communities are still taught to know and value their relatives, as their families always wished." These Ojibwe family narratives attest to the resilience and agency of boarding school students, a resilience and agency that is all the more remarkable given the often appalling and all-consuming nature of life in the schools.¹¹⁰

Nearly a decade later, in 2002, more than a dozen boarding school scholars gathered at the University of California at Riverside to convene a symposium called “Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences.” The subsequently published 2006 anthology examined the contested and complicated boarding school world by seeking to understand, among other things, the schools’ long-term consequences. “Part of the message, importantly,” wrote Lomawaima to the editors of the anthology, “has been that the schools were not monolithically destructive or successful in their assimilative goals, but the harsh reality is – for some people, they were.” Moreover, she continued, “the central message of... [boarding school] experiences is how varied—but almost always deeply affecting—they have been across individuals, schools, time, and space.” In a series of essays spanning a variety of disciplines, schools, eras, experiences, and consequences, the authors of this anthology collectively affirm that the complicated swirl of experiences and consequences at every school “have a multitude of meanings.” Especially important are the essays by David Wallace Adams, “Beyond Bleakness: The Brighter Side of Indian Boarding Schools, 1870-1940”; Margaret Connell Szasz, “Through A Wide-Angle Lens: Acquiring and Maintaining Power, Position, and Knowledge Through Boarding Schools”; and Patricia Dixon and Clifford Trafzer, “The Place of American Indian Boarding Schools in Contemporary Society.”¹¹¹

Finally, histories of individual schools began to emerge in increasing numbers by the 1980s, giving us a much fuller understanding of how and with what consequences Native people encountered, resisted, and shaped the boarding schools. Many of the first generation of these

books are primarily institutional histories, including Robert Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Oklahoma, 1988), Devon Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909* (1993); Donal F. Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923* (1995); Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920* (Oklahoma, 1996); Dorothy Parker, *Phoenix Indian School: The Second Half-Century* (Arizona, 1996) and Scott Riney, *The Rapid City Indian School, 1898-1933* (Oklahoma, 1999).

More recent work has re-examined a number of the off-reservation schools including Myriam Vučković, *Voices From Haskell: Indian Students Between Two Worlds, 1884-1928* (2008); Melissa Parkhurst, *To Win The Indian Heart: Music at Chemawa Indian School* (2014); and Clifford Trafzer, Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds., *The Indian School on Magnolia Avenue* (Oregon State, 2012). Parkhurst is especially notable as her book brings the Chemawa story into the twenty-first century through a series of important conversations about student identity through ruminations on music, including powwow singing and garage bands. Esther Burnett Horne and Sally J. McBeth’s *Essie’s Story: The Life and Legacy of a Shoshone Teacher* (Nebraska, 1999), and Adam Fortunate Eagle’s *Pipestone: My Life in an Indian Boarding School* (Oklahoma, 2010) give readers vital glimpses into life at the boarding schools during the twentieth century, attesting to the ideas that Lomawaima and Child suggest ought to be at the heart of any discussion of the boarding schools—disruption, resistance, agency, and Native survival set against the continuing, toxic legacy of assimilation that continues to plague Native nations in the twenty-first century.

ENDNOTES

108. Adams, "Education for Extinction," 234-235.
 109. Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, xii, xv, 167.110.
 110. Child, "Boarding School Seasons," 7-8, 100. Lomawaima and Child acknowledged Sally J. McBeth's very important "Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians" (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), one of the first studies to use student voices. McBeth published a summary of that work in "Indian Boarding Schools And Ethnic Identity: An Example From The Southern Plains Tribes Of Oklahoma," *Plains Anthropologist* 28:100 (1983), 119-

128, in which she argued that not only had the schools generally failed at assimilation, "the very segregationist and assimilationist beginnings of the Oklahoma boarding schools effectively, if inadvertently, seem to have fostered the formation of an Indian identity," 120.

111. Trafzer, et al, "Boarding School Blues," xi, 28.

General Histories of Indian Education

The most comprehensive non-Native account of Indian education's long history is Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (2004), which assesses the substance and policy of Indian education from the colonial era down to the twenty-first century. The chapter on boarding schools (chapter 6) is a reliable and well-sourced discussion of both reservation and off-reservation schools, and the attention to student experience is useful and informed. The authors discuss the schools' harsh discipline and cultural assaults, and they also note experiences in the schools that speak to "a core of resistance to both assimilation and education." Chapters on the shifts in the rhetoric of federal Indian policy and education between the 1950s and the early 2000s are especially important for understanding the long-term history and consequences of schooling in Indian country, including the continued use of boarding schools. Their analysis of how policy shifts do not always translate into more substantial support for Native-led schooling, or in rising achievement levels, confirms that many Indian schools remain deeply disadvantaged.

In *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928* (1999), Margaret Connell Szasz addresses how and with what consequences Native communities moved to take control of Indian education in the post-World War II decades. Her discussion of public school enrollments beginning in the 1940s and 1950s as an alternative to boarding schools is insightful and deeply informed. Szasz's work is perhaps most useful when she parses the long-term process that began to challenge the paternalism of Indian education in schools, particularly in boarding schools, by the 1960s and 1970s. Her chapters on Native organizations, and Indian control of schools, as well as her overview of policy between 1928-1977 are important. The long-term consequence of movements for educational self-determination, she concludes, was that "major policy shifts were no longer feasible without Indian approval."¹¹² What is less clear is that shifts in the rhetoric and implementation of policy did not automatically reverse decades of assimilationist thought.

K. Tsianina Lomawaima and Teresa L. McCarty have published crucially important commentaries on the history of Indian education in their 2002 essay "When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy: American Indian Education and The Democratic Ideal" and in their 2006 book *To Remain an Indian: Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education*. Lomawaima and McCarty assail the historical and contemporary colonialist and imperialist underpinnings of federal Indian schooling, arguing that a healthy democracy should reject standardizing models in favor of ones that acknowledge the inherent sovereignty of Native Nations and accord their cultural practices and values respect and protection. Their "safety zone theory" notes the limits of change in Indian education over time and asserts:

...the reality of an entrenched federal bureaucracy that, despite its public rhetoric, has stifled and sabotaged self-determination at every turn. When Indigenous initiatives have crossed the line between allowable, safe difference and radical, threatening difference, federal control has been reasserted in explicit, diffuse, and unmistakably constricting ways.¹¹³

As they and other Native scholars make clear, shifts in the rhetoric of policy have not always led to shifts in lived experience, and a deep-seated ambivalence about Native cultural sovereignty continues to cripple meaningful educational reform. In all of this, the legacy of the boarding school system looms menacingly.

ENDNOTES

112. Szasz, "Education and the American Indian," 165.

113. K. Tsianina Lomawaima, and Teresa L. McCarty, "When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy: American Indian Education And The Democratic Ideal," *American Educational Research Journal* 39:2 (2002): 283; K. Tsianina Lomawaima, and Teresa L. McCarty, "To Remain an Indian: Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education" (New York: Teachers College Press, 2006).

Nature of the Available Research Literature

The following section offers a brief description of the types of information available across several topical areas. It also describes the research team's process for selecting and including literature.

A literature review identifies current research strengths and current research gaps. In a literature review, the writers review and summarize what the available research indicates. Our research team collected over 250 citations from biomedical, social science, and humanities fields. Of these, we excluded 40 that were either not sufficiently relevant or were of insufficient quality to use in the review. The studies we have included document several boarding school eras as well as variation within single eras, between communities, and between types of schools.

We have focused the majority of this literature review on the immediate and intergenerational impacts of boarding school attendance for students who attended federal schools from the 1870s to the 1940s in the United States. Though this literature review is specific to the United States, we acknowledge that significant literature exists regarding the long-term impacts of Canada's residential school system, a system similar to that used in the United States. In this review, we note areas where Canadian literature points to trends that might also exist in the United States.

Since the late 1980s, there has been a significant rise in the scholarship conducted on boarding schools in the United States by scholars whose families were impacted by the schools. We believe that Native researchers offer unique insights into the complicated outcomes of the boarding schools. Wherever possible, we have attempted to prioritize research done by Native researchers, research teams that included Native consultants, and/or research that used Indigenous research frameworks.

Our review has limitations that are important to highlight. Because there are political and power dynamics that influence what Indigenous experiences are described and not described in academic writing, it is almost certain that some experiences with boarding schools have been

overlooked in the academic research so far. For that reason, what is included in this review may be only a partial telling of the myriad experiences students have had in government and mission schools. We hope that this review provides an important next step in identifying what has been described in the research on the boarding schools so far, as well as pointing to critical gaps and places for improvement for future research.

Within Indigenous communities, our oral histories are an important and valued source of information. For that reason, in addition to the available academic research, we have also included works of journalism, memoirs, personal essays, and references to anecdotal information shared with us through our families. As Mohatt et al. note, "Historical trauma operates through a layering of narratives, including trauma as a concept represented in stories, history as a socially-endorsed memory, and an internal logic linking history to present suffering and resilience."¹¹⁴ How these personal narratives represent and respond to past traumas are at times more illustrative than academic examinations of data.

Including these additional sources can also offset the Eurocentrism present in some of the academic research. In the health literature, for example, research methodologies from government and academic researchers "are not neutral insights and assessments... but rather venture to explain and predict behavior based on a very historically and culturally specific mode of representation. ... Behavioral theories decontextualize and individualize social problems and many sociocultural theories continue European representations of Native peoples that have origins in the politics of the colonial and early American era."¹¹⁵ If we disregard oral histories and anecdotal evidence, we risk having the concept of historical trauma become a less productive tool for understanding and addressing Indigenous outcomes of trauma.¹¹⁶

Native communities differ from one another in geographic location, access to resources, worldviews, and historical experiences, among many other variables. It is

therefore very hard to compare boarding school-related findings across communities or to generalize the findings of one study to another population. Most social science and health research on boarding school impacts has been done with Native people located on reservations (often for the ease and convenience of the researcher); however, the majority of Native people in what is currently the United States reside in urban and suburban areas. Research findings

from reservation-based studies may not always apply to urban and suburban populations.¹¹⁷ Most research has also been deficit-focused, but boarding school alumni and descendants have used both constructive and destructive coping mechanisms to respond to boarding school impacts.¹¹⁸ Taking a strengths-based approach instead can highlight strength and resiliency while acknowledging negative outcomes.¹¹⁹

ENDNOTES

114. N. V. Mohatt, A. B. Thompson, N. D. Thai, N. D., and J. K. Tebes, "Historical Trauma as Public Narrative: A Conceptual Review of How History Impacts Present-day Health," *Social Science & Medicine* 106(2014): 129.
115. Eduardo Duran and Bonnie Duran, "Native American Postcolonial Psychology" (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 110.
116. E. Prussing, "Historical Trauma: Politics of a Conceptual Framework," *Transcultural Psychiatry* 51:3 (2014): 436-58.

117. N. R. Whitesell et al., "Epidemiology and Etiology of Substance Use among American Indians and Alaska Natives: Risk, Protection, and Implications for Prevention," *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse* 38:5 (2012): 376-82.
118. Evans-Campbell, "Historical Trauma in American Indian/ Native Alaska Communities," 316-38.
119. Whitesell et al., "Epidemiology and Etiology of Substance Use," 376-82.

Health-Related Literature

The existing health-related literature focuses mostly on Eurocentric, biomedical diseases and symptomatology (e.g., post traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, substance abuse) that can be quantitatively measured and assessed. There are inherent limitations to this approach to studying the health impacts of boarding school policy. Namely, 1) concepts that can't be measured will not be included, 2) research questions relevant to Indigenous nations, communities, families, and individuals may not be asked or not asked in a way that aligns with Indigenous worldviews, 3) the scientific methods used (e.g., convenience samples, small sample sizes, etc.) may not allow for definitive answers

to the questions posed, and 4) the studies are correlational, not necessarily causative.

While acknowledging these limitations, we focus this report on studies that are well-designed and implemented, and/or were critical to the development of this particular field of research. Health-related research in a Canadian context is further developed than in the United States; as a result, we include Canadian literature when it provides insights that we believe would be comparable in a United States setting.

Language-Related Literature

This review includes several studies that address the shift away from speaking Native languages and the rise of Native American English as a linguistic way to assert an Indigenous identity. The studies in this review that address Native languages use audio recordings of speakers,

interviews, and historical materials to investigate changes in language use. Among the myriad social factors that impact language use, these researchers point to the boarding schools as one possible site of the shift to prioritizing English over Native languages.

Economics-Related Literature

Research that addresses the long-term economic impacts of boarding schools is sparse. Only one economics journal has published a United States-oriented study on the boarding schools. Some labor historians have addressed this topic in terms of the immediate mismatch between vocational training at the schools and the job availability for alumni during the first and second generations of the boarding schools, and these findings may point to longer-

term economic impacts of the schools. Importantly, some of the economics research comes from non-Native scholars who may understand the history of the boarding schools differently than a researcher whose family was involved in the schools. Additional available literature comes from Canada and may point to directions for future research in the United States.

Education-Related Literature

Much of the research published in education journals investigates the history of the schools, including school curricula, federal policy intentions, and student experiences. This overlaps with literature from History and American Indian and Indigenous Studies. Though some Canadian studies link boarding school family histories with lower

educational outcomes for current students, particularly as a result of poorer economic conditions, significant future research is needed in the United States context regarding the connections between boarding school history and current educational outcomes.

Family-Related Literature

Many sociology studies in this literature review address the changing nature of families, including the role of grandparents, parent relationships with children, the impact of state agencies and foster care on Native families, and the presence of abuse or neglect within families. Many

of these researchers conducted interviews and analyzed federal policies for their studies. The social work literature complements the topics covered by the sociology literature by providing the perspective of therapists and others that work directly with those exposed to historical trauma events.

History-Related Literature

Much of the History and American Indian and Indigenous Studies research cited in this report draw on interviews with boarding school students and alumni, student memoirs, student autobiographies, student biographies, school yearbooks, school newspapers, and family correspondence. Recognizing that official documents and heavily surveilled student correspondence may limit the completeness of the historical record, historical researchers

often read both what is said in the documents and what is implied between the lines of the written record. This method of “reading against the grain” allows historical researchers to look for the perspectives that the official narrative often obscures. The historical literature makes clear that there is no one template for what a student experienced at the schools and that experiences varied across schools and Native communities.

Consequences for Communities and Native Nations

Impacts at the level of communities and Native nations are the least studied and documented in the literature, presumably because they are hard to capture with a standard, Eurocentric research lens. Despite this, there is a general understanding that generations of historical assaults on culture, social structure, and ways of life have negative consequences for communities.¹²⁰ Children represent the future. When they are removed from communities, this jeopardizes a community's ability to envision its future. Beyond the devastating emotional impacts of systematic removal of children from communities, such a removal also means the loss of autonomy, the ability for the community to self-sustain, govern, and foster self-determination. The fracturing of communities brought on by boarding school policy also limits the ability to protect language and culture.

Tribal members recognize the economic intentions and outcomes of boarding schools. One tribal member who previewed this report noticed both the timeline of the U.S. investment in boarding schools and their overarching mission. She remarked that she felt young Native boys and girls were being trained to be slaves. She connected the formal end of slavery and the need for a new cheap labor source with Native young women being taught domestic duties and young men being taught skills relevant to farming and blacksmithing. As Native people remember the schools and make sense of their impact, her comments reflect a sense that Native children were being prepared to be exploited as base laborers.

“At the community level, responses may include the breakdown of traditional culture and values, the loss of traditional rites of passage, high rates of alcoholism, high rates of physical illness, and internalized racism. Unresolved trauma has been found to be intergenerationally cumulative, compounding the subsequent health problems of the community. Further, mourning that has not been completed and the ensuing depression are absorbed by children from birth on.”¹²¹

ENDNOTE

120. Evans-Campbell, “Historical Trauma in American Indian/ Native Alaska Communities,” 316-338.

121. Lajimodiere, “American Indian Boarding Schools in the United States: A Brief History and Legacy,” 260.

1. The Boarding Schools Set a Precedent for What Constitutes School Success in American Schools.

The boarding schools defined success as fluency in spoken and written English, an internalization of American values and patriotism, adherence to Christian teachings, a desire to participate in the capitalist labor market, and a rejection of tribal worldviews and lifestyles, among others. One education study suggests that these expectations for “success” became a model for how schools define student achievement. It links the mentality created in the boarding

schools and their ostracizing of Indigenous knowledge with contemporary K-12 and university cultural expectations. As the authors note:

Whether the actual site of this process is the boarding schools of the nineteenth century or contemporary schools and universities, whether the mechanisms of grading and the culturally specific design of such

‘universal’ examinations as the Scholastic Aptitude Test have largely replaced beatings and blatant humiliation, little else has actually changed. School children and college students—American Indians as well as non-Indians—are still too often being taught that integration into the nation is the necessary condition for acceptance, and that this integration requires the debasement and outright rejection of individual identities as members of separate—and sovereign—nations.¹²²

Another education study notes the ongoing paternalism of federal Indian education policies, even after the Meriam Report. As an example, the authors identify cases of schools punishing Native boys for having long hair, a policy that echoes boarding school requirements that students cut their hair upon arriving at school.

2. Boarding Schools may have Contributed to the Development of Native American English.

Within the boarding schools, Native students used English to push back and exert their own influence.¹²³ Some linguistics studies cite boarding school attendance as one possible factor in the rise of Native American English, a distinct dialect that reinforces Indigenous identity. Research demonstrates that Native American English is one way in which Native peoples from different Native nations manifest a unified identity.

Two additional historical factors likely affected both the rise of Native American English and the decline in

Indigenous language speaking: The Dawes Act of 1887 led to increasing numbers of white settlers moving into tribally controlled areas, particularly in the West. As these non-Native communities became increasingly connected by the growth of the railroad and communications networks, English became the language of commerce for many areas of the country. In addition, the federal government began pushing for Native students to attend public schools with white students in the early 1900s. As they did, English expanded further within tribal communities.¹²⁴

3. Some Boarding School Alumni Used Their Boarding School–Developed Skills to Advocate for and Work within Their Communities.

One of the ironies of the boarding schools is that school alumni often used their boarding school educations to advocate for Indigenous political, social, and economic goals rather than for assimilation and acculturation. While advocacy wasn’t strictly confined to boarding school alumni, historians have documented that by the 1910s and 1920s, a generation of boarding school-educated Native leaders began to assert claims against the government’s goal of forcing Indian people into permanent economic subservience and political impotence. This trend grew over the course of the twentieth century as former boarding school students married their formal European education with traditional community ethics around education and

took leadership positions in tribal governments and founded advocacy groups and inter-tribal political associations. Indeed, instead of destabilizing their identities as Indigenous people, Joanne Nagel has argued that the schools unwittingly created an environment in which students from dozens of different Nations realized their common ground, a process she refers to as “nationalizing the Indian.” Dr. Carlos Montezuma served as Carlisle’s physician and described the school as “a Gibraltar, a place to think, observe, and decide” about matters vital to Native sovereignty and identity. Students repurposed what they were being taught into tools for Indigenous survival. As Jacqueline Emery notes in her recent work on boarding school newspapers, knowing how

students simultaneously accepted but also resignified what they were being taught opens the way to “a richer sense of the conversations and debates that transpired between and among boarding school students and prominent Native American intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century.”¹²⁵

Whites assumed that these Native intellectuals would be aspirational images for other students—exemplars of education’s ability to erase Indigenous cultures and replace them with something more suitable to the needs of the day. In fact, from the beginning boarding schools produced students who were bridging the gap between their communities and the wider world, and doing so in ways that did not always reflect the white, middle-class, Christian indoctrination at the heart of the boarding schools. The two most widely shared aspects in the seventeen biographical sketches that appear in *American Indian Intellectuals of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (2002), for example, are, first, a remarkably unified commitment to serving Native communities according to Native needs, values, and sensibilities; and, second, a nearly universally shared background in the boarding schools. Dr. Charles Eastman (Dakota, 1858-1939) studied at the Santee Normal School, Dartmouth, and Boston University before embarking on a career as an author and lecturer tirelessly devoted to Native rights. James Murie (Pawnee, 1862-1921) attended day school on a Nebraska reservation as well as the Pawnee Boarding School in Oklahoma before enrolling at Hampton and beginning his career in anthropology. George Bushotter (Teton Lakota, 1864-1892) attended Hampton before embarking on a career as the first Lakota ethnographer. Emmet Starr (Cherokee, 1870-1930) graduated from the Cherokee National Male Seminary before taking a medical degree; he later spent decades tracing the history and genealogy of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. Flora Zuni (Zuni, 1897-1983) went to the boarding school at Black Rock, Arizona before becoming an agency interpreter, schoolteacher, and businesswoman.¹²⁶

Others followed similar paths. Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte (Omaha, 1865-1915) attended agency and mission schools on the Omaha Reservation before attending Hampton. She took a medical degree in 1888, the first Native woman to do so. Zitkála-Šá, also known as Gertrude Bonnin (Dakota, 1876-1938) attended White’s Indiana

Manual Labor Institute and Earlham College before joining the staff at Carlisle, where she taught music. Ultimately known best for her literary career, Bonnin was a fierce critic of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and its boarding schools, and a member of the Society of American Indians, whose goal, emblazoned on its stationery, was to “help Indians help themselves in protecting their rights and properties.” As historian Frederick E. Hoxie notes,

Educated Indians who had come of age at the beginning of the Progressive Era had spent the previous generation calling on the American majority to recognize their group’s claims. They had criticized government policy, unmasked the white majority’s hypocrisy, and demanded recognition as a distinct community that deserved more than a small corner of their tribal homeland and pious sermons from government-sponsored missionaries. In effect, these Native American intellectuals and national leaders had warned all who might hear them that they did not believe themselves to be on the verge of extinction or transformation into red versions of white people.¹²⁷

These former boarding school students used their boarding school-acquired knowledge and skills to claim agency and affirm Native sovereignty. And they were doing it in ways that signaled significant shifts in tribal politics, economics, and cultural practices. One very clear example concerned the role of the so-called “schoolboys” at the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency in Oklahoma, where, as Donald Berthrong writes, “What united the leaders of the 1928-37 councils and first business committee was education.” By the mid-1920s, all of the officers on the council had attained at least an eighth-grade education in agency or local public schools, and the “schoolboys” were beginning to dominate things like official tribal delegations to Washington. In the process, writes Berthrong, power was shifting as this new dynamic also allowed politically ambitious younger men educated in the schools to serve in increasingly important positions in their tribal governments, working “both as intermediaries for their older leaders and as official delegates not relegated to the status of mere interpreters.”¹²⁸ This occurred across Indian country as a new generation of leaders, schooled in the white man’s ways, began to use their educations to subvert the education’s assimilationist tendencies.

4. Some Boarding School Alumni Advocated for Native People through Newly-Formed Indian Organizations like SAI, NIYC, and AIM.

Former boarding school students also found common cause in inter-tribal political organizations designed to promote Native agendas. A cohort of Native activists and professionals who had attended the boarding schools, and who were devoted to improving economic, social, and political conditions in Native communities, founded the Society of American Indians (SAI) in 1911. Hazel Hertzberg reports that eleven members of the original executive committee were former boarding school students or employees, including such notable figures as the Rev. Henry Roe Cloud (Winnebago, Genoa Boarding School) and Dr. Carlos Montezuma (Yavapai-Apache, Carlisle). In all, eight members of the executive committee were Carlisle graduates and two were Hampton graduates. The SAI had many members who were professionals earning their livelihoods in the law, medicine, education, and the arts, including Marie Baldwin (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa), an accountant in the BIA's education division who later took a law degree from the Washington College of Law; Dennison Wheelock (Oneida), an accomplished musician and attorney; Charles Eastman (Dakota) and Carlos Montezuma (Yavapai-Apache), both medical doctors; Thomas Sloan (Omaha), the first Native attorney to argue before the United States Supreme Court; Angel De Cora (Winnebago), one of the most acclaimed Native artists of the early twentieth century; Dr. Arthur Parker (Seneca), an anthropologist; and Laura Cornelius Kellogg (Oneida), an educator. The SAI disbanded in 1923, but it was a sign of things to come. Many of its leading figures continued to be deeply involved with Native issues at the national level. For example, Rev. Henry Roe Cloud founded the American Indian Institute in Wichita, Kansas as a college preparatory school for Native students in 1915, and served on the 1928 Meriam Commission.¹²⁹

The SAI signaled the emergence of inter-tribal associations led by boarding school graduates who keenly understood the need to advocate for Native rights, and who used their education to advance their cause. In the decades to come, every major national group had members who had come through the Indian education system, including a large number who had survived the boarding schools. When

the National Congress of American Indians was formed in 1944, for example, its charter members included many former boarding school students like the author D'Arcy McNickle (Flathead) who had attended the Chemawa School in Oregon, and Edward L. Rogers (Minnesota Chippewa), a Carlisle graduate with a law degree who had also served in tribal government at Cass Lake. Moreover, many of their colleagues at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) were professional educators like Ruth Muskrat Bronson (Cherokee), who taught at Haskell before working in the education division at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Archie Phinney (Nez Perce), the first Native graduate of the University of Kansas and an anthropologist who became the Superintendent of the Nez Perce Agency.¹³⁰

During the 1960s, a generational schism produced two especially notable inter-tribal associations, both with important connections to boarding schools and Indian education. In 1961, young Native activists, many of whom were students frustrated by what they perceived as NCAI's inability to address Native needs, met in Gallup, New Mexico, and formed the National Indian Youth Conference (NIYC). Many of the members had come of age in the late 1950s and 1960s when significant shifts in federal policy emerged in support of tribal sovereignty and Native rights. These young activists, many of whom attended reservation schools as well as BIA boarding schools, originally convened at the University of Chicago, where the anthropologist Sol Tax introduced them to the intensive study of American Indian history, culture, and federal policy. These seminars became a key component of the NIYC's mission statement, which read in part:

...the National Indian Youth Council endeavors to carry forward the policy of making their inherent sovereign rights known to all people, opposing termination of federal responsibility at all levels, seeking full participation and consent on jurisdiction matters involving Indians, and staunchly supporting the exercise of those basic rights guaranteed American Indians by the statutes of the United States of America.¹³¹

As with the SAI and the NCAI, these activists believed that education was a crucial aspect of their work, and in it they saw a way to challenge federal policies and ideas that supported assimilation and marginalized Native people.

In 1968, urban Native activists in Minneapolis founded the American Indian Movement (AIM) in response to police brutality. Notably, many of AIM's first members were former boarding school and mission school students whose experiences in those institutions helped to spur their commitment to Native-led initiatives in education, culture revitalization, and political activism. Clyde and Vernon Bellecourt (White Earth Ojibwe) attended Benedictine

mission schools in their youth in the 1950s on the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota. Dennis Banks (Leech Lake Ojibwe) was an outspoken critic of boarding schools, having spent more than a decade in them. The experience was so searing that it was mentioned in his 2017 *New York Times* obituary: "When he was 5, he was taken from his family and sent to a series of government schools for Indians that systematically denigrated his Ojibwa (Chippewa) culture, language and identity."¹³² For Banks, as for many of his colleagues in the movement, the boarding schools that they attended in the 1940s and 1950s were both an opportunity to gain an understanding of how the white world worked and a reminder of assimilation's ugly demands.

5. Some Boarding School Alumni Became Advocates for Indian Education, Including Survival Schools, Tribal Colleges, and Tribally Controlled Schools.

Though boarding schools had attempted to erase Native languages and worldviews, boarding school alumni often advocated for schools that centered Native languages and cultures in the curriculum. These individuals and the groups they led believed that education represented an important element in their ability to navigate changing federal policies and mainstream American culture while protecting the rights of Native nations. In Henry Roe Cloud's 1915 essay "Education of the American Indian," he suggested that more and better education was the key to solving virtually every problem in Indian country. "If we are to have leaders who will supply disciplined mental power in our race development," he wrote, "they cannot be merely grammar-school men. They must be trained to grapple with these economic, political, religious, and social problems." No doubt aware of the schools' assaults on the dignity and well-being of Native children, many Red Progressives, as they were called, forcefully advocated for better educational opportunities to prepare Native people for professional careers. Arthur Parker came down firmly in favor of a creating a group of Native professionals through the schools in order to advocate for Native rights and needs. "Under conditions as we find them now," he wrote:

...the Indian must buy, trade, or sell, he must own real and personal property. He must, therefore, know how to buy advantageously, how and when to sell, how

to acquire, hold, and protect his property. He must learn how to resist the diseases and overcome the temptations and vices of that civilization brings. It is therefore manifest that he must acquaint himself with these ways and customs in order that he may exist in health, live in more or less comfort, and protect his property. Otherwise the Indian will always be at a disadvantage.¹³³

For AIM co-founder Eddie Benton-Banai (Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe), who was instrumental in establishing Heart of the Earth Survival School in Minneapolis and the Red School House in St. Paul in 1972, Native-led education initiatives became a crucial weapon in the campaign to reclaim Indigenous histories and cultures. The movement for tribally-controlled schools covered the spectrum from early childhood to higher education. Tribally controlled and Native-led schools are grounded in a place and a people—their curricula and school environments reflect local worldviews and are meant to support the future health of their Native nations. Tribally controlled schools have taken the form of language immersion schools, tribal charter schools, and BIE schools operated by tribes through contracts or grants, among others. Today, tribal schools are part of a movement for tribal school choice, schools marked by "tribally led, culture-based leadership."¹³⁴

The Tribal College movement grew out of this same belief that education, based in the appropriate principles, could be a pathway for Indian Country to thrive. These founders had a “revolutionary vision” that “higher education rooted in tribal sovereignty, identity, systems, and beliefs would ensure the survival and prosperity of their people.” They were looking back and ahead at the same time, recognizing the assimilationist history of Indian education as well as the potential for a system that would center Native communities’ visions for themselves. Over the last fifty years,

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU)s have demonstrated a commitment to language and culture revitalization, their land, and their people. The founders of the TCU movement created institutions that remain “committed to remaining unchanged as Indigenous, to resisting assimilation, and to serve as the pillars of modern tribal Indigenous societies” with a “vision of transformation and wellness rooted in traditional educational practices, spirituality, and relationship.”¹³⁵

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135. Cheryl Crazy Bull and Justin Guillory, “Revolution in Higher Education: Identity & Cultural Beliefs Inspire Tribal Colleges & Universities,” *Daedalus* 147:2 (2018): 95, 103.

Consequences for Families

We believe that families belong together and are stronger together. The US boarding school system disrupted traditional familial organizations, which had and continue to create several challenges for today's Native families.

When we use the term *family*, we refer to the nuclear concept of a family (e.g., children, mothers and/or fathers) as well as extended family groups, which may include blood and non-blood members. We consider clans to be an extended family group. Some use the term “psychological family” as a way to describe connections to others that may not be biologically connected, but who have a strong interpersonal connection nonetheless.¹³⁶ Both nuclear and extended families are critical to a child's development and survival: they help define one's responsibilities, obligations, and relationship to others and also provide children their first exposure to cultural norms.

Family separations during the early boarding school era occurred both through the schools, when students were

taken away and might not return for years at a time, and through the allotment system. Native parents resented that the boarding schools split children from parents, at least temporarily disrupting bonds between the two.¹³⁷ The Dawes Act of 1887 split up families on separate plots across the reservation. Extended families, who often had important roles in raising children, were often physically separated. For example, one of the authors on this review had a great-grandfather and a great-uncle whose land plots were on opposite ends of the reservation. Such a separation would have been difficult for the family to navigate.

These impacts are intensely personal. Our families and friends in our tribal communities have discussed with us the intergenerational impacts of loss of parenting knowledge and abuse on their own health and well-being. They note the rise of anxiety and of child abuse, directly attributing both to their and their parents' experiences in the schools.

1. Separation of Family Members Kept Children from Acquiring Traditionally Grounded Parenting Techniques and Familial Roles.

One repercussion of the US boarding school policy was fractured families, which impacted transmission of traditionally-grounded and appropriate parenting techniques from parents to children.¹³⁸ Parental behaviors are sociocultural characteristics learned through observation.¹³⁹ One way parents learn parenting behaviors is through re-enacting the parenting techniques they received as children from their caregivers. Separated from traditional parenting and caregiving role models, students were “parented” by non-Native staff and teachers of their boarding schools, which provided a poor surrogate.¹⁴⁰ For some Dakota students in the schools, children were still disciplined by their older siblings (a Dakota cultural norm), but school staff did not fulfill the traditional role of parents and grandparents to compensate with love and protection.¹⁴¹

Parental behaviors learned at boarding schools may

be the only model available to some alumni. Many teacher and student relationships were characterized by emotional and physical abuse, and these relationships were the ones students had available to build their own relationship skills toolbox.¹⁴² This matters because the ways in which a person perceives their relationship with their parent figures impacts how they grow and develop as a child, eventually impacting how they will parent as an adult.¹⁴³ Exposure to poor parenting as a child has reverberating impacts that can be felt through generations.¹⁴⁴ With continued social fracturing in a community or family, there will continue to be ineffective parenting practices passed through generations.¹⁴⁵

Recent research conducted through oral histories also points to boarding schools as a source of intergenerational pain for families. Researchers working on the 2016 “In Our

Own Words” study contacted tribal college staff to identify possible interviewees and subsequently interviewed a dozen people from the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation, the Standing Rock Oyate Nation, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, and the Spirit Lake Nation. Interviewees, university researchers, and artists collaborated to create a set of art pieces that amplify the interviewees’ words from the oral history transcripts. Though the interviewers asked no boarding school-related questions, the schools came up frequently as a topic of conversation. The art piece seen

here, entitled *My Parents Had No Parenting*, is one selection from the research study. In it, Denise Lajimodiere (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa) reflects on how her father’s boarding school experiences impacted her childhood and parenting. The text reads, in part, “We were disciplined the way they were in boarding schools. We were never told ‘I love you.’ We were never hugged. ... The sad legacy is I could also not tell my kids ‘I love you,’ or hug them. They never had parenting. Instead they were beaten.”¹⁴⁶

Figure 6: *My Parents Had No Parenting*



Caption: The text comes from an oral history interview with Denise Lajimodiere (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa), pictured here in the portrait on the left, in which she reflected on her father’s boarding school experiences. This art piece is part of the “In Our Own Words” research project from Lucy Ganje, Daniel Heyman, and Kim Fink.

The emotional impact of boarding school-induced separation continues to weigh on families. With the assistance of a focus group of elders, Les Whitbeck and colleagues created a *Historical Loss Scale* to capture how often contemporary American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) think about historical losses. In their flagship study, loss of family ties because of boarding school attendance was thought about by more than half of the two U.S. Upper Midwest and Ontario, Canada tribal communities included in the study.¹⁴⁷ This tool has been used in other tribal communities: among AI/ANs in Baltimore, Maryland, nearly half thought about loss of family ties due to boarding schools.¹⁴⁸

Historical loss is also associated with family cohesion, though studies have found the relationship to work in two different directions. For members of two U.S. Upper Midwest and Ontario, Canada tribal communities, greater Historical Loss Scale scores (i.e., more thinking about and acknowledgment of historical loss) was associated with greater family cohesion,¹⁴⁹ while among urban AI/AN in Baltimore, those with higher historical loss-associated symptoms had lower family cohesion.¹⁵⁰ Separating children from their families and social networks impacted survivors’ ability to effectively parent and to learn traditional roles and relationships in their Native Nations, the impacts of which are ever-present among survivors and their families.

Canadian Contribution: The educational and child-rearing practices in place at residential schools were incongruous with traditional Native practices. Students struggled with this mismatch, a lack of role-models, and a breakdown in their identity and community connection. Unresolved grief led in some circumstances to self-medication through substance misuse and/or other self-destructive behaviors, ultimately leading to family dysfunction and more substance misuse.¹⁵¹

2. Some Native Grandparents Today are More Likely to Choose to Raise their Grandchildren in an Effort to Stop the Cycle of Loss Initiated by the Boarding Schools.

A look at four non-boarding-school-related qualitative studies among several U.S. tribal communities revealed that many participants brought up the effects of boarding schools unprompted. Specifically, participants were concerned about the role of the schools in negating the relevance of their traditional health practices and that the schools resulted in loss of many traditions.¹⁵² Despite the challenge of cultural loss due to boarding school attendance, families are making efforts to halt this intergenerational loss. Many AI/AN grandparents are the primary caregivers for their grandchildren. This is sometimes due to parents being absent because of work or school obligations, incarceration, or death. Grandparent care may be formal, through adoption or foster care, or may be the result of a more informal arrangement. Some grandparents have cited a desire to keep their grandchildren out of the foster care system as a reason for caring for them. Grandparents in several studies articulated past harm with the boarding schools that either they personally experienced or was shared with them by

relatives. Researchers speculate that grandparents may take pride in breaking the cycle of government involvement in their children's lives, noting that they may feel "an increased sense of purpose that empowers them with the knowledge that they have played a role in ending the cycle of family and tribal dissolution and past trauma."¹⁵³ Other grandparents cite their decision to provide primary care to their grandchildren as motivated by a desire to provide tradition and cultural connection to their descendants.¹⁵⁴ Though grandparents often enjoy taking care of their grandchildren, there are significant stressors that can accompany taking on this role.¹⁵⁵

It is important to note that grandparents' responses vary. While some grandparents take on care-giving roles to stop cultural loss, some try to fully immerse their children in Eurocentric ways in order to reduce experiences of marginalization.¹⁵⁶

3. The Descendants of Students who Attended Boarding Schools May be Less likely to Speak an Indigenous Language.

"From the way back, all they [Chickasaw ancestors] spoke was Chickasaw. Generation from generation, it was all in Chickasaw. Up until us kids started to go to white school. We started speaking English. That's how our language got away from us."¹⁵⁷

"Language reminds people of the torture inflicted in the

past. Language is a touchy subject. It's not something that many fluent Native people initially like to listen to—it produces post-traumatic stress. [Language immersion programs] remind them, with our very presence, of the horrors inflicted upon them in the mission schools and the government schools and the public schools. They are so afraid someone will snitch on us. They are afraid for us that we are using the language."¹⁵⁸

Many boarding school alumni and their children have shared stories about the degradation of Indigenous languages in government schools. Students were required to read, write, and speak in English, and early versions of the schools required students to adopt English names instead of the names their families gave them.¹⁵⁹ Alumni recall the physical abuse that students suffered for speaking their Native language while at school. Due to the myriad factors that affect language use, however, it is difficult to draw a direct line of causation between the boarding schools and language shift.

Though more data collection in linguistics may be needed to demonstrate the link between boarding school policies and language shift, boarding school alumni and their families are clear about the impact they see the schools having had on Native languages. At the National Advisory Council on Indian Education and Indian Nations At Risk Task Force 1990 Joint Issues Session, attendees talked about parents' unwillingness or inability to teach an Indigenous language to their children as a result of the boarding schools.¹⁶⁰ While at school, some Chickasaw students "internalized the notion that English was a language of greater worth than Chickashshanompa', which resulted in decreased use of the language in Chickasaw homes." In her study on Chickasaw language speakers, Chickasaw researcher Kari A. B. Chew notes that the assault on the language was twofold: first, students were discouraged from speaking the language at school, and second, students began to believe that their Native languages were actually inferior to English. She additionally notes that some parents "believed [English] would enable their children's success in a changing world and shield them from abuse associated with speaking an Indigenous language." Such abuse may be associated with the physical punishments students received at boarding schools for speaking their languages. Chew

cites other scholars who find that the boarding schools also interrupted the natural transmission of language and culture from one generation to the next, prompting some Chickasaw people who have lost cultural and linguistic connections to wrestle with their identities.¹⁶¹

Studies in Linguistics and in American Indian and Indigenous Studies indicate that some parents stopped teaching their children their original languages both because of the shame of the boarding schools and because of increased English language standardization across America. In Alaska, for example, Yup'ik scholar Walkie Charles' links the boarding schools with sociological elements that impacted language shift in Yup'ik communities. He explains how Yup'ik boarding school students were kept away at school for nine months out of the year. They spoke English at those institutions, and when they came home for the summers, they often went directly into summer work that prevented students from spending significant time at home to re-grow their linguistic ties. Charles also discusses how, in the years after the boarding schools when Alaska Natives had access to schools in their communities, students struggled to re-integrate themselves into lives at home with less independence and with a greater reliance on Yup'ik, a language with which many now struggled.¹⁶²

Many Native people link speaking the language with keeping the culture alive. Russell Caskey argues that language is essential to cultural identity and survival. He notes that "one of the most destructive and long-lasting effects of colonization is the purposeful devaluation and destruction of Indian languages and, by extension, of traditional Indian beliefs. He connects this process to the boarding schools, noting public shaming and internalized guilt as two of the ways through which the boarding schools discouraged students from speaking their languages.¹⁶³

Canadian Contribution: Canadian research closely links the boarding schools with the health of Indigenous languages. One study finds that children of mothers who attended residential school are less likely to speak or understand an Indigenous language. Though children of residential school alumni are more likely to believe that it is important to speak their Indigenous language, there is so far no statistical data to indicate that they are more likely to actually speak it. Research from Canada also reveals important information about the relationship between Indigenous languages and health. One Canadian study found that First Nations bands with higher rates of conversational language speakers had lower rates of youth suicide. This study confirms what many Native people have already said—that cultural and linguistic vitality are essential to the future prosperity of Native communities.¹⁶⁶

4. Boarding School Experiences, Particularly Abuse and Neglect, are Associated with a Constellation of Psychological Distress and Related Symptoms. Psychological Distress Makes One more Susceptible to Alcohol or Illicit Substance Use/Abuse, Suicidal Thoughts, and Suicide Attempts. These Experiences can Transfer to Later Generations.

The continued forces of colonization, control, and governmental surveillance provide a backdrop for the impacts of boarding school attendance-related abuse, neglect, and cultural loss. The impact of boarding schools on AI/ANs cannot be understood without placing this particular historical trauma in the context of a legacy of assault on AI/AN people, as well as individuals' previous life experiences.¹⁶⁷ For many Indigenous populations, there are myriad layers and sources of stress—racism, poverty, inadequate education, and family instability. Because sources of stress are so intertwined, it can be hard to distinguish the sources of stress that come directly from boarding school attendance and those that come from

elsewhere. However, some work has been done in this area.¹⁶⁸ For example, research shows that the trauma of being separated from one's family and forced to disassociate from one's culture, as well as experiences of abuse and neglect while in school, may result in increased psychological distress.¹⁶⁹ Psychological distress is an umbrella term that includes conditions like post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. This, in turn, can increase alcohol and illicit substance use and abuse among survivors, as well as suicidal ideation and attempts. Psychological distress, substance abuse, and suicidality can transfer to younger generations.

Canadian Contribution: There is a clear impact between residential school attendance, cycles of abuse and neglect, and suicidal ideation. Researchers have identified stress proliferation, elevated risk taking, poor socioeconomic status, lack of traditional parenting roles and role models, intergenerational stress, parental behaviors, abuse (sexual, physical, emotional) and neglect, household dysfunction, poor health, altered social norms, and co-occurring combinations of these as mediators between familial boarding school attendance and well-being.¹⁷⁰

Before discussing intergenerational transmission pathways, we first need to understand the relationships between boarding school attendance, abuse, cultural loss, psychological distress, abuse and neglect, substance use/abuse and suicidality. These relationships are identified as bold, italicized sentences.

Boarding school attendance was associated with several horrific experiences. Boarding school students and alumni describe experiences with neglect, cultural loss, and sexual, physical abuses when they talk about the schools. Students were particularly susceptible to the ill effects of these experiences because they were in critical periods for learning cultural norms and developing physically, emotionally, and cognitively. Even without explicit neglect and abuse, students were exposed to stress due to separation from their families, communities, and known ways of life.¹⁷¹ A study

conducted during the boarding school period with Navajo students found that those who came from more Navajo traditional backgrounds (e.g., an environment quite different than a boarding school environment) experienced greater levels of stress during their first year and were sick more frequently.¹⁷² Beyond the immediate physical impacts like getting sick more frequently, increased stress and exposure to traumatic events can also create psychological distress, like depression, PTSD, and anxiety.¹⁷³ It is important to note that historical trauma responses among AI/AN may manifest differently from the Eurocentric expectations for symptoms of depression, PTSD, and anxiety.¹⁷⁴ Because the majority of the literature uses these Eurocentric concepts as analogues for historical trauma response, we discuss them in this section. This disconnect between definitions is a major gap in the literature, however.

Substance abuse goes hand-in-hand with several mental-health related historical trauma responses like depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and anxiety. AI/ANs who experienced five or more traumatic events (sexual abuse, injury or assault, witnessed trauma, experienced crime without injury, unexpected death) - any of which could have occurred, and indeed have been recorded as occurring, in a boarding school setting—also had substance abuse and PTSD.¹⁷⁵ PTSD, anxiety, depression, and alcohol use disorder are more common in AI/AN populations than white populations.¹⁷⁶ Further, PTSD has a stronger association with alcohol use disorder in AI/ANs than in non-Hispanic whites, meaning AI/ANs with PTSD have greater odds of alcohol use disorder than non-Hispanic whites without PTSD and non-Hispanic whites with PTSD, as well as AI/ANs without PTSD.¹⁷⁷

Substance abuse provides a way to cope with historical trauma events, previous personal traumatic events, and current day stressors. In this way, substance use and abuse can provide a form of self-medication. Interviewees of one study saw their substance abuse as a response to a combination of contemporary and historical challenges. However, many of the the same participants said they strove for sobriety as a way to contribute to ending intergenerational family patterns and said that the strength and fortitude shown by elders, despite the historical traumas that they had endured, was a force that motivated their sobriety.¹⁷⁸

Mainstream, Eurocentric views that substance abuse are the result of individual-level character shortcomings fail to understand how larger social forces may cause substance abuse. AI/AN populations recognize that larger social forces and injustices lead to substance abuse.¹⁷⁹ AI/AN youth stated in focus groups that “intergenerational stressors” such as negotiating generational differences in culture and identity and feelings of displacement, persecution, and cultural disconnection contributed to their alcohol and other substance abuse.¹⁸⁰ A qualitative study with Apsaalooke (Crow) people examining perceptions of historical and current loss (including boarding schools) identified a belief that poor mental health causes poor physical health through self medication by substance use and abuse.¹⁸¹

In this case, the literature reaffirms what Native people know: the relationship between boarding school-associated cultural loss and abuse leads to negative outcomes in their communities and families.

Suicidality is associated with psychological distress, abuse, and alcohol abuse. In both urban and reservation-raised youth, alcohol abuse or dependence and sexual abuse were associated with a history of suicide attempt. Youth raised on the reservation had a higher rate of suicidal ideation than those raised in urban settings (32.6% v. 21%), but attempted suicide was relatively similar with 17.6% for reservation youth compared to 14.3% for urban youth.¹⁸²

Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma

There are several pathways connecting abuse, cultural loss, intergenerational transfer of psychological distress, substance abuse, and suicidality. The word “pathways” in this sense refers to the ways in which personal, familial, or community boarding school related traumas (or other traumas) have an impact on families. In essence, pathways are the line connecting the trauma event with the trauma response. Some pathways are based on behaviors (like abuse), while some focus on biology (genetic heritability and epigenetics). The majority of the research in this area is dominated by PTSD-specific studies and its causes, which again, include both behavior and biology. Identifying pathways between historical trauma events and historical trauma response is challenging because there are many factors which contribute to a person’s well-being—such as where they live, what they do for employment, their socioeconomic status, the presence or absence of social support—all of which may themselves be impacted by history, economics, politics, and other past traumas. Further, there is little research looking at the ways in which the impacts of chronic and compounded historical trauma exposure (e.g., forced relocation, land loss, language loss, massacres, boarding schools, oppression) experienced by AI/AN communities and families may differ from those of single historical traumatic events (e.g., a massacre). However, several specific pathways have been identified to explain how psychological distress due to historical trauma events may be transferred to later generations: 1) observed and learned behaviors, 2) unconscious transmission, 3) communication patterns, 4) biological

and neurobiological risk factors, 5) epigenetics. These mechanisms may act independently or in combination with one another. After discussing the five pathways, we will discuss intergenerational transmission of abuse, followed by intergenerational transmission of psychological distress, then intergenerational transmission of substance abuse, and lastly, intergenerational transmission of suicide.

The **five key pathways** for transmission of intergenerational trauma:

1. **Psychological distress can transfer through observed and learned behaviors, including learned parental strategies, coping strategies, or intergenerational abuse.** For example, in qualitative interviews, some AI/ANs said that substance abuse provided a way to cope with historical trauma and that they had witnessed previous generations do the same.¹⁸³
2. **Psychological distress can also transfer unconsciously from a survivor to the next generation through repressed trauma experiences or unresolved or disenfranchised grief.** This may occur through the concept of disenfranchised grief, explained by Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, who writes that colonial systems don't allow space for traditional grieving ceremonies and practices, at times resulting in unresolved grief which can be experienced through generations in families and communities. She elaborates, "grief from traumatic deaths following the Wounded Knee Massacre and boarding school placement ... may have been inhibited both [mentally] with shame as well as societally disenfranchised through the prohibition of ceremonial grieving practices ... grief covered by shame negatively impacts relationships with self and others and one's realization of the sacredness within oneself and one's community. Associated feelings are helplessness, powerlessness, feelings of inferiority, and disorders in the identification of the self."¹⁸⁴ When unresolved grief acts on the community or family level, such feelings may come to impact multiple generations.
3. **A "conspiracy of silence" among survivors, or a reluctance to discuss their childhood experiences or trauma, may transmit trauma to the next generation while also preventing amelioration of symptoms in**

both survivors and their children.¹⁸⁵ For example, children of trauma survivors may be less likely to get help when they experience trauma because of the perception that their traumatic experience isn't as traumatic as their parent's experiences.¹⁸⁶

4. **While research in the ways that stress and trauma experiences enter the body are relatively new, evidence suggests that they have neurobiological impacts.** The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis manages the body's hormonal stress responses. When stressed, cortisol (a stress hormone) can increase in circulation throughout the body. High levels of circulating cortisol is associated with susceptibility to depression, hypertension and other health outcomes, while low levels of cortisol is associated with PTSD and chronic fatigue.¹⁸⁷ Two HPA-related genes have been found to interact with childhood trauma to increase the risk for suicidal behavior.¹⁸⁸
5. **Extremely stressful events can alter a person's biology in a way that can be passed down through generations.** The interaction of a person's genes with their environment, such as occurs during a stressful event or experience, may result in changes in the way a person's genes (sequences of DNA) are read by the body, without changes in a person's underlying DNA. This is called epigenetics (see the glossary for a more complete definition). These epigenetic changes may result in some genes being turned on or off. As genes determine a person's physical and mental characteristics, turning them on or off may result in changes in a person or in their children. One of the ways in which epigenetic changes have been shown to manifest is in the way one responds to stress or trauma experienced in their lives.¹⁸⁹ An example specific to Native populations is discussed below in the section titled "Intergenerational transfer of psychological distress."

The 5 key pathways for intergenerational transmission of trauma:

1. Observed and learned behaviors
2. Unconscious transmission

3. Communication patterns
4. Neurobiological factors

5. Epigenetics

Intergenerational transfer of abuse: Accounts of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse are present throughout historical literature about U.S. boarding school attendance. Abuse and neglect tend to run in intergenerational cycles, meaning that some who were abused may also then become abusers.¹⁹⁰ A qualitative study with Apsaalooke people (Crow) noted that people perceived boarding schools to be associated with cycles of physical and sexual abuse.¹⁹¹ Cycles of abuse can also occur on multiple directions and levels within a family. For example, students that were abused may abuse their children, and in turn, those children may grow up to abuse their children.¹⁹² As adults, children that were abused may also abuse the elders who previously abused them.¹⁹³

Intergenerational transfer of psychological distress: PTSD is one set of symptoms associated with trauma exposure. Ehlers et al. (2012) proposed that PTSD symptoms in AI/AN populations were heritable, meaning that having a parent with PTSD symptoms may increase the next generation's lifetime experience of PTSD symptoms.¹⁹⁴ While this study of two-spirit boarding school attendees is not specific about the time period of school attendance, generalized anxiety disorder and incidence of PTSD symptoms (but not a formal PTSD diagnosis) were higher among those who had a caretaker who attended boarding school. The heritability of PTSD has been found in other studies among Holocaust survivors and their children.¹⁹⁵

While simplified, Figure 8 shows the relationships between trauma survivors and descendant (next generation) childhood trauma, adult trauma, PTSD, and substance use. Exposure to childhood trauma, such as physical abuse, can create adult PTSD (Figure 7, A). The next generation may or may not have more psychological distress than those not born to trauma survivors,¹⁹⁶ but they may be predisposed to higher stress vulnerability; in other words, if exposed to high contemporary stress, they may be more likely to exhibit PTSD or related symptoms (Figure 7, B).¹⁹⁷ Experiences of next generation childhood trauma (such as neglect or abuse)

is a function of survivor trauma exposure and, independently, survivor PTSD (Figure 7, C). If the next generation has more than one parent with PTSD, they are more likely to have more exposure to childhood trauma (Figure 7, D).¹⁹⁸ PTSD goes hand-in-hand with substance abuse (Figure 7, E), and those that abuse substances have greater chance of having children that experience trauma (Figure 7, F).

Epigenetic changes as a result of childhood sexual abuse are linked to neurobiological alterations and psychological distress. The X-linked MAOA-LPR gene encodes for an enzyme that plays a key role in the metabolism of stress neurotransmitters, including norepinephrine and serotonin. In one study of AI/AN women who had experienced childhood sexual abuse, the presence of the MAOA-LPR allele was found to increase a woman's vulnerability to psychological distress following childhood sexual assault, particularly common were antisocial personality disorder and alcoholism.¹⁹⁹ Through childhood trauma induced epigenetic changes to MAOA-LPR gene expression, antisocial behaviors may become more pronounced.²⁰⁰ These genetic alterations can be passed to future generations and manifest as antisocial behaviors in descendants.

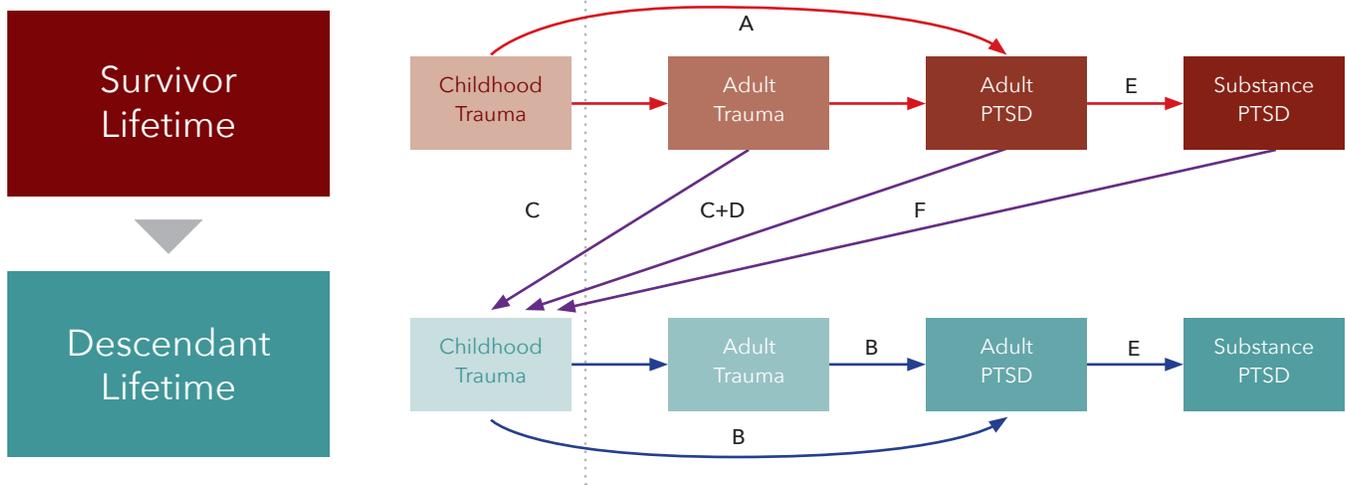
Intergenerational transfer of substance use/abuse: The same study of two-spirit boarding school alumni mentioned previously also found that those two-spirit individuals who also had a caretaker that was an alum, reported higher rates of alcohol abuse or dependence and cocaine and narcotic use than those that didn't have a caretaker with boarding school history, though the differences were not statistically significant.²⁰⁵ Substance abuse also negatively impacts one's ability to be an emotionally available and involved parent. For AI/AN youth specifically, ongoing poor family affiliation (lacking a strong sense of family) is linked to substance misuse.²⁰⁶ There are also neurobiological and epigenetic mechanisms for intergenerational transfer of substance abuse. For example, in response to heavy alcohol consumption, individuals with certain genetic variations may be more susceptible to permanent neurologic changes.

In this way, the children of trauma survivors that self-medicate to treat historical loss and unresolved grief may also have a genetic predisposition to develop permanent neurological changes in response to their heavy alcohol use.²⁰⁷

Intergenerational transfer of suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts: In a comparison of urban and reservation-based AI/AN youth, attempted suicide among the urban

youth was associated with a history of physical abuse and a family member attempting or contemplating suicide. In the reservation group, depression, conduct-disorder, a family history of abuse, and perceived discrimination due to Native status were significantly associated with a history of suicide attempt.²⁰⁸ Two-spirit individuals who had a caretaker who attended boarding school reported higher rates of suicidal thoughts and attempts.²⁰⁹

Figure 7: Intergenerational transmission of trauma and substance abuse from survivor to next generation



Caption: This figure shows relationships between trauma survivor and descendant childhood trauma, adult trauma, PTSD, and substance use. Survivor-specific relationships are in red and descendant relationships are in blue. Purple arrows demonstrate intergenerational transmission. Exposure to childhood trauma, such as physical abuse, can lead to adult PTSD (pathway A). The next generation may or may not have more psychological distress than other those not born to survivors, but they may be predisposed to higher stress vulnerability; in other words, if exposed to high contemporary stress, they may be more likely to exhibit PTSD or related symptoms (pathway B). Experiences of descendant childhood trauma (such as neglect or abuse) is a function of survivor trauma exposure and, independently, survivor PTSD (pathway C). If the next generation has more than one parent with PTSD, they are more likely to have more exposure to childhood trauma (pathway D). PTSD goes hand-in-hand with substance abuse (pathway E) and those that abuse substances have greater chance of having children that experience trauma (pathway F).

Canadian Contribution: There is also an increased incidence of lifetime experience of depressive symptomatology among attendees of residential schools and their descendants. First Nations adults who had at least one parent who attended residential school had elevated depressive symptoms, despite the fact that the sample was comprised of individuals with greater than average socioeconomic outcome and level of education. Descendants of boarding school alumni appeared to have more exposure to stressors and to also be more affected by stressors. Sensitivity to stressors may come from HPA axis activation or dysregulation or neurochemical function in limbic and frontal cortical regions.²⁰¹ Children of residential school alumni responded more poorly to stressors than controls, leading investigators to conclude that adverse childhood experiences may limit the ability to function successfully in adulthood, thereby increasing the likelihood of experiencing stressful situations.²⁰² Lastly, current experiences of discrimination and other life stressors can be exacerbated by exposure to historical trauma, like residential school attendance. For example, descendants of residential school alumni were more likely than their peers to report perceived discrimination.²⁰³ One explanation is that children of alumni report higher levels of Aboriginal centrality (Aboriginality as a core piece of identity) and are more attuned to viewing past experiences as discriminatory.²⁰⁴

Canadian Contribution: The residential schools have had an impact on suicides. Youth who had at least one parent in the residential schools are more likely to have had suicidal thoughts.²¹⁰ In another study, having a parent or grandparent who attended residential schools was associated with greater risk for lifetime suicidal ideation and suicide attempts, and greater levels of psychological distress.²¹¹ The relationship between abuse, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts and boarding school attendance may be compounded with multiple generations of boarding school attendance. One study found that individuals with a family history that includes multiple generations of boarding school attendance have 1.16 times the odds of abuse, 1.37 times the odds of suicidal thoughts, and 1.71 times the odds of attempting suicide. The pattern remained even for individuals who themselves had not attended boarding school, but who had multiple generations of family members attend; these individuals reported 2.05 times the odds of abuse, 5.38 times the odds of suicidal thoughts, and 2.94 times the odds of suicide attempt.²¹² People living in communities with fewer Indigenous language speakers are more likely to wrestle with their identity and attempt suicide.²¹³

Lastly, the public narrative around historical trauma can have implications for how survivors and their families draw meaning from their experiences. The public narrative can play a role in how children place themselves with respect to family and community adversity and resilience.²¹⁴ Relatedly, identity and self-esteem - two factors that protect against psychological distress, particularly in Indigenous communities²¹⁵—are also determined by collective response to historical trauma events. Historical trauma events can endanger identity and self-esteem. For reservation youth, high levels of family satisfaction appeared to be protective against suicide attempt, as did high levels of social support in urban youth.²¹⁷ Without intervention, abuse, psychological distress, substance abuse, and suicidality can transfer from generation to generation.

While we have presented several of these concepts as distinct responses to historical trauma, we know that abuse, psychological distress, substance abuse, and suicidality are interconnected. Trailblazers in historical trauma research in AI/AN communities summarize the relationships as follows: The survivors of trauma events experience PTSD. For some, their inability to appropriately grieve and address the trauma leads to intergenerational unresolved grief symptoms like attempted suicide, depression, etc. Deaths resulting from unresolved grief within a population may lead to psychological numbing and destructive coping mechanisms and further compound historical trauma. Brave Heart and DeBruyn hypothesize that the high rates of depression, suicide, homicide, domestic violence, and child abuse found in many AI/AN communities is the result of internalized oppression and the fallout of unresolved grief.²¹⁸

5. Research Regarding other Family Impacts in a U.S. Setting Have not been Well-Described. Canadian-Based Research can Provide Additional Insights.

Canadian Contribution: A 2017 review article found that both personal and familial attendance was associated with an increased incidence of chronic conditions like headaches, heart problems, and arthritis. Further, parental boarding school attendance is associated with negative health behaviors in future generations such as smoking, smoking during pregnancy, and progress towards injection drug use. Students whose parents attended residential school in Canada are less likely to live on-reserve. This means that these Indigenous students are more likely to attend provincial public schools where they may feel discriminated against or marginalized, something which would certainly impact their desire to go to school and their successes (or lack thereof) in school environments. Children of residential school alumni are more likely to

repeat a grade, more likely to get suspended or expelled, and less likely to win an award for grades or other activities.²²⁰ Other studies find that parents' residential school history may correlate with students' poorer educational outcomes, including increased reporting of learning difficulties and decreased reporting of doing "well" or "very well" in school.²²¹ In seeking to understand the mechanisms through which this relationship might occur, another study found three characteristics common among former residential school students that may lead to lower educational outcomes for children of boarding school alumni. These possible pathways through which residential schools may continue to impact students' educational outcomes include living in households with a lower income, living in larger households, and experiencing food insecurities.²²²

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Consequences for Individuals

Individual students responded to the boarding schools differently. Some students were able to develop constructive coping strategies, some developed destructive coping strategies, and some have remembered their boarding school experiences through a lens of resilience. Many used a combination of these strategies at different times in their lives and relating to different topics. These coping strategies had an impact on students’ well-being. The unfortunate reality is that Native children were often pitted against each other, forced to compromise their traditional teachings and many people died at or soon after returning from schools.

A family member of one of the writers of this report recalled her mother and grandmother’s stories, or rather lack of stories, while growing up. The reader’s

grandmother attended and later ran away from the boarding school she was attending, having married one of the school’s groundsmen in what was deemed a marriage to escape school. The marriage lasted less than a year. The grandmother carried her boarding school-learned shame of being Indigenous throughout her life. Her children were not allowed to learn or talk about their family history, for fear of “being found out.” This translated into no acknowledgement of their culture or language throughout their lives, aside from an occasional visit to a nearby island where the grandmother’s parents lived in, more or less, traditional housing and followed traditional lifeways. The shame of being Indigenous, initiated by the boarding school staff, led to a generational gap in the author’s family’s ability to learn about their identity.

1. Maintaining Strong Community Connections, Including Connections to Indigenous Worldviews and Cultural Practices, can Support Resiliency.

At the individual level, having strong cultural connections is closely linked to resiliency in childhood. Students who are more closely engaged in their Nation’s specific art forms and spiritual practices show greater self-reported school successes.²²³ Resilience and constructive coping strategies include deep emotional attachments to other people, holding traditional values, helping others, focusing on future generations, serving as a positive role model, or getting involved in community-healing efforts. At the family level, the impacts are manifested in more subtle ways, and intergenerational trauma can become an

organizing concept for families whereby descendants take on roles of testimony about the past, try to act in “good” ways, or avoid bringing up their own issues because they can’t ever be as “hard” as the experiences of their ancestors.²²⁴ Family stories that re-frame boarding school experiences through strengths-based frameworks emphasize how family members overcame difficulties and remained strong in the face of adversity. This may help youth connect to their ancestors, develop a sense of self, and find their place within their family and tribe.²²⁵

2. Some Students Internalized Boarding School Messages that Told Them to Feel Ashamed of their Identities and Communities.

Even as early as the 1910s, some boarding school students demonstrated a decreased sense of self-confidence that they related to lessons learned in the schools about being Native. Laura Kellogg, an Oneida woman educated in mission schools, noted the difference between “one who dares to be himself” and “the government school Indian.” She notes, “How different in tone is the expression we too often hear from the government school Indian as an excuse for anything he has done poorly: ‘Well, I am only an Indian!’ I have no patience with this last expression. It isn’t characteristic of our ancient pride....”

This feeling of shame continued for later generations of boarding school students, as well. One education study has found that many of the colonial harms of previous versions of boarding schools still continue (in lessened degrees) in current BIA boarding schools. This study demonstrates how some students might identify with the people and institutions of the schools as they internalize assimilationist messages and lifestyles, finding that students may mold

themselves to fit the school environment, resist it, or both at different times. The authors argue that students who mold themselves to the school may arrive at the school with pre-existing “feelings of worthless and helplessness.” When they see powerful, influential adults in the school, some of whom they may perceive as being nurturing, they may unconsciously internalize and accept the values of those adults and the school itself. The authors note that “the oppression they may have internalized may result in on-going unresolved emotional issues and have ongoing negative ramifications in relationships with others.”²²⁶

The authors also note the dangerous possibility that some students who view their boarding school experiences positively might be reframing their memories. For example, some may be remembering physical abuse as something the teachers did “for my own good”. This line of study indicates that students may have internalized their oppression and accepted it as something beneficial to their development.²²⁷

3. Additional Research is Needed to Understand the Educational Impacts of Boarding Schools on Native Students Today.

As discussed earlier, educational outcomes for boarding school students were split between students for whom the boarding schools resulted in limited academic skills and students who became part of the growing Native professional class that attended post-secondary institutions.

So far, little research in the United States has investigated the intergenerational educational impacts for individual people. What is clear is that Native students in the US today lag behind other students in many

important metrics, including graduation rates. As education scholars Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy and K. Tsianina Lomawaima note, “It appears that achievement gains, as measured by [National Assessment of Education Progress test scores], are not hopeful; but the challenges confronting Indigenous academic achievement are not fifteen years old. Limited achievement gains over the short term point not to incapacity, but to long-term, structural damages to capacity, which have been centuries in the making.”²²⁸

Canadian Contribution: The perspective that more education always leads to greater income and thus better overall quality of life does not always reflect actual economic outcomes, particularly in an Indigenous context. In some cases, educational attainment among Indigenous people may not result in professional advancement or higher income.²²⁹ Also, income may be supplemented in non-monetary ways through social or community support, and thus not fully accounted for in income studies. Research is clear, however, that lower educational outcomes for Indigenous students is not a result of lower parental investment or lower expectations. Residential school alumni have equally high expectations for their students' educational achievement as other parents.²³⁰

4. Boarding Schools did not Prepare Native Students to Acquire Meaningful Employment after Leaving School. Additional Research is Needed to Understand the Economic Impacts of Boarding Schools on Native People Today.

By the 1920s, the BIA had largely abandoned education as the engine for assimilation, opting instead for schools that prepared students for menial labor. Rather than preparing Native youth for high-wage work, they “received their initiation into the world of wage labor at BIA-run boarding schools on and off the reservation.” Students’ vocational training consisted of school maintenance to cut school costs, including cleaning school facilities, maintaining school grounds, and running the school laundry and kitchen, among others, as well as participating in the outing program. Such policies were based on racist beliefs about Native inferiority. As Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells put it in 1918, the “racial heritage” of Native people meant that Indian education must be “essentially practical rather than idealistic.” By time of Sells’s racist observations, the consequences of lowered expectations for students in the schools were clearly evident. A 1912 report on the occupations of former Carlisle and Hampton students, for example, showed that the overwhelming majority reported working as farmers, housewives, domestics, laborers, or tradesmen: 72% for Carlisle; 74% for Hampton. In 1915, Arthur Parker critiqued the federal government for denying Native people “the right to compete on the same terms as other men” and “a true and adequate education.” And by 1920, reservations were already lacking in resources and showing clear signs of rising poverty.²³¹

The jobs that students prepared for in the schools (like blacksmithing) often did not match up with available jobs back home, dramatically increasing rates of unemployment on reservations and prompting some to leave the reservation

to find work, a reality still found in many reservation communities. Students’ lack of training in useful job skills coincided with other economic and policy changes that reduced the likelihood of being able to provide for one’s family and also remain in the community. Navajo women, for example, were negatively impacted by the BIA livestock reduction program. When they returned from school with decreased work opportunities at home, they sometimes had to seek work on commercial farms or as “domestics in border towns or in middle-class households in various western Metropolitan areas, where they were recruited directly from Indian boarding schools as part of their vocational curriculum.” Despite local economic difficulties, many boarding school alumni were dedicated to their home communities. Those who moved away for work frequently returned home, and many boarding school alumni became public servants within their tribal communities, including working as teachers and in tribal government.²³²

In the early 1900s, boarding school curriculum began to teach American Indian art. However, the schools’ new focus on art was less about allowing students to maintain connections to their home communities than about fulfilling the consumer market’s desire for a specific type of American Indian art, one that often depicted artistic traditions from Southwestern tribes. Students were often expected to create art reminiscent of Southwestern tribes regardless of their individual tribal backgrounds. The art training they received continued to relegate Native students to a specific social class of trained laborers.²³³

Only one academic study has investigated the community-level intergenerational economic impacts of the boarding schools in the United States.²³⁴ We have concerns about the methodology of this study, and we have included it in this literature review because it is the only one of its kind. The study linked community exposure to off-reservation boarding schools from 1911-1932 with contemporary educational and economic outcomes (high school graduation rate, income per capita, poverty rate, English language spoken in the home, and family size) among Native people living on US reservations. After controlling for historical factors, contemporary factors, and reservation-specific factors, reservations that had a higher proportion of students attending an off-reservation boarding school had, on average, increased graduation rates, increased per capita income, decreased poverty rate, increased rates of people who exclusively speak English at home, and decreased family size. However, this study may be subject to bias. The author included only states with immediately available data, excluded reservations with

multiple tribes, and ignored schools that closed and later reopened. Additionally, the author takes an apolitical stance on assimilation policy, which begs the question (yet doesn't answer it) of whether the potential economic benefits of assimilation outweigh the human rights violations that occurred within the schools. Lastly, while the study documents small economic gains for those communities with a higher history of off-reservation boarding school attendance, the comparison to communities with lower rates of off-reservation boarding school attendance overestimates the importance of such economic gains. If the comparison were to the economic situation of the US dominant culture, the investigator would immediately notice that, regardless of the proportion of youth sent to off-reservation boarding schools, many Native communities have significantly worse economic and educational outcomes than the general US population.

Canadian Contribution: Adults who attended boarding schools may experience lower socioeconomic outcomes than adults who did not. The residential schools may have forced a false binary — participate in the economy or maintain a connection to cultural ideas and practices. Mothers who attended residential school have lower socioeconomic outcomes than those who did not, including living in a home with six or more people (including at least one more child than the Canadian national average) and having lower household incomes. These factors can also impact child educational achievement.²³⁵ If a person attended residential school, they are less likely to be employed and more likely to be divorced. With regard to educational outcomes, one researcher finds that “if residential schools damaged Aboriginal communities economically, it was likely through cultural depreciation and possibly perverse intergenerational transmission...”²³⁶ Residential school attendance appeared to negatively impact health by limiting future access to socioeconomic resources.

²³⁷

5. The Direct Emotional and Physical Abuse that Many Native Students Experienced in the Boarding Schools can Lead to Psychological Distress and Alcohol or Illicit Substance Use and Abuse. Substance Abuse is Therefore Both a Result of Historical Trauma and a Means through which it is Perpetuated.

It is undeniable that some attendees of federal Indian boarding schools experienced horrendous cases of physical and emotional abuse. The absence of exact statistics on the prevalence of such occurrences is indicative of historical

power systems and ensuing psychological trauma which encouraged victims to suffer in silence throughout their lives. The scope of abuse may not be quantifiable today, but its impact on the individuals who experienced it, as well as

those who did so indirectly, is telling. In addition to abuses at school, studies have shown that those who attended boarding school were more likely to experience negative events later in life than those who did not attend boarding school.^{238, 239}

As discussed at length previously, some of the traumas associated with the boarding school era are the losses of language, culture, social cohesion, and Native identity. Such losses, and the historical loss associated symptoms (HLAS) which may result, are strongly associated with an increased risk of depressive symptoms, using multiple drugs, and PTSD symptoms.²⁴⁰ Those who attended boarding schools are more likely to report that they have suffered from alcohol or other substance abuse or dependence over the course of their lifetime.²⁴¹ Factors contributing to the use of alcohol and other substances may be compounded in Native individuals who attended boarding school, as both experience of historical trauma and historical loss are considered to be environmental risk factors for the development of Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD).²⁴² Historical loss is also associated with lifetime illicit drug use.²⁴³ A qualitative study among the Apsaalooke (Crow) people identified the belief that boarding schools also brought cycles of abuse which led to poor mental and physical health through the use and abuse of alcohol and other substances.²⁴⁴ This is supported by a study of adults from four Midwestern reservations and six Canadian reserves

which found that boarding school attendance was associated with higher levels of current depressive symptoms.²⁴⁵

The impact of boarding school attendance on mental health differed for individuals based on many factors, including tribe of origin, school attended, age at attendance, and traditional values. AI/AN women have reported that being removed from their homes as children to attend boarding school had a negative impact on their lives. Among urban AI/AN men, boarding school attendance has been found to be predictive of AUD.²⁴⁶ A study of historical trauma among the Lakota, for example, found gender differences in the ways that the boarding school era was remembered, with women feeling more anger and responsibility to undo the pain of the past while men experienced greater levels of survivor guilt. The author of this study theorized that traditional European gender roles may affect the relationship between original historical trauma events and the symptoms and feelings which are associated with them throughout life.²⁴⁷

It is important to note, however, that although many individuals and studies have drawn associations between boarding school attendance and alcohol and substance abuse and poor mental health, other studies have found no association between boarding school attendance and either lifetime diagnosis of a mental disorder or alcohol dependence.²⁴⁹

Canadian Contribution: For many, residential school attendance included direct emotional and physical abuse. These abuses can lead to a constellation of psychologic distress, including alcohol and illicit substance use and abuse, depression, anxiety, suicidal behaviors, low self esteem, and anger. For example, 48% of IRS survivors in one Canadian study had experienced abuse in their lifetime, compared to 36.5% of non-attendees. However, a lower percent of survivors reported having suicidal thoughts (26% vs. 30%) and suicide attempts (14% vs. 16%) than non-attendees, which might speak to the resiliency of survivors.²⁵⁰ Additionally, a 2017 Canadian scoping review found 43 studies that associated personal or family IRS attendance with mental distress, depression, addictive behaviors, substance misuse, stress, and suicidal behaviors.²⁵¹

6. Subsequent Poor Conditions and Chronic Stress is Associated with Increased Risk of Disease and Poor Self-Rated Physical Health.

Poor physical health has long been associated with boarding schools. In 1928, the Merriam Report, officially titled *The Problem of Indian Administration*,²⁵² stated:

1. The Indian children in boarding schools are generally below normal in health as compared to the standards for white children.
2. The appropriations for food for these children are not sufficient to secure for them a suitable, balanced diet for well children, much less for children whose health is below normal.
3. The boarding schools are generally crowded beyond their capacity so that the individual child does not have sufficient light and air.
4. The boarding school dormitories are generally of the congregate type so that those who are below par in health cannot be isolated from the others. Contagious diseases under these circumstances have almost free scope.
5. The normal day at the boarding schools, with its marked industrial features, is a heavy day even for well, strong children. It is too much for a child below normal. Added to insufficiency of diet and overcrowding, it may be an explanation of the low general health among children in Indian boarding schools.

The report went on to conclude that “the majority of children in boarding schools are in a questionable state of health and require infinitely more attention than they are securing.”²⁵³ This poor health may have contributed to subsequent poor physical condition throughout life, most clearly seen in the high rate of self-reported poor health by attendees of boarding schools.²⁵⁴ A study of the boarding school experience among one Northern Plains tribe found that having attended a boarding school was associated with decreased self-rated physical health.

Among those who attended, factors commonly associated with the loss of culture, such as having entered after the age of eight, experiencing infrequent family visits, being forced to attend church, being prohibited from practicing one’s culture or traditions, and being punished for using Indigenous languages, were also associated with a greater degree of perceived poor health by the individual. Overall, the authors found that those who were punished for using AI language and who were eight or older when they started school had a mean physical health status score lower than those who weren’t punished or who were seven years or younger when they started.²⁵⁵

Canadian Contribution: The literature surrounding the long-term physical health impacts of the boarding school era for individuals is extensive; the majority, however, has been conducted within a Canadian context. There is little doubt in our minds that the boarding school experience resulted in many of the same outcomes between attendees in the United States and Canada. Boarding school experiences are associated with increased risk of chronic and infectious disease, including eventual diabetes and obesity because of poor nutrition, HIV/AIDS and STIs, tuberculosis, and trichomoniasis, as well as poor self-rated health. A study of a First Nations community in Saskatchewan Province reported that all former residential school attendees reported being negatively impacted by residential school attendance, either physically or psychologically.²⁵⁶ A 2017 Canadian scoping review concluded that residential school attendance was associated with decreased sexual health including increased incidence of HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, and other STIs.²⁵⁷ Residential school attendance may impact health by first impacting socioeconomic outcomes. Finally, Canadian research indicates that residential school attendance was associated with a lower likelihood of reporting excellent health. A study using the Cross Sectional Aboriginal People’s Survey in Canada found that any residential school attendance resulted in worse self-rated health, even after taking socioeconomic status and community adversity measures into account.²⁵⁸

7. Many Individuals Regularly Think about Historical Trauma, Including Losses Associated with Boarding School Attendance.

One of the ways in which historical trauma and its associated narrative is transmitted is through the collective memory of the people. One study of urban American Indians found that 12.5% of the study population thought about the loss of family ties due to boarding schools yearly or during special occasions, while 16.7% thought about it monthly, 2.5% weekly, 5.8% daily, and 8.3% multiple times per day.²⁵⁹ Another study of people living on reservation reported that 26.6% of study participants thought about the loss of family ties resulting from boarding schools years or during special times, 11.4% monthly, 5.1% weekly, 8.2% daily, and 4.4% several times a day.²⁶⁰ Yet another similar study found that around 10% of people thought about the history of broken treaties, losses due to boarding schools, loss of land, and government location daily.²⁶¹ Experiences of discrimination may trigger a sense of loss or may serve as a reminder of loss, particularly for some AI/AN women.²⁶² There is evidence that age impacts the frequency with which boarding school losses are considered, with Whitbeck et al. reporting that a

greater proportion of youths than adults think about the loss of family ties associated with boarding school attendance on at least a monthly basis.²⁶³ As noted earlier in this review, other researchers have also indicated differences in how students remember their school experiences based on a variety of interacting factors.²⁶⁴

While the findings of these studies indicate that a large number of AI/AN individuals think about the losses associated with boarding schools on a regular basis, it is important to note that in the first two studies 54.2% and 44.3% of people respectively never thought about boarding school losses.²⁶⁵ The fact that many individuals never think about historical loss, despite the fact that there is clear evidence for its impact on populations, could point to two possible reasons—either the resilience of Native people to overcome the losses or an acceptance of acculturation, the boarding schools' purported policy.²⁶⁶

8. Individuals may not Need Direct Personal Exposure to Boarding Schools to be Impacted by the Policy.

The majority of the impacts discussed thus far involve people who attended boarding school themselves, their immediate family, or their direct descendants.

The effects of the boarding school policy, however, reverberate across Indian Country, impacting not only attendees and their descendants, but individuals, families, and tribal communities who had no direct contact with the schools.

One study, which included members of tribal nations who did not participate officially in the boarding school

system in the United States, found that 18% of participants still thought about the losses associated with boarding schools on a weekly basis.²⁶⁷ This suggests that the shared experience of colonization and its legacy is ubiquitous and may be shared across communities through shared narratives of historical trauma. Shared community memories, stories, and perceptions of trauma may result in a historical trauma response even within individuals whose families or communities were not directly impacted by boarding school policies. In fact, the ways in which individuals tell boarding school stories and construct narratives about boarding school experiences may impact the way in which Native people collectively remember the policies themselves.²⁶⁸

9. Boarding School Experiences may have a Negative Impact on the Ability of Alumni to Maintain Healthy Interpersonal Relationships.

The strength of many communities lies in their network of social support, and a strong kin network has been found to play an important role in resilience and healing in AI/AN families.^{269,270} Boarding school policies, then, may contribute to the erosion of protective interpersonal relationships. We use the term “interpersonal” relationships to encompass any person-to-person relationship, whether or not the connection is biological or temporal.²⁷¹

Former and current boarding school students were exposed to assimilationist messages and lifestyles, which likely impacted their self esteem, identity, and the ways that they interact with others. For example, after interviewing 46 students and staff at Oklahoma, California, and Kansas schools, investigators suggest that school-based assimilation processes contributed to ongoing unresolved emotional issues and thus hindered alumni’s ability to form good relationships with others.²⁷² Tellingly, in his address to tribal leaders at the 175th anniversary of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Assistant Secretary Kevin Gover noted the possible link between boarding schools and several historical trauma responses, including domestic violence. He stated:

This agency forbade the speaking of Indian languages, prohibited the conduct of traditional religious activities, outlawed traditional government, and made Indian people ashamed of who they were. Worst of all,

the Bureau of Indian Affairs committed these acts against the children entrusted to its boarding schools, brutalizing them emotionally, psychologically, physically, and spiritually. Even in this era of self-determination, when the Bureau of Indian Affairs is at long last serving as an advocate for Indian people in an atmosphere of mutual respect, the legacy of these misdeeds haunts us. The trauma of shame, fear, and anger has passed from one generation to the next, and manifests itself in the rampant alcoholism, drug abuse, and domestic violence that plague Indian country. Many of our people live lives of unrelenting tragedy as Indian families suffer the ruin of lives by alcoholism, suicides made of shame and despair, and violent death at the hands of one another. So many of the maladies suffered today in Indian country result from the failures of this agency. Poverty, ignorance, and disease have been the product of this agency’s work.²⁷³

Gover’s comments point to boarding schools being responsible for egregious acts of abuse and neglect as well as attempts to make entire generations of Native people feel ashamed of their identity. Without a firm grounding in identity, individuals may struggle to negotiate their place in the world as well as their relationships with others. The impacts of this reverberate through nations, communities, families, and friendships.

10. Some Individuals see their Relatives’ and Communities’ Survival of the Boarding School Era as a Source of Personal Strength.

Much of the discussion surrounding the contemporary impacts of the boarding school era focuses on the ways in which boarding school attendance resulted in negative outcomes for communities, nations, and individuals. What is less frequently discussed, however, is the strength and resiliency with which Native individuals and communities have responded, at times using adversity to reinvest in traditional cultural practices and values.²⁷⁴

During the boarding school era, many families took advantage of the schools to cover needs in their home communities. Historians have documented how many Native families used boarding schools at times of family crisis to combat instability, hunger, and poverty by taking advantage of the clothing and meals boarding schools provided, as well as the distance they ensured from sick relatives during outbreaks of disease. As Brenda J. Child observed in her study of boarding school correspondence:

That American Indians attended government boarding schools in increasing numbers during the 1930s—institutions that were a recurring source of resentment on the reservations—is not necessarily a sign that after several decades Indian people had finally warmed to the idea of residential schools for their children. More likely, it is a sign that boarding schools had become familiar institutions and that, when economic or family problems beset Indian people, boarding schools could be useful to them.²⁷⁵

Some Native people see the stories of friends and relatives who successfully navigated the boarding schools as examples of personal fortitude and sources of inspiration.²⁷⁶ For example, a qualitative study among the Apsaalooke (Crow) people found that boarding school attendees

attributed their survival to strength of mind and soul. Descendants of boarding school alumni spoke about family strength, using boarding school as an example of something which had been overcome.²⁷⁷ Another example of the use of stories to nurture resilience comes from a family in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho that used stories to reinforce youth's connection to ancestors and their position within their family and tribe.²⁷⁸ Stories can help people internalize narratives, be they about abuse and neglect or perseverance. They can position the boarding school experience and other historical traumas in a strengths-based perspective, emphasizing how family members overcame difficulties and remained strong in the face of adversity. In one study, urban American Indians in the Twin Cities cited the perseverance of elders despite the traumas that they endured as a motivation for sobriety.²⁷⁹

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224. Teresa Evans-Campbell, "Historical Trauma in American Indian/Native Alaska Communities: A Multilevel Framework for Exploring Impacts on Individuals, Families, and Communities," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 23, no. 3 (2008): 316-38.

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235. Feir, "The Intergenerational Effects of Residential Schools on Children's Educational Experiences in Ontario and Canada's Western Provinces," 1-44.

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237. Violet Kaspar, "The Lifetime Effect of Residential School Attendance on Indigenous Health Status," *American Journal of Public Health* 104:11 (2013): 2184-90.

238. Mary P. Koss et al., "Adverse Childhood Exposures and Alcohol Dependence among Seven Native American Tribes," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 25, no. 3 (2003): 238-44.

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245. Walls and Whitbeck, "Distress among Indigenous North Americans," 124-36.
246. Nicole P. Yuan et al., "Alcohol Misuse and Associations with Childhood Maltreatment and Out-of-Home Placement along Urban Two-Spirit American Indian and Alaska Native People.," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 11:10 (2014): 10461-79.
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259. Wiechelt et al., "Historical Trauma Among Urban American Indians," 319-336.
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261. Ehlers et al., "Measuring Historical Trauma in an American Indian Community Sample," 180-187.
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277. Bird et al., "The Impact of Historical and Current Loss on Chronic Illness," 198-210.
278. Denham, "Rethinking Historical Trauma," 391-414.
279. Myhra, "It Runs in the Family," 17-40.

Promising Strategies for Healing

“Our history is our strength, and our strength is our history.”²⁸⁰

“We believe that power can neither be given nor received. Power is, we believe, embedded in us all. The work is to assist young people in finding ways to access the power they have and then deploy it in ways that allow them to be strong, self-sufficient, proud, and giving. Programs that are guided by the notion that they can assist young people in unlocking their inherent strengths will successfully address many of the challenges that Indigenous [people] encounter.”²⁸¹

Many Indigenous people understand the impact of historical trauma within Indigenous communities. Within Indigenous communities, discussions of historical trauma often also bring up the resistance and resiliency that have helped Native people to survive persistent colonial programs and policies. This review has provided extensive information on the myriad impacts of boarding school policy, many of which are still felt today by Native nations, communities, families, and individuals. The review now turns to discuss how Native nations are creating their own solutions and ways of healing, drawing on the guidance of elders, cultural teachings, and traditional lifeways.

There is extensive literature that addresses possible directions for healing the multifaceted harms that boarding schools, and the greater constellation of settler colonial structures, have produced. Fully addressing the scope of interventions across Indian Country would require additional literature reviews.²⁸² The majority of interventions focus broadly on addressing the damage resulting from historical trauma (of all kinds) and its related outcomes like disconnection from culture or loss of family cohesion. For example, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa created their “Bawaating Community Healing Process” to address poverty and other social concerns created by historical injustices and discrimination. Their healing process built common knowledge and vocabulary among participants, raised awareness around historical loss and genocide, shared clan teachings, reviewed accomplishments of AI/AN, revisited the creation story, and discussed ways to

find joy and balance in life.²⁸³ Few interventions explicitly respond to the harms explicitly caused by boarding schools. Our review does not provide project evaluations; rather, it identifies promising directions in community-based initiatives and academic scholarship. In this section, we draw on both empirical studies and “grey literature,” which Brayboy et al. define as the “non-empirical, non-academic, non-peer-reviewed literature generally targeted to inform a lay audience about programs and initiatives to better the current state of affairs for Native [people].” For this review, these sources include tribal websites, tribal social media accounts, Native non-profit websites, and conversations that the authors of this review had with program directors and program funders.

As with the impacts of the boarding schools themselves, each community is unique and experiences intervention activities differently based on their traditional, cultural, social, geographic, and historical background and worldview. An intervention which is highly successful for one Native nation may not meet the needs of another.

Many Native people and Native communities recognize the historical harms brought about by federal policies and are committed to finding solutions. We categorize our discussion of existing interventions according to their topical category (language and education, economic opportunities, research and scholarship, family relationships, and health and well-being) and highlight some directions in community-driven interventions to settler colonial harms in the United States, including those that explicitly mention boarding schools. We also present case-studies of specific interventions which have been conducted by Native communities in the lower 48 states and Alaska. We recognize that there are interventions of merit which are not included in this review, and we encourage readers to discuss and share interventions that they believe to be effective in addressing historical trauma. The sharing of knowledge across Indian Country is a form of intervention in itself.

ENDNOTES

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281. Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy et al., "RISE: A Study of Indigenous Boys and Men" (Philadelphia: Research Integration Strategies Evaluation for Boys and Men of Color, 2017): 30.

282. The USC Race and Equity Center's report "A Study of Indigenous Boys and Men," cited in this section, provides a strong example of what such a review might offer.

283. Beverly A. McBride, "Aspects of Community Healing: Experiences of the Sault Sainte Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians," *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research* (Online); *Aurora* 11:1 (2003): 67-83.

The Canadian Government's Response to Healing

The Canadian Government's response to the subjugation of Native children in boarding schools has differed from that of the US Government. In 1998, the Canadian Government issued a statement of reconciliation and created the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF), an organization to oversee the payment of \$515 million to Indigenous communities. Between 1998 and 2010 the AHF supported local healing initiatives that worked towards ameliorating the impacts of Indian Residential Schools. It has been estimated that, by 2013, these programs had reached 55% of those impacted both directly and through intergenerational transmission.²⁸⁴ By 2006, the AHF funded 103 community-initiated programs both on and off reserve with First Nation, Inuit, and Métis participants. Unfortunately, federal funding for the AHF was cut in 2010 and the foundation closed in 2014.

Prior to closing, the AHF identified three pillars of healing: reclaiming history, cultural interventions, and

therapeutic healing, as well as six characteristics common to effective healing practices:

1. values and guiding principles that reflect an Aboriginal worldview,
2. a healing environment that is personally and culturally safe,
3. a capacity to heal that is represented by skilled healers and healing teams,
4. a historical component, including education on residential schools and their impacts,
5. cultural interventions and activities, and
6. a diverse range and combination of traditional and contemporary therapeutic interventions. In keeping with the concept of historical trauma as a force which acts on the broader community as opposed to the individual, the AHF reported that successful interventions often address communities and families.

ENDNOTES

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Healing through Language and Education

Literature on successful interventions with Native youth, particularly with regard to men and boys, indicate that successful programs connect Native youth to their identities; build on tribally-specific ethical frameworks and spiritual practices; strengthen relations between youth,

community members, and tribal lands; discuss the important role youth can play in the future of their communities; and ensure that students have access to resources from the institutions in their lives.²⁸⁵

ENDNOTES

285. Brayboy et al., "RISE: A Study of Indigenous Boys and Men," 25-29.

Centering Native Languages in Schools

Native languages and the cultural practices and worldviews embedded in them are often at the core of healing through education. A Native language immersion school movement has been underway for approximately 25 years, with many schools pointing to the Maori Te Kōhanga Reo and Kānaka Maoli Pūnana Leo programs as models.²⁸⁶ These programs work to undo the harms done to Native languages through centuries of assimilationist programs, including the boarding schools, English-dominant public schools, and, in some states, official English-only policies. Immersion schools can work to bring back the language. As Darrell Kipp, founder of the Piegan Institute, has noted:

If mission, government, or public institutions took the language from your mother or your father, you can replace that at some point during your own journey through life. ... This is what we should be doing as responsible Indian people. That is reconciliation with our parents and grandparents and our ways. ... As our parents loved us and protected us by shielding us from the humiliation brought on our languages, from all the horror that they had suffered because they spoke the language, it is now your turn to reconcile what was done in the name of love. You can now demonstrate your love for them by protecting and shielding the language in a different way. You can begin to embrace it, to use it, to foster it, to renew it, to teach it to your daughters, to teach it to your sons.²⁸⁷

Kipp has developed a guide for tribal communities beginning their own immersion schools based on his experiences opening three Piegan immersion schools. In describing the origin of his community's language program, he points to the Pūnana Leo program as inspiration, noting the importance of collaborating with other immersion schools. Kipp writes, "We are all part of a native language immersion school movement ... We need to sit and visit. We need to visit each other and to encourage ourselves."²⁸⁸

Kipp's guidance document for other immersion schools includes information about the important considerations, such as conducting community language assessments, acquiring land and space, building an endowment, and the accreditation process, among others. He stresses both the urgency of developing immersion programs and that such schools must be grounded in community values, history, and knowledge. It is not enough to translate standards and curriculum into the language; rather, the whole school must be built from the ground up on a foundation of tribally-specific information that already exists in the language. The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's Sitting Bull College Lakhóliyapi Wahóhpi recently presented on their curriculum development process at the 5th annual North Dakota Indian Education Summit. After an extensive series of community conversations, the school has developed a curriculum that blends Lakota expectations for what children should know and be able to do with programs like Montessori and International Baccalaureate, always ensuring that their curricular and pedagogical practices align with Lakota values.²⁸⁹

School programs that build from tribally-specific expectations for what students should be able to know and do can empower students as scientists, researchers, writers, artists, historians, philosophers, and mathematicians, among many other skill sets. Students often spend significant time outdoors engaging in hands-on learning. Some programs, such as the A'o Hawaii community of teachers, are working to develop interdisciplinary ways of teaching that engage students their community knowledge and history. The program notes that:

When learning is made culturally, socially, and environmentally relevant, students that were previously unengaged, become captivated and fascinated. The knowledge becomes real, tangible, and eternal; geometry, for example, becomes vivid when applied to the optimal shape of a sail in order to catch the wind,

while algebra comes alive when framed within a star compass and figuring out how to sail from Hawai'i to Tahiti. In reference to social studies, values are deeply embedded in a floating canoe of finite resources where how we treat each other carries a legacy that sails alongside us always.²⁹⁰

ENDNOTES

286. To learn more about the Maori Te Kōhanga Reo, see <https://www.kohanga.ac.nz>. To learn about the Kānaka Maoli Pūnana Leo schools, see http://www.ahapunaleo.org/index.php?/programs/youth_programs_-_punana_leo/.

287. Kipp, "Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned," 8.

288. Kipp, "Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned," 39-40.

In addition to culturally-based curriculum, Kānaka Maoli language schools have recognized the need to develop assessments in Kānaka Maoli and have received limited approval from USED to conduct state assessments in the language.²⁹¹

289. For more on Lakhóli'iyapi Wahóhpi, see <https://sittingbull.edu/immersion-nest/>.

290. <http://www.hokulea.com/ao-hawaii-teaching-and-learning/>.

291. The waiver approved the use of assessments in the language, though it did not approve the use of Hawaiian Language standards as the basis for such assessments. <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/stateplan17/waivers/hitesting2017.pdf>.

Supporting Native Languages through Public Programming and Technology

*"Don't ask permission. Go ahead and get started, don't wait even five minutes. Don't wait for a grant. Don't wait, even if you can't speak the language. Even if you have only ten words. Get started. Teach those ten words to someone who knows another ten words. In the beginning, I knew thirty words, then fifty, then sixty. One day I woke up and realized I was dreaming in Blackfeet."*²⁹²

Other strategies for language revitalization have included public programming through language centers, such as those offered through the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitíohkwa Language and Cultural Center. The Center has developed a puppet show that airs on the local broadcast channel. The show's goals are to "promote and foster oral proficiency abilities in Kanien'kéha for viewers, to create awareness of the following health priorities in Kahnawà:ke; mental wellness, substance abuse/addictions, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity and cancer, [and] to write the show in a way that the characters are firmly rooted in Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) culture and values and that is inclusive for all children in Kahnawà:ke."²⁹³

Additional initiatives include the development of apps, television programs, and video games in both the United States and Canada. For example, apps for Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) exist from both the Little Shell Band of Chippewa in what is currently Montana and the Naagdaawendaandaa Anishinaabemowin Committee of the Wiiwemkoong Unceded Territory in what is currently the province of Ontario. Such apps often focus heavily on vocabulary acquisition through flashcards. Some also include historical or cultural information. Private companies often collaborate with tribal members to create these resources. One Ojibwe-founded company works with tribal communities, language revitalization centers, and universities to develop language apps for mobile phones. Another private company partnered with the Cook Inlet Tribal Council as they developed Never Alone, a video game that includes many Iñupiat teachings and stories.* (LaPensée, Elizabeth. "Indigenous Digital Expression 2: Representational; Week 6: Storytelling," 2018. <http://www.elizabethlapensee.com/indigenousdigital2/>). Many of these companies seek to support community language revitalization efforts. In developing resources, they collaborate directly with fluent speakers, tribal colleges, and/or tribal councils.

The creation of reading materials in the language is another important effort. Some tribal communities have worked to translate children's books into their languages, such as the Eastern Band of Cherokee's efforts to translate

Charlotte's Web into CWY. Indigenous-owned presses, such as Wiigwaas Press and Waub Ajijaak Press, are also producing literature in their respective tribal languages. Many of these books are for children and young adults.

ENDNOTES

292. Kipp, "Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned," 8.

293. To learn more about the work of the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center, see <http://korkahnawake.org/programming/>.

The Development of the Tribally Controlled School Movement

Even in the wake of the policy shifts beginning in the 1960s that curtailed boarding schools, acknowledged the need for deep reforms, and encouraged tribal control, all too often the ideas and practices that lay at the core of the boarding school system remained implicitly in place. One of the ways to challenge both the lingering presence of assimilationist thinking and the BIA's deeply entrenched bureaucracy was to force federal authorities to acknowledge that under federal law, tribal sovereignty included control over Indian education. As Francis Paul Prucha noted, "the drive for Indian self-determination was nowhere more pronounced than in education," and this echoed a rising determination in Native communities to challenge the BIA's deeply entrenched paternalism. An early example of this push for autonomy was the all-important 1966 Rough Rock Demonstration School on the Navajo Reservation that anticipated the subsequent transfer of substantive control of Indian schools to Native nations.²⁹⁴

John Tippeconnic wrote in 1999:

Numerous studies and reports have concluded that tribal/local control of formal education in schools is absolutely necessary if education for American Indians is to improve significantly. Local control of public education is a right and responsibility of the states, implied by the US Constitution's lack of mention of any federal role. Local or tribal control is also a basic principle inherent in the sovereignty status of American Indian tribes. The current federal policy of tribal self-determination, supported by legislation, provides the

administrative mechanism for tribes to assume greater control over their own affairs, including education.

....

Outside of Indian country few people realize that Indian tribes do not fall under the jurisdiction of states but are recognized as sovereign bodies by the federal government. As such, tribal governments have the legal right to make decisions about how to educate tribal members.²⁹⁵

For Tippeconnic, this reveals two distinct but related concerns. First, the administration and implementation of Native education must respond directly to the unique issues that shape schooling in Indigenous communities; second, pedagogical and curricular programs must be based on culturally relevant approaches that resonate with local community needs and ideals. Tippeconnic summarized the first of these as obtaining adequate funding, improving academic performance, increasing the presence of Native cultures and languages, increasing parental and tribal involvement, upgrading school facilities, and developing Indian leadership and staffing, and obtaining accreditation.

Tribal control of education is essential to self-determination and is in keeping with the government-to-government relationship and the policy of tribal self-determination. Its premise is that the education of American Indians will be most effective when controlled directly by tribal governments. Tribal control is essential to achieve self-sufficiency and to strengthen the use of Native languages and cultures in school.²⁹⁶

Native charter schools are part of the current movement for Native school choice, an important branch of the tribally controlled school movement. In 2013, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools reported that there were 31 reservation charter schools across the country, accounting for 15% of all public schools on the reservations; five years later, the enthusiasm for these schools continues to grow. As Ahniwake Rose, executive director of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) explained in a 2017 essay on Native charter schools, “Charter schools give our tribes the flexibility to decide courses, provide language classes and make culture an integral part of a student’s school day... To protect tribal sovereignty and to promote the economic security of our nations, tribes must have the ability to provide for the education of their citizens. When we allow this to happen, our students will be successful.”²⁹⁷

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) recently published a new report called “Sovereignty in Education: Creating Culturally-Based Charter Schools in Native Communities.” This report provides profiles of Native charter schools in Hawaii, New Mexico, and Florida and outlines the Native Charter School Framework, a collection of guidance for how to found, administer, and sustain a Native charter school. NIEA affirms the important role education can play in strengthening Native youth’s connection to their identities, and its report notes that the charter movement gives communities the flexibility to build schools where Native languages and worldviews are the foundation of the school. NIEA asserts, “Charter education has the potential to support the growth of Native students by revitalizing and renormalizing their Native ways of knowing, believing, and being.”²⁹⁸

One approach to the charter school movement is the Native American Community Academy, headquartered in Albuquerque, NM. The schools that operate under NACA are prime examples of Native communities taking control of their own schools. As Paul Nyhan described them in a 2016 essay, “This charter school and its ideas ... came from a tight-knit network of Native American organizations ... who started with a simple and powerful idea: They asked tribal communities and families what they wanted. Then, together, they built a middle school and a high school. From that grew a movement.” Nyhan observes that the NACA schools are in part a response to the long-term legacies of the boarding schools:

NACA leaders consider it their duty to have an ongoing dialogue with families and the community about their needs and bring in many perspectives to shape the NISN [NACA Inspired Schools Network]. Given the historical context and trauma of Native Americans being educated in boarding schools that aimed to remove their cultural identity, NISN schools make identity development and cultural instruction and preservation a core value. The six NISN schools currently serve families from 50 tribes and 18 ethnicities.²⁹⁹

NACA now works with other Native-led charter schools across the country, including the Sovereign Schools Project, a Native charter school promoter in Oklahoma, to support school development through its NACA Inspired Schools Network.

ENDNOTES

294. Prucha, “The Great Father,” vol. 2, 1146; Teresa L. McCarty, “A Place to Be Navajo: Rough Rock and the Struggle for Self-Determination in Indigenous Schooling” (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002); Teresa L. McCarty, “School as Community: The Rough Rock Demonstration,” *Harvard Educational Review* 59 (1989): 484-503; David W. Adams, “A Case Study: Self-Determination and Indian Education,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 13:2 (1974), 21-27.

295. John Tippeconnic III, “Tribal Control of American Indian Education: Observations since the 1960s with Implications for the

Future,” in Karen Gayton Swisher and John W. Tippeconnic III, eds., *Next Steps: Research and Practice to Advance Indian Education* (Charleston: Appalachian Educational Laboratory: 1999), 34, available online: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED427902>.

296. Tippeconnic, “Tribal Control of American Indian Education,” 39, 40.

297. <https://www.publiccharters.org/press/public-charter-schools-growing-native-american-reservations>; see also Brian Bielenberg, “Charter Schools for American Indians,” in *Learn In Beauty*, 132-151, <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/jar/LIB/LIB11.html>;

Ahniwake Rose, "Native Students Do Better When Tribes Run Schools," <https://brightthemag.com/native-students-do-better-when-tribes-run-schools-4789da471e25>. For a literature review of Native charter schools, see "Research and Resources on Charter Schools and American Indian Students," http://www.c3ta.org/knowledgebases/resources/research-and-resources-on-charter-schools-and-american-indian-students-1724.html?node=4_3_2. For a list of Native charter schools by state, see http://www.sc3ta.org/knowledgebases/American_Indian/4_3_2_0/resources/charter-schools-listing-1725.html?node=4_3_2_0#H.

298. "Sovereignty in Education: Creating Culturally-Based Charter Schools in Native Communities" (Washington, D.C.: National Indian Education Association, 2018), 63.

299. Paul Nyhan, "Want to Fix US Schools? Look to Native American Communities," *Equal Voice News*, August 10, 2016, <https://www.caseygrants.org/evn/want-to-fix-u-s-schools-look-to-native-american-communities/>; "Deep Community Engagement at the Native American Community Academy (NACA)," <https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/case-study/deep-community-engagement-native-american-community-academy-naca/>; On the NISN, see <http://www.nacainspiredschoolsnetwork.org/>.

The Importance of Culturally Relevant Curriculum

School environments and curricula that positively reflect students' life experiences and identities promote student success. When Gloria Ladson-Billings first defined "culturally relevant pedagogy," she referred to a set of teaching strategies that would "produce students who can achieve academically, produce students who demonstrate cultural competence, and develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social order."³⁰⁰

In Indian Country, this can mean students who have academic skills to succeed in K-12 and higher education, who actively contribute to their tribal communities, and who can push back against settler colonial harms. Yet, too many Native students attend schools where culturally relevant environments are not available to them. As Duane Champagne put it in a 2017 editorial, "the education of Indian children does not address the cultural, political, and economic needs of Native American communities and governments," and "is not suitable to Natives who want to preserve tribal identities, communities or nations." In 2018, Denise Juneau, former Montana state superintendent of public instruction, published a blistering commentary on the Bureau of Indian Education's chronic failure to support culturally relevant curriculum reform for Native students.

The BIE needs to recognize its constituency: Native students, mostly in Native communities. Tribes' repeated requests to include Native language and culture in the BIE schools should be front and center, not buried. The BIE needs to embrace its legal and moral obligation to tribal people and stop giving lip service to integrating culture into academic programs. It is frustrating for tribes to be

consulted on the same issues time and again, give similar input, wait for the written plan, be hopeful for the coming implementation, observe as some window dressing is changed, and then see continued dismal educational results for their youngest citizens.³⁰¹

K. Tsianina Lomawaima has highlighted that how students are taught cannot be separated from what they are taught. As Lomawaima and a host of others remind us, Native schools must build from Indigenous epistemologies to provide Native students with the skills and knowledge they need to live, work, and thrive.³⁰²

Tarajeen Yazzie-Mintz's study of Navajo teachers' perceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy examines what culturally appropriate curriculum means for Native students, paying particular attention to the role of teachers. She writes, "the teacher's personal history and degree to which she has acquired cultural knowledge—in and outside of school—is an essential component in defining a culturally appropriate curriculum for classrooms in which Native students are educated." Yazzie-Mintz also asserts that understanding the "what" of culturally appropriate education isn't enough — to fully understand what's happening, we also must ask why teachers are doing what they're doing and understand the relationship between their "why" and their "how."³⁰³

The concern with pedagogy has been taken up with great clarity and energy in texts like *Indigenous Educational Models for Contemporary Practice: In Our Mother's Voice*

(2008), in which more than two dozen Native educators assess best practices for a wide variety of pedagogical and curricular issues including the revival and use of languages, Indigenous epistemologies, community-based education initiatives, culturally relevant models of assessment, and partnerships with non-Native institutions and communities. *Learn In Beauty: Indigenous Education for a New Century* (2000) includes a particularly important collection of essays on Indigenous perspectives in education, including Angelina Weenie's thoughtful commentary "Post-colonial Recovering and Healing."³⁰⁴

Two studies provide examples of culturally responsive math curriculum for Alaska Native students. One research team worked with Nancy Sharp, a Yup'ik teacher who participated in the *Math in a Cultural Context* (MCC) program. Through interviews and video of classes (analyzed by Yup'ik community consultants and by the research team), they describe her "third space" of teaching—a fusing of Yup'ik and Western teaching strategies that resulted in her students' increased math skills. The types of strategies

that Nancy Sharp used are also discussed in a study on Yup'ik storytelling methods as tools for math lessons. By incorporating Yup'ik stories into math curriculum, the authors hope to help promote Yup'ik language use in schools and to support the acquisition of math skills for Native and non-Native students alike.³⁰⁵

Models of teaching that blend tribally specific and western teaching strategies provide examples of what Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy and K. Tsianina Lomawaima have called a braiding together of Indigenous schooling and Indigenous education. Brayboy and Lomawaima discuss the Arizona State University Pueblo Doctoral Cohort, the Choctaw-majority Calcedever Elementary School, and the trilingual Puente de Hózhó Elementary School as models that are "local, contextual, and [address] the needs of the community and its children." They describe how schools that have the "staff and community work together to braid the local culture with high academic standards" can yield desired outcomes for students and their families.³⁰⁶

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301. Denise Juneau, "The Bureau of Indian Education Is Broken," Education Week, February 6, 2018, <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/02/07/the-bureau-of-indian-education-is-broken.html>.; See also the special report "Education in Indian Country: Obstacles and Opportunity," Education Week, 12/4/2013, <https://www.edweek.org/ew/projects/2013/native-american-education/>.

302. See Lomawaima's important literature review on curriculum and pedagogy in "Educating Native Americans," 450-454. The Journal of American Indian Education is an especially important resource for this literature. Recent representative examples include James A. Bryant, Jr., "Educating for Activism: The Gadugi Program," Journal of American Indian Education 56:3 (2017), 59-78; Lindsay A. Morcom, and Stephanie Roy, "Learning Through Language: Academic Success in an Indigenous Language Immersion Kindergarten," Journal of American Indian Education 56:2 (2017): 57-80; Cornel Pewewardy, "Learning Styles Of American Indian/Alaska Native Students: A Review Of The Literature And Implications For Practice," Journal of American Indian Education 41:3 (2002): 22-56; Tarajeon Yazzie-Mintz, "From A Place Deep Inside: Culturally Appropriate Curriculum As The Embodiment Of Navajo-Ness In Classroom Pedagogy," Journal of American Indian Education 46:3 (2007): 72-93. Other useful journal articles on the topic include Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy, and Angelina E. Castagno, "Self-determination Through Self-education: Culturally Responsive Schooling for Indigenous Students in the USA," Teaching Education 20:1 (2009): 31-53; Ray Barnhardt, "Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Alaska Native Ways Of Knowing," Anthropology & Education Quarterly

36:1 (2005): 8-23; Cornel Pewewardy, "The Holistic Medicine Wheel: An Indigenous Model of Teaching and Learning," Winds of Change 14:4 (1999): 28-31. Useful books and book chapters include, among many others, Willard Sakiestewa Gilbert, "Developing Culturally Based Science Curriculum for Native American Classrooms," in Honoring Our Heritage: Culturally Appropriate Approaches for Teaching Indigenous Students, Jon Reyhner, Willard Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Louise Lockard, eds. (Northern Arizona University, 2011), 43-55; Linda Miller Cleary and Thomas D. Peacock, Collected Wisdom: American Indian Education (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1998); Kate McCoy, Eve Tuck, and Marcia McKenzie, eds., Land Education: Rethinking Pedagogies of Place from Indigenous, Postcolonial, and Decolonizing Perspectives (New York: Routledge, 2016); Django Paris and H. Samy Alim, eds., Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World (New York: Teachers College Press, 2017); Malia Villegas, Sabina Neugebauer, and Kerry R. Venegas, Indigenous Knowledge and Education: Sites of Struggle, Strength, and Survival (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review, 2008); Beverly Klug, Standing Together: American Indian Education as Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers/Association of Teacher Educators, 2012)

303. Tarajeon Yazzie-Mintz, "From a Place Deep Inside: Culturally Appropriate Curriculum as the Embodiment of Navajo-Ness in Classroom Pedagogy," Journal of American Indian Education 46:3 (2007), 80.

304. Duane Champagne, "Tribal Identity and Native American

Education," *Indian Country Today*, July 23, 2017; <https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/tribal-identity-and-native-american-education-i1zOUayAekSfeRsjJWsChA/>; Maenette Kape'ahiokalani Padeken Ah Nee- Benham, ed. *Indigenous Educational Models for Contemporary Practice: In Our Mother's Voice, Volume II* (Routledge: 2008); Jon Reyhner, Joseph Martin, Louise Lockard, W. Sakiestewa Gilbert, eds., *Learn In Beauty: Indigenous Education for a New Century* (Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University: 2000), full text here: <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/jar/LIB/LIBconts.html>. See also Angelina E. Castagno, Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy, "Responsive Schooling for Indigenous Youth: A Review of the Literature," *Review of Educational Research* 78:4 (2008), 941-993; Robin A. Butterfield, "The Development and Use of Culturally Appropriate Curriculum for American Indian Students," *Peabody Journal of Education* 61:1 (1983); Tiffany Lee, "'I Came Here to Learn How to be a Leader': An Intersection of Critical Pedagogy and Indigenous Education," *Inter-Actions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 2:1 (2006), [https://](https://cloudfront.escholarship.org/dist/prd/content/qt92m798m0/qt92m798m0.pdf?t=lnq6qs)

cloudfront.escholarship.org/dist/prd/content/qt92m798m0/qt92m798m0.pdf?t=lnq6qs; Mary Lynne Herr, *Building a Teacher Education Curriculum According to Dine Philosophy of Education*, *Journal of Navajo Education*, 12:3 (1995), 14-18.
 305. Jerry Lipka, Nancy Sharp, and Betsy Brenner, "The Relevance of Culturally Based Curriculum and Instruction: The Case of Nancy Sharp," *Journal of American Indian Education* 44:3 (2005), 31-54; Joan Parker Webster and Evelyn Yanez, "Qanemcikaluni Tekitnarqelartuq [One Must Arrive with a Story to Tell]: Traditional Alaska Native Yup'ik Eskimo Stories in a Culturally Based Math Curriculum," *Journal of American Indian Education* 46:3 (2007), 117.
 306. Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy and K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "Why Don't More Indians Do Better in School? The Battle between US Schooling & American Indian/Alaska Native Education," *Daedalus* 147:2 (2018), 90.

Healing through Increased Economic Opportunities

Like all of the categories discussed here, economic interventions in Indian Country are wide-ranging and deserve their own literature review. Here are a few interventions from across Indian Country:

- Some tribes are developing business incubators, programs that help new companies develop plans and tools for their long-term success. Business incubators that are specific to Indian Country, such as the Native American Business Incubator Network or the Native Entrepreneur in Residence Program, seek to address the specific challenges facing Native entrepreneurs. Such programs provide networking, training, workspaces, and technical assistance.³⁰⁷
- Native nonprofit organizations can positively impact policy and support tribal governments and individuals in building financial capacity. For example, the First Nations Development Institute has crafted the Native American Asset Watch Initiative, a "comprehensive strategy for systemic economic change, which seeks to provide a range of support for efforts by Native communities to reclaim direct control of their assets and re-

establish sustainable approaches to the use of land and natural resources."³⁰⁸ The Native American Finance Officers Association (NAFOA) provides financial trainings and professional development for Native youth and tribal leaders. NAFOA, and other nonprofits like the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), also works to ensure that reforms and policies reflect tribes' economic interests.

- Grassroots movements like the Inspired Natives Project and tribally-based movements like #BuyNative encourage consumers to buy from Native artists and entrepreneurs. These movements use online platforms to increase visibility, expand the reach of Native-owned businesses, build momentum and connections across different geographical areas, and ensure profits benefit Native communities. Working with Native businesses, particularly those located on reservations, can promote healthy tribal economies.
- More than a dozen tribally controlled banks currently operate across the United States. The Tribal Business Journal has described chartering

a bank as one way to exercise tribal sovereignty, and these banks are crucial economic resources for tribes. In 2002, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency issued a guidance document for tribes interested in founding financial entities.³⁰⁹

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307. For more on Native Business Incubators, see <http://tribalbusinessjournal.com/news/native-business-incubators-rising/> and <http://tribalbusinessjournal.com/news/creation-tribal-business-incubators-transformative-indian-country/>.

308. For more on NAFOA, see <https://www.nafoa.org/about>. For more on the Native American Asset Watch Initiative, see "Native American Asset Watch: Rethinking Asset-Building in Indian Country" (Longmont, CO: First Nations Development Institute, 2009), https://firstnations.org/system/files/2009_NAAW_Rethinking_Asset_Building.pdf. For more on NCAI's policy recommendations, see "Empowering Tribal Workforce

Development: Indian Country's Policy Recommendations for the Federal Government" (Washington, D.C.: National Congress of American Indians, 2016), http://www.ncai.org/NCAI_PTG_Empowering_Tribal_Workforce_Development_Brief_10-3-16.pdf.

309. "A Guide to Tribal Ownership of a National Bank" (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 2002); J. D. Colbert, "The Tribally Chartered Bank: The Next Frontier for Expanding Tribal Sovereignty," *Tribal Business Journal*, n.d., <http://tribalbusinessjournal.com/news/tribally-chartered-bank/>.

Healing through Research and Scholarship

Many settler colonial harms have been justified at their moment in time on the basis of racist beliefs that Native people were intellectually or morally inferior. These inaccurate assumptions contribute to tangible harms like the over-incarceration of Native people and the disproportionate rates of youth suspension and expulsion from schools.³¹⁰ The legacy of colonialism continues to promote false narratives and beliefs of Native people. To combat this, the First Nations Development Institute (FNDI) and Echo Hawk Consulting partnered with a team of community advisors to create *Reclaiming Native Truth*, a national effort to uncover these hurtful, yet common, stories and give more power to Native populations to tell their story.³¹¹ This project used results from national focus groups, surveys, interviews, discussions, and social media analyses to uncover an approach for Native populations and allies to use to gain momentum and create messages that resonate with non-Natives. The research indicates that when presented with shared values, truthful history, or links to contemporary issues, non-Natives are more open to engage with Native issues and citizens. *Reclaiming Native Truth* promises to equip Native communities and allies with the communication framework needed to gain recognition, inclusion, and justice.

While thoughtful and intentional partnerships can be built between researchers and tribal communities,³¹² some of the most egregious, extractionist, and exploitative atrocities have occurred in the name of medical and health sciences. Nowhere is this more true than in human biology, where, in the past, social Darwinism was used to justify racism, colonialism, and imperialism against Indigenous populations on the basis of pseudo-scientific practices like phrenology and eugenics.³¹³ More recently, tribal biological samples, data, and information have been extracted and used without consent.³¹⁴ There exists the very real concern that incomplete and inappropriate understandings of genetic information could be used to reaffirm racist hierarchies today. To combat this, many Native nations are taking ownership over the research process by establishing their own research review boards. Tribes are also investing in a new generation of Native researchers through tribal college applied research opportunities, particularly in the sciences.³¹⁵ Early and continued education in the sciences is important for everyone, and the support of Native youth in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields is integral. By enabling our youth to actively engage in these arenas, we empower our communities to hold the key to their own bodies of knowledge and to decide how that knowledge is used.

Darrell R. Kipp describes his community's experiences with researchers. He notes his community's preference for community-driven collaborations that build local skills and benefit the tribe:

How do you interact with the linguists? How do you regard someone who is a cultural vampire? What do you say to those who profess to understand your tribe, your nation? I have never encountered a situation where linguists may understand our language better than the Native speakers have. However, after giving information and access, frequently they have been known to refrain from even supplying a copy of their work. One linguist in particular was tracked to the University of California, where a copy of his work was finally procured. We got the thesis when he refused to give us one. He ate at the table with many of us, talked, shared, and robbed us.

...

When the IE Film Association wanted to send us people, we asked that they just send us the camera, show us how to run it, and show us how to film, so that we can do it ourselves. They did. Then they said, "We will send a lady from New York to edit." We said, "Teach us. Send Joe Fisher to Montana State film and show us how to edit and run all the machinery." On our film *Transitions*, when it was time for music, we learned how to do it, we sang ourselves. Hire someone to do a song? That's us, for this movie is us. After we completed it, we had a little film festival. We invited everyone with whom we made it, ordered one thousand copies of the film, and distributed copies to everyone we could.³¹⁶

The Summer Internship for Indigenous Peoples in Genomics (SING) is an example of a program which seeks to incorporate Indigenous epistemologies with biomedical practices to empower young Indigenous researchers and community members, and assist in providing them with the

necessary tools for careers in the field of genetic research. The program was initiated through the recognition that there exists a shortage of Indigenous peoples in scientific advisory and leadership roles, which has frequently resulted in inadequate understandings of cultural values and concerns stemming from the exploitative historical relationship between science and Indigenous populations. Additionally, there is a dearth of individuals qualified to explain the uses, benefits, and limitations of scientific research with Indigenous communities considering participation in research. SING is an annual week-long workshop open to Native peoples from the United States and Canada. In 2018, of the eleven people on the advisory board, five were members of North American Native Nations. SING's three goals are: "1) to facilitate discussion on Indigenous cultural values and whether scientific methods can be beneficially incorporated with these values, 2) to provide awareness of how genomics is currently used as a tool to assist in projects focused on natural resources, history, and health and, 3) to increase the number of Indigenous peoples in science research, leadership and teaching careers at all levels."³¹⁷

Other programs and research groups have demonstrated success at integrating Indigenous epistemologies and Eurocentric academic research. For example, the *Takini* Network (Lakota for 'to come back to life' or 'to be reborn'), is a collective of Native women and non-Native women allies dedicated to the advancement of healing within Native American and Alaska Native communities. The network specifically focuses on addressing issues of historical and intergenerational trauma through strategies which are grounded in the *Lakota Woppe Sakowin* (Seven Laws)—guiding principles on how to live one's life. In addition, the network offers advice and support for Native women practitioners navigating the often treacherous and challenging academic environment.³¹⁸

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310. "American Indians and Crime" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, 1999), viii; US Department of Education, "School Environment Listening Sessions Final Report" (Washington, D.C.: White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education, 2015), 6, 20.

311. <https://www.reclaimingnative truth.com/> Retrieved 7/29/2018.

312. See the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Policy Research Center's "'Walk Softly and Listen Carefully': Building Research Relationships with Tribal Communities" publication for insights into constructive research relationships: http://www.ncai.org/attachments/PolicyPaper_SpMCHTcjrMEjDnPmesENPzjHTwhOIOWxiWOIWdSrykJuQggG_NCAI-WalkSoftly.pdf

313. W. H. Jaynes, "Race, Racism, and Darwinism," Education

and Urban Society 43:5 (2011): 535-59; J. W. Love, "Research and Racial Hierarchy Creation: A Return to Scientific Racism" (Dissertation, University of California, 2014); G. Rutecki, "Forced Sterilization of Native Americans: Later Twentieth Century Physician Cooperation with National Eugenics Policies?," *Ethics & Medicine* 27:1 (2011): 33-42.

314. National Congress of American Indians. "Resolution #SAC-06-019 Supporting the Havasupai Indian Tribe in Their Claim against Arizona Board of Regents Regarding the Unauthorized Use of Blood Samples and Research." Resolution. NCAI 2006 Annual Session, 2006.

315. For more on science research at tribal colleges, see the 2018 National Science Foundation video A Best Kept Secret: STEM

Research at Tribal Colleges and Universities. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XyqwWR3_d4&feature=youtu.be. Retrieved 8/3/2018.

316. Kipp, "Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned," 28.

317. Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology. "Summer Internship for Indigenous Peoples in Genomics (SING)." Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology: Where Science Meets Society, 2018. <https://sing.igb.illinois.edu/>.

318. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart et al., "Women Finding the Way: American Indian Women Leading Intervention Research in Native Communities," *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research* 23:3 (2016): 24-47.

Case Study: Philanthropy Supporting Community-Driven Programs

*"Any intervention designed to affect educational attainment and success for Native boys and young men must focus on re-establishing relations with themselves and their communities. ... [S]tructural and system modes of oppression have been and can be effectively countered through engagement with culture and through understanding of relations. Native boys face challenges in educational and life outcomes. These challenges manifest as low high school graduation rates, higher dropout rates, higher rates of suspension, and other challenges that continue to inhibit their contribution to their communities."*³¹⁹

In 2013, the First Nations Development Institute (FNDI) worked alongside the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to fund five community-driven interventions developed for Native boys and young men. These programs were located in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, and each focused on a community-developed process to connect young men and boys with a network of relations in their tribal nation. These programs took an asset-based approach that recognized the potential within each boy and young man to meaningfully contribute to his community.³²⁰ As one FNDI staff member noted, "Communities that did this work prioritized youth and tried to think about how to engage youth not from a deficient model but one that lifted them up. I think that is the most important thing—not only prioritizing youth but also lifting them up as assets [in their] communities."³²¹

Programs that connect youth to their communities and their cultures are critical in Indian Country. The First Nations Development Institute summative report, *Advancing Positive Paths for Native Boys and Men*, cites research that indicates that "retaining connection to attributes of culture is difficult, but proves successful in achieving better life, educational and social outcomes. ... Culture, in its varied expressions and modes of transmission, plays a vital role in educational attainment, behavior, and civic engagement." Each grantee's successful interventions were based on the networks of relationships and support each program built around its youth. They implemented strategies that align with current research findings that "prevailing interventions like mentoring, teacher-student attention, cultural and language acquisition [are] important to understanding and building relations."³²² This matches research on Native boys and young men that finds that

Programs specific to the needs and experiences of Native boys and men recognize that education and school have figured prominently in the quality of life of Indigenous boys and men. These programs root their solutions to male student success in relation to their communities and culture and provide support for the proposition that disparate educational outcomes for American Indian males can be effectively countered by engaging students with their culture and helping to facilitate their relationships within community.

Moreover, they recognize education goes beyond the formal and Westernized notion of schooling to also include learning within Indigenous communities. Such learning often is family, community, and environmentally based, connecting boys and men to their ancestral homelands and allowing for important ceremonies and sacred and spiritual practices to take place.³²³

Through the RWJF, Kalliopeia Foundation, and NEO Philanthropy-supported program, FNDI was able to provide a one-year investment in programs developed by the Cocopah Indian Tribe, Santa Fe Indian School Leadership Institute, Tewa Women United, STAR (“Service to All Relations”) School, and Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. These investments allowed community-developed initiatives to advance their efforts in addressing the experiences of rural, young Native American boys. Specific interventions that they saw as valuable for their own communities were deployed. The grantees worked to support Native boys and men through connecting to tribally-specific teachings and expectations. Four of the five programs worked to address truancy and dropout rates in school through a variety of strategies, including mentorships, recovering missed school credits, and teaching cultural traditions, that ultimately helped the boys and young men to feel that they are loved and needed by their communities. The fifth program also focused on connecting the boys and young men to their

cultures and teachings, recognizing the importance of being able to find success both in their homelands and in institutions of higher education.

A crucial element of the grant program was the emphasis on communities developing their own solutions. Each community knows best what its youth need to flourish, and the grant process allowed the grantors to buttress, rather than prescribe, how the community would approach its needs. An FNDI staff member explained that “our philosophy ... is that communities are full of solutions to community challenges, [and] they just need a little capital to implement these plans into action. When communities use their assets, including culture, to develop solutions, they are more likely to find successful approaches.”³²⁴

Private funding for philanthropic efforts in Indian Country has declined significantly in the last two decades, making the Advancing Positive Paths for Native American Boys and Young Men program an important case study in the role of philanthropic organizations in Indian Country. Whereas the majority of private foundation dollars in Indian Country currently supports non-Native entities, the FNDI program funded Native entities directly.³²⁵ The Advancing Positive Paths program demonstrates the potential for private donors to support community-developed, community-driven interventions to community-identified concerns.

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319. “Advancing Positive Paths for Native American Boys and Young Men: A Project Evaluation” (Longmont, CO: First Nations Development Institute, 2016), 4

320. Here, we use the concept “asset-based” in the same way that Brayboy et al. use the concept “strengths-based.” Both terms refer to programs that “focus on the promises and possibilities of people, their communities, and their homelands.” See Brayboy et al., “RISE: A Study of Indigenous Boys and Men,” 9.

321. Personal communication

322. “Advancing Positive Paths for Native American Boys and Young Men: A Project Evaluation” (Longmont, CO: First Nations Development Institute, 2016), 2-3, 4.

323. Brayboy et al., “RISE: A Study of Indigenous Boys and Men,” 10.

324. Personal communication

325. “Growing Inequity: Large Foundation Giving to Native American Organizations and Causes, 2006-2014” (Longmont, CO: First Nations Development Institute, 2018).

Healing through a Focus on Family Programs

Many interventions focus on supporting Native families, and these range from language to parenting programs. The literature on such programs is vast, and

deserves a review in its own right. For those wishing to learn more, here are a few programs and resources:

- Leanne Hinton's book *Bringing Our Languages Home* provides thirteen chapters documenting efforts to revitalize Indigenous languages. The book highlights Anishinaabemowin, Hawaiian, Miami, Wampanoag, and Mohawk, among others.
- The Ina Maka Family program at the United Indians of all Tribes Foundation in Seattle provides parenting classes and in-home visits with Parent Partners for low income families whose AI/AN children are under three years old.³²⁶
- NICWA's Positive Indian Parenting classes integrate culturally responsive parenting strategies with conversations about historical trauma, including the boarding schools. NICWA trains both tribal and non-tribal child welfare workers to facilitate these classes with families.³²⁷
- The Tulalip Tribes' Family Haven has a mission to "provide opportunities for family wellness and empowerment" through "positive beliefs in families" and "consistent support." Its services include weekly meetings for moms, nutrition classes, parenting classes, and programs for young women and men that focus on life skills and cultural awareness, among others.³²⁸
- One research study suggests the development of fatherhood programs that integrate values from tribally-specific traditional men's societies, including warrior societies. Such programs could focus on providing positive male role models and developing tribally-specific frameworks about fatherhood. The study, which focuses on fatherhood in Dakota communities, particularly notes the importance of working with Tribal Head Start to engage fathers, uncles, and grandfathers through positive parenting opportunities.³²⁹
- The *Parenting in 2 Worlds* program is a parenting program for urban Native parents. It was developed through conversations within three urban Indian communities (each including Native people from many different tribes) about traditional values and practices for raising healthy children. One study of the program found that parents involved with *Parenting in 2 Worlds* felt that they were using more positive parenting practices and were experiencing fewer conflicts with their children, among other outcomes.³³⁰

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326. To learn more about Ina Maka, see <http://www.unitedindians.org/programs/family-support-services/ina-maka-family-program/>

327. For more on NICWA's Positive Indian Parenting trainings, see <https://www.nicwa.org/training-institutes/>. For more on Positive Indian Parenting classes, see <http://www.tribaljustice.org/program-profiles/nicwa-positive-indian-parenting>.

328. For a detailed account of the Girls Group, see <http://www.tulalipnews.com/wp/tag/family-haven/>. For more on Family Haven see <https://www.tulaliptribes-nsn.gov/Home/Government/Departments/FamilyHaven.aspx>.

329. White, Godfrey, and Iron Moccasin, "American Indian Fathering in the Dakota Nation" 49.

330. Stephen Kulis, Stephanie L. Ayers, and Tahnee Baker, "Parenting in 2 Worlds: Pilot Results From a Culturally Adapted Parenting Program for Urban American Indians," *Prevention Science* 17:6 (2016): 721-31. See also <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4289082/>.

Healing through a Focus on Health and Well-Being

Systems of healing commonly used within the United States, and the evidence-base that supports them, were established in Eurocentric scientific (and thus colonialist) contexts.³³¹ This has presented a challenge for Indigenous researchers and health practitioners, as "Indigenous knowledge production faces continued pressure to exist

in a world that is only comfortable if colonial institutions maintain control over knowledge, including the power to verify legitimate knowledge."³³² This often results in constraints to securing funding for health interventions which do not adhere to Western ideologies, as well as the challenges in disseminating information about program

outcomes. Thus, the sharing of knowledge is stymied, contributing still further to the barriers that exist in the development of effective health interventions for Native populations. This remains true in the mental health field, where psychological diagnoses and services stem from Eurocentric worldviews.³³³ Such approaches have been described as disparate to Indigenous conceptions of the mind and body, and treatment may be “alienating, assimilative, or otherwise harmful.”³³⁴

Successful healing programs, according to pioneers of the field, Duran, Duran, Brave Heart and Horse-Davis, will “utilize Indigenous epistemology as the root metaphor for theoretical and clinical implementation.”³³⁵ Even when healing interventions are designed according to Indigenous ways of being, they must be tailored to local contexts as each population is unique and has its own concerns.³³⁶ It should not be surprising that of the many approaches to healing which have been documented, successful ones are initiated within communities and are firmly rooted in the traditional cultural practices and beliefs of that community. When interventions are developed in collaboration with non-Indigenous allies, it is imperative that ownership be maintained at the tribal level.³³⁷ To this end, many of the programs aimed at interrupting the transmission of the historical trauma response are community-based and incorporate concepts of resilience, cultural revitalization, and participation in traditional activities, including talking circles, drum circles, language use, and traditional teachings.³³⁸

Participation in traditional activities has been found to be associated with positive mental health in American Indians.³³⁹ Talking circles and other forms of group sharing shift blame and personal pain from the individual to a broader, shared Indigenous experience of colonization.³⁴⁰ As Brave Heart describes, interventions in Lakota communities advocate for the facilitation and resolution of historical unresolved grief by encouraging the free expression of pain in small groups, followed by culturally appropriate grief ceremonies which allow for connection to traditional

values.³⁴¹ A combination of talking about past traumas and traditional cultural engagement is also described in one intervention by Gone (2009), “healing was seen to entail much more than the mere amelioration of personal distress and promotion of individual coping... a robust *postcolonial* Aboriginal identity - attained in part through the contemporary reclamation of Indigenous cultural and spiritual practices - [provided the] primary means to remedy the shared legacy of [historical trauma] that continued to afflict the community”.³⁴²

Cultural identity protects against the harms caused by historical trauma events. Identifying with a group identity can contribute to an individual’s resilience, particularly among elders.³⁴³ Those who connect more with a group identity appear to be more protected from the historical trauma response. For example, having a strong sense of cultural values can impact how individuals experience depression, as can their perceptions of the mental health and substance use of the people around them. In this way, connections with one’s community may impact one’s beliefs about vulnerability and resilience.³⁴⁴ One study in a Southeastern tribe found that having social support could stave off depressive symptoms following a traumatic event, particularly among elders.³⁴⁵ In addition, a strong connection to Indigenous identity appears to lessen the likelihood of intergenerational transmission of substance abuse.³⁴⁶ Thus, programs and interventions which seek to strengthen or support traditional cultural values and networks of social support may prove beneficial in interrupting the harm caused by historical trauma events like the boarding school era.

While there are no doubt several Indigenous designed and managed healing programs that reflect the values stated above, many have not been sufficiently described in the academic literature. To that end, we are providing two cases studies of interventions that use approaches steeped in traditional values to address historical trauma from the perspective of health and wellbeing.

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Case Study: Qungasvik (Toolbox): A Yup'ik Intervention to Address Youth Suicide and Alcohol Abuse

The description of this intervention is based on a 2014 article by Rasmus, Charles, and Mohatt entitled *Creating Qungasvik (A Yup'ik Intervention "Toolbox"): Case Examples from a Community-Developed and Culturally-Driven Intervention*.

Qungasvik, 'toolbox' in Yup'ik, is an intervention initiated and conducted by community members with the aim of addressing concerns regarding increasing rates of youth suicides and alcohol abuse. The name *Qungasvik* was chosen because "it contains the tools to help Yup'ik people to find their own answers and approaches to problems threatening their communities and youth."³⁴⁷ While community based, university researchers were invited in by the community in order to provide input when asked and to observe and record. All activities were community run, and a Community Planning Group (CPG) which included elders, community leaders, parents, and youth guided the intervention questions and activities. The goal of the intervention was to assemble "tools [the youth] need to survive in today's arctic," meaning, an environment that is culturally grounded but not "rooted in a historically imagined or re-imagined past." Thus, the CPG identified

contemporary Yup'ik traditions and practices while also being cognizant of shifts in social, historical, and cultural context so that the final intervention was representative of modern Yup'ik life. By combining Yup'ik and Western ideas and practices, program organizers intended that the intervention produce "a more integrated and contemporary Yup'ik youth experience." The integration of select Western practices was intentionally reflective of the traditional importance of learning and acquiring knowledge from visitors.³⁴⁸

The intervention itself is comprised of 36 potential modules which are intended to be customized by each community to fit their unique needs and traditions. In this way, the intervention comes to be owned by a community as it is implemented. The modules fall into three categories with an emphasis on protective factors for youth at the community, family, and individual levels, while maintaining a focus on the individual as part of a collective. Ultimately, the intervention is conceptualized as a restoration of balance. While all 36 modules have merit both individually and together, we have chosen to present as case studies one module from each category. These are the same modules

which were highlighted in a publication of the intervention activities by Rasmus, Charles, and Mohatt.³⁴⁹ While not specifically focused on addressing the harms resulting from boarding schools, the intervention incorporates many elements which have been shown to be beneficial for communities seeking to address the impacts of historical trauma, including refocusing on traditional knowledge and practices, using Indigenous languages, strengthening kinship networks, and highlighting community, family, and individual resilience. The following is an overview of the three sample modules:

Example 1 – Community Module, Qasgiq (Men’s House):

The *qasgiq*, or ‘men’s house’, was traditionally a communal structure and gathering place in which Yup’ik men shared food, tools, and knowledge. It was integral to community life, and was a place where youth received the tools necessary for *yuuyaraq* (living the Yup’ik way of life). It was the belief by elders in the community that the loss of the *qasgiq* in contemporary Yup’ik communities had resulted in a breakdown of community structure and cohesion with the result that harmful youth behaviors were going unseen and youth were not being held to expected social norms. To address this, the *qasgiq* module involved elders guiding youth of both genders to create a temporary space in a council building which resembled the inside of a traditional *qasgiq*. During creation of the space, elders described the importance of each design element. A purification ritual was held at the beginning of each meeting within the *qasgiq* as a demonstration of the sacredness of the space. The ultimate goal of the module, in addition to fostering interaction between elders and youth and the sharing of knowledge, was to create a sacred space for learning that focused on a traditional Yup’ik instructional setting, as opposed to the Western educational environments with which youth were also familiar.

Example 2 – Family Module, Yup’ik Kinship Terms:

In addition to a breakdown of community structure and cohesion, the CPG identified changes in the traditional kinship structure of the community as another root cause of the challenges to the wellbeing of youth. At birth, Yup’ik babies are given both a Yup’ik and English name. Traditionally, Yup’ik names are inherited, and with them the child receives not only the name but also the roles and responsibilities the person carried during their lifetime. Thus,

a name provides a person with not only knowledge regarding kinship relationships, but also one’s role and responsibility within that kinship network. In order to strengthen kinship networks, this segment of the intervention involved families coming together to learn about the meaning and function of Yup’ik kinship terms and naming practices. With guidance from elders, families worked to construct genograms and identified not only the people within their kinship network by Yup’ik name, but also their strengths, resources, and roles. Ultimately, the activity demonstrated the interconnectedness of the traditional family network, in which every person plays a vital role.

Example 3 – Individual Module, Surviving Your Feelings:

Elders identified experiences facing Yup’ik youth that they believed had not been a concern for past generations, such as alcohol use and abuse by parents, domestic violence, and sexual abuse. They believed that the intensity of feelings resulting from exposure to these experiences, when combined with disconnection from family and cultural knowledge, was another root cause of harmful youth behaviors like suicide and alcohol abuse. Therefore, the goal of the ‘Surviving Your Feelings’ module was to create a community setting where both youth and adults could express their feelings openly while discussing challenging or stigmatized topics like suicide. The intervention occurred in a safe place, and was led by a community member role model who would tell a story of a personal experience that “tested their own capacity to survive, that was personally difficult, but at the same time, in surviving it, was transformational.” Youth then followed suit, speaking openly and safely about their own experiences, concerns, and intentions. The desired outcome of the intervention was for individuals to “take out” of themselves thoughts and feelings which were strong or disturbing. In Yup’ik tradition, feelings which are “taken out” become collective, and can be managed within a shared collective consciousness. In closing, individuals formed a circle and passed a ball of string while engaging in question-and-answer format interactions with the others in the circle. At the end, everyone is found to be holding a piece of the string and is connected to everyone else in the circle. Through the physical and tangible manifestation of their interconnection, youth are able to understand their emotional regulation in terms of a collective identity.

Resources regarding Qungasvik include:

Center for Alaska Native Health Research: <http://canhr.uaf.edu/research/past-canhr-projects/qungasvik-toolbox-indigenous-intervention-science-model-alaska-native-communities/>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <https://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/qungasvik-toolbox-toolbox-promoting-youth-sobriety-reasons-living-yup%E2%80%99ik-cup%E2%80%99ik>

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Case Study: Wikoskalaka Yuwita Pi (A Gathering of Young Women)

Based upon a phone conversation with camp organizers, Randilynn Boucher & Elicia Goodsoldier on July 22, 2018.

In one program that has operated yearly since 2011, 15 to 30 young Lakota women and their caregivers have been gathering for four days to reconnect with themselves, each other, their culture, and their sacred lands. Wikoskalaka Yuwita Pi translates to *Gathering of Young Women*. Each day of camp begins with a morning prayer, which helps ground the young women in the importance of regular prayerfulness and reflection. Then, the young women are exposed to 4-5 teachings which include presentations or hands-on, engaging activities regarding traditional cultural practices and lifeways. Through connecting with their culture and language, the young women begin to heal from settler colonial harms.

Some of the teachings focus on mental health, which is an intentional practice, grown out of growing concern for a rash of teen suicides on the Pine Ridge Reservation. A traditional sense of healing can help women understand how to be a member of their community and culture, helping suicidal youth see themselves as leaders. Many of the young women are preparing to go through their womanhood ceremony, so during the camp they also learn more about what it means to be a Lakota woman. They sew dresses and

make moccasins while learning the critical importance and significance of every piece of clothing they create. Elders and older woman relatives are also present and share their life experiences. All parts of the camp are interwoven.

Wikoskalaka Yuwita Pi is one part of a larger grassroots organization called the Seven Sacred Families Education and Health Center. Other Sacred Families include a young men's camp and a group that does equine therapy. Each Sacred Family has elder advisors and spiritual leaders that guide the teachings and activities of the Families. Communities interested in creating a similar healing camp can do so and are encouraged to work with their elders to incorporate their community's specific cultural teachings and traditions. Wikoskalaka Yuwita Pi works because it is culturally grounded in Lakota lifeways. Organizers say that the logistics and planning do not take a lot of time and energy, but that several adults are needed to support the day-to-day camp activities. Organizers also say that transportation to and from the camp for the youth and their caregivers is always a challenge, so additional attention is needed during planning stages. This camp works on a limited budget, making a lot of magic happen with few financial resources. Each year they raise the camp budget from scratch, culling together small grants, in-kind donations, and creative fundraising efforts such as Go Fund

Me campaigns and t-shirt sales. Though there is no specific long-term financial plan, organizers know both that the camp provides an invaluable experience to young Lakota women and that if they try and pray hard, the camp will continue.

Success at Wikoskalaka Yuwita Pi happens when a youth returns to serve as mentor and share their experiences with other young women at the camp. They go from being introverted and having difficulty trusting adults to taking

on responsibilities. When the girls receive their Lakota name, they feel pride in their identity and their newfound connection with their community. This camp instills a sense of how to conduct themselves in a Lakota way in the youth. The overall goal is to set young women on a path to becoming Lakota again, a mission in which they are succeeding.

A video made by one attendee can be viewed here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9pMY14myxA&feature=youtu&list=PLAgsrmx6PTMkKOJdFzOXpztDrT2JGG6Ib

– Summary of Knowledge Gaps & Suggestions for Future Research –

The US-focused literature regarding the impacts of boarding school policy has made significant strides in the last 30 years, and it would benefit from continued attention by researchers. We feel it is important to note the relative paucity of US-based studies regarding the impact of boarding schools, more specifically, and historical trauma, more broadly, when compared to Canada. In an effort to identify current knowledge gaps and suggest areas for future research in the US, we include a list of potential research

topics, several of which were identified in the literature we reviewed here. Papers that suggest a specific research topic or approach are cited, as applicable.

Before listing specific topical areas for future study, we identify several methodological challenges encountered in the current body of literature. Many of these are related to study design and could be addressed through thoughtful and intentional action by investigators.

Approaches to Overcome Methodological Challenges

- **Approach research from an Indigenous and strengths-based lens.** Most research has been deficit-focused (i.e., identifying risk factors for disease or ill-health), but community partners are advocating for a strength-based (i.e., identifying factors that are protective against disease or ill-health) approach instead, highlighting strength and resiliency instead of focusing on victimization.³⁵⁰
- **Consult communities and existing literature to ensure precise and meaningful language is used and is used consistently.** The literature is currently hindered by a lack of common language regarding historical trauma events and responses, particularly in the context of Native populations. This means that people use different terms to describe the same concept or the same word to describe two different concepts (e.g., historical trauma to mean events that cause traumatic responses, as well as the traumatic responses themselves).

- **Think beyond statistical significance.** Reliance on p-values and statistical significance will often fail to adequately reflect Native issues and experiences because of the small sample sizes of AI/ANs included in many studies. In some instances, the effect estimate associated with attending a boarding school may fail to reach statistical significance. This can be because 1) the effect of boarding schools is, in fact, small (i.e., close to the null value of no effect), or 2) the population is small. The lack of statistical significance could be an artifact of the small sample size. If a study was soundly designed, an insignificant finding doesn't mean the effect isn't or wasn't real for the participants.
- **Consider supplementing self-reported measures with additional measures.** Listening to the voice of survivors and their experiences is critical for research on the boarding schools. There are also situations when reliance on participants' memory alone can create challenges for study validity for those evaluating research through a Eurocentric research lens. Several studies use self-reported measures of health or well-being, which are subject to bias, including recall bias when participants may find it difficult to accurately recall past experiences. In the case of events that occurred long ago, participants can also misremember the order of events in their past. This latter issue can raise temporality concerns, especially if a study is trying to understand the impact of events that happened in a certain order (i.e., boarding school experience and then young adulthood experiences).³⁵¹
- **Work to differentiate the ways in which historical trauma events impact well-being.** This means conducting studies that 1) differentiate between causes of historical trauma responses over space, time, and by causal strength, 2) identify mechanisms of transmission of historical trauma responses across generations, 3)

accurately identify the prevalence and incidence of historical trauma responses and associated grief, and, 4) identify symptomology in a way that aligns with Indigenous worldviews.³⁵²

- **Use purposeful participant sampling to improve generalizability and to characterize a wider range of experiences.** Studies include those individuals that self-select themselves for participation, which may cause the literature to be a biased representation of the experience of boarding school attendees. Several studies also use convenience sampling rather than more intentional sampling designs, a decision that can limit the ability to apply the research findings to populations other than those directly involved in the study. Further, tribal communities differ from one another and it is therefore very hard to compare across communities or to transfer findings of one study to another population.

Use of a Eurocentric, biomedical framework and scientific method makes proving causation between historical trauma and consequent health and wellbeing very difficult. This is due to several factors including, 1) the long period of time that traumatic policies and practices (like boarding schools) were in effect, 2) the variation in the lived experience of historical trauma, 3) the cumulative, intergenerational nature of historical trauma, and 4) the compounding effect of a harmful policy (or historical trauma) within a continuing legacy of colonization, disparity, and discrimination. These are limitations of the scientific methods used in this area of research. However, these limitations shouldn't be used as reason to avoid pursuing research in this area. If intentional and well designed, research studies can both help us understand the impacts of boarding school attendance and be a useful part of the healing process for those impacted by attendance.

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Topical Areas for Future Research

Healing from the trauma of boarding school attendance

- Narratives of historical trauma and loss and how they relate to narratives of healing and resilience. By being more aware of how boarding school narratives operate, we can better identify how historical trauma can have damaging effects on health or be the springboard for transformation and resilience.³⁵⁴
- Effective treatment and healing around boarding school trauma.³⁵⁵
- Case studies of culturally appropriate interventions to heal harm done by boarding school policy.³⁵⁶

Impacts of public narratives around boarding school attendance

- How boarding school narratives operate in specific cultural contexts. Historical trauma narratives link the past to the present through ongoing meaning-making. What individual communities and families choose to remember about boarding schools, and how they choose to share those stories, can serve as a contemporary stressor with health implications.
- The ways in which people remember the schools and how this impacts collective memory. Studying how people remember the schools keeps the focus on current-day impacts and their connections to the historic past. It recognizes that how people represent and respond to past traumas may be more instructive than examining the historical data alone.

Intergenerational transmission of trauma

- Adult attachment and the intergenerational transmission of trauma through parent-child relationships.³⁶⁰
- Family-level meaning making of the boarding school experiences, how such narratives are transmitted across generations, and how this factors into identity development.³⁶¹
- Community-level impacts of boarding school trauma.³⁶² More thoughtful investigation into the group-level impacts boarding school policy had and continues to have.
- The relationship between historical trauma (an

event that has the potential to cause or illicit a historical trauma response) and historical trauma response (commonly conceptualized as negative outcomes like depression, language loss, etc. and less frequently inclusive of positive responses like resiliency).³⁶³

Language loss

- Language loss as a result of boarding schools in the United States. With the exception of Leap, the materials cited in this review are government reports, personal commentaries, and journalistic essays³⁶⁵ or reference language loss in Canada. Other academic investigations of language shift in the United States that reference boarding schools focus on the development of American Indian English.³⁶⁷

Relationship between demographic factors and boarding school attendance

- Impact of differing amounts of time spent in a boarding school(s) and its impact on the effects of attendance (i.e., lessen or exacerbate).³⁶⁸
- Identify critical age range or time span during which exposure, or time since exposure, to boarding school was more or less harmful.³⁶⁹
- Regional differences in experiences of boarding schools and their impact.³⁷⁰
- The relevance of a school's distance from a student's home.³⁷¹
- Gender differences in the impacts of boarding school policy (and historical trauma more broadly).³⁷²

Socioeconomic and educational impacts of boarding schools

- Educational outcomes for individuals and communities, including the extent to which a parent's or grandparent's boarding school experience can impact their child's educational outcomes. Some research in Canada has been done to link possible socioeconomic factors for boarding school alumni to their children's educational outcomes. Similar research should be conducted in

the United States.³⁷³ As Brayboy and Lomawaima note, "If the data are so sparse as to be suspect, how can we measure progress or identify places for improvement? How can we establish policies to address or understand concerns if we are unsure of the validity of the concerns?"

- Impact on socioeconomic outcomes for communities as a whole. Research exists for individuals and families in Canada,³⁷⁵ but little exists for Native nations.³⁷⁶
- A closer review of Native economies in the 2000s, as well as attempting to understand how the break from traditional economies affected tribal sovereignty.
- Making meaning of boarding school experiences.
- Family/community/individual processes or awarenesses that impact or lessen the impact of boarding schools on individuals.³⁷⁷ What factors are protective vs. risk promoting?

- How current life stressors and traumas are experienced within the context of boarding school-related trauma (i.e., compounding impacts of traumatic events or increased vulnerability to stressful events).³⁷⁸
- The extent to which personal narratives about boarding school attendance change over time from youth to adulthood.³⁷⁹
- How did parents feel and react when their children attended boarding schools.³⁸⁰

Lastly, we and other researchers call for more peer-reviewed research in the area of boarding school impacts.³⁸¹ Several papers that have been presented at conferences and several abstracts are published, but this scholarship does not always make it into the form of a peer-reviewed, published article.

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Glossary

Culturally adapted interventions: Programs that reflect the values, traditions, beliefs, norms, practices, and worldviews of the population to receive the intervention.³⁸²

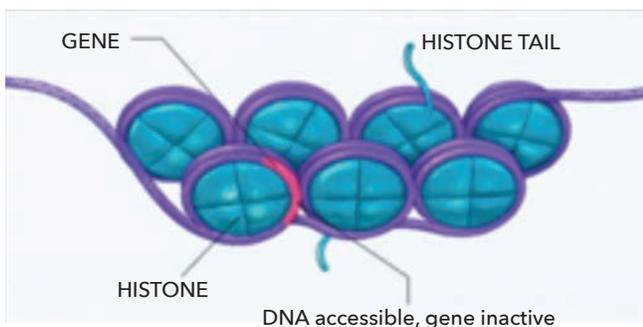
Boarding Schools/Industrial Schools: Both boarding and industrial schools are used to describe the system of federal government education for Native children. While boarding school is a more sanitized idea, the schools most closely resembled industrial schools and were an attempt to force Native children to acculturate to western ideals while teaching them menial tasks that would benefit a continued slide into socioeconomic poverty.

Decolonization: An acknowledgment that Indigenous peoples continue to be negatively impacted by settler colonialism. Decolonization is a process that questions the legitimacy of settler colonial power and centers tribal autonomy, including in research and interventions.³⁸³

Disenfranchised Grief: Grief that cannot be publicly mourned.³⁸⁴

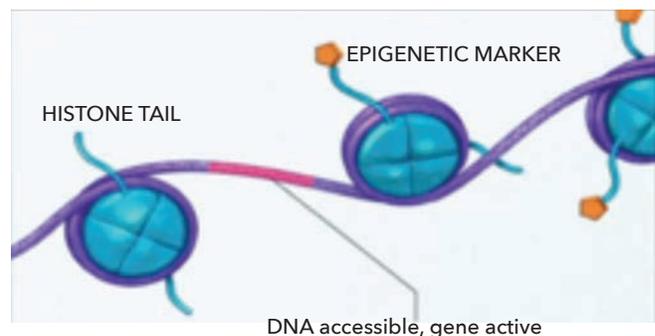
Epigenetics: Genes are made from segments of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) and are part of the building blocks that make all living things. Genes contain codes that make proteins, which regulate our bodies and their functions (e.g., make bones, move muscles, etc.). The official definition of epigenetics is "a stable, heritable phenotype resulting from changes in a chromosome without alterations in the DNA sequence." The process of epigenetics consists of the placing of flags or markers on genes, often in response to outside pressures like changes in a person's physical environment or events and experiences in a person's life. Because these markers are placed on genes and not in them (the Greek prefix 'epi' means 'on top of' or 'outside of'³⁸⁶, they are copied along with the gene when it is replicated, but they don't change the DNA sequence (the order of the DNA). DNA, and therefore genes, are wrapped around proteins called histones, which allow DNA to be stored compactly. The placed epigenetic markers can change the way that genes interact with one another, including allowing the body to read the information contained in a gene so that it can be physically manifested or blocking that information from

Figure 8: Simplified Illustration of Epigenetic Mechanisms



The gene (presented in pink) is tightly wrapped on a histone for storage, and the DNA contained on that genes is therefore inaccessible for use by the body. Because of this, the gene is referred to as inactive.

Sources: modified from National Institutes of Health (2018). A scientific illustration of how epigenetic mechanisms can affect health. Accessed July 26, 2018 from <https://commonfund.nih.gov/epigenomics/figure>



In this image, epigenetic markers (presented as yellow pentagons on histone tails) have caused the gene to be only loosely wrapped on the histone, making the information contained in that gene accessible to the body. This gene is referred to as active.

being read and therefore used. This process is commonly referred to as turning a gene 'on' or 'off'.³⁸⁷ For example, an epigenetic marker on a histone tail may cause DNA to be more tightly wrapped on the histone, making it no longer available to be read. Alternatively, the epigenetic marker could cause the DNA to be more loosely wrapped on the histone, enabling the body to read a gene which was previously unavailable. When a gene is turned on or off, the result can be physical or mental changes in a person. Some epigenetic markers are not wiped during fetal development, and thus changes in physical or mental outcome in a parent can be transferred to their child.

Historical Loss: Refers to a broad range of adverse experiences of Native Nations, including loss of land, broken treaties, and boarding school attendance. The word "loss" is, however, challenged by Kirmayer, Gone, & Moses.³⁸⁹ Kirmayer et al. argue that the experience of historical loss differs from a typical human experience of loss in such a way that the same word should not be used for both.

Historical Loss Associated Symptoms (HLAS): A set of symptoms, like sadness, anger, and intrusive thoughts, caused by historical loss. Whitbeck et al. created a measurement tool to quantify the impact of historical loss.

Historical Trauma: The "collective experience of violence perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples in the process of colonizing the Americas resulting in an unresolved humanitarian crisis for Native communities."³⁹² Historical trauma has also been defined as the "psychological trauma and loss experienced as a result of involvement in a historical event."³⁹³ When applied to Native communities, it has been defined as

...the legacy of numerous traumatic events, a community's experiences over generations and encompasses the psychological and social responses to such events. Scholars have suggested that the effects of these historically traumatic events are transmitted intergenerationally as descendants continue to identify emotionally with ancestral suffering. This collective trauma has been characterized by scholars as the soul wound, knowledge of which has been present in Indian Country for many generations.³⁹⁴

In Native communities specifically, historical trauma refers to a massive group experience that has the following characteristics: 1) it is an event or set of events, 2) the event(s) are collective phenomenon, felt by a group of people with a shared identity, 3) the event(s) have genocidal intent, 4) it/they cause(s) significant lifestyle change within the community, and 5) it/they incorporate(s) both psychological and social consequences of historical oppression. Historical trauma spans many generations and can combine with other individual contemporary stressors and traumas.³⁹⁵

The term "historical trauma" is used to refer to four distinct processes: 1) historical trauma events as those which illicit a response, 2) historical trauma as a type of response to a historical trauma event(s), 3) historical trauma as a pathway or mechanism by which an impact has intergenerational impact, and 4) historical trauma's interactions with other proximate factors (e.g., microaggression, domestic violence). The impacts of historical trauma can be felt at individual and community levels, and different types of historical trauma may result in different health responses.

Though some scholars discuss historical trauma as a form of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), PTSD is inadequate to describe historical trauma responses or symptoms. PTSD is associated with a single event (i.e., a massacre), while historical trauma refers to historical and contemporary events, continuously compounding through time and across generations (see Historical Trauma Events).³⁹⁶

For more information on this concept and definition:

- Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, "The Historical Trauma Response Among Natives and Its Relationship with Substance Abuse: A Lakota Illustration," *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 35:1 (2003): 7–13.
- Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart et al., "Historical Trauma Among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: Concepts, Research, and Clinical Considerations," *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 43:4 (2011): 282–90.
- Karina L. Walters et al., "Bodies Don't Just Tell Stories, They Tell Histories: Embodiment of Historical Trauma among American Indians and Alaska Natives," *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 8:1 (2011): 179–89.
- Michelle Sotero, "A Conceptual Model of Historical Trauma: Implications for Public Health Practice and

Research,” SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, Fall 2006).

- Joseph P. Gone, “Redressing First Nations Historical Trauma: Theorizing Mechanisms for Indigenous Culture as Mental Health Treatment,” *Transcultural Psychiatry* 50:5 (2013): 683–706.

Historical Trauma Events: Events that are widespread and affect many people within a specific group or population, are perpetrated by outsiders who act with destructive intent, and generate high levels of collective distress among the group or population affected (see Historical Trauma).³⁹⁷

Historical Trauma Responses: Responses to historical trauma events that continue to undermine the well-being of contemporary groups.³⁹⁸ Historical trauma response is defined by a constellation of reactions and symptoms, including mortality and morbidity from heart disease, hypertension, alcohol abuse, depression, and suicidal behavior. Additional symptoms have included anxiety, intrusive trauma imagery, depression, survivor guilt, elevated mortality rates from violent death, identification with ancestral pain and deceased ancestors, psychic numbing and poor affect tolerance, and unresolved grief. The historical trauma response is associated with *historical unresolved grief*.⁴⁰⁰

Historical Unresolved Grief: Historical unresolved grief is a component of the *historical trauma* response and refers to the unsettled distress that results from also being kept from engaging in traditional practices and ceremonies.⁴⁰¹

Multigenerational Trauma: Also referred to as intergenerational trauma. Trauma that occurs across generations and plains and which can be understood to be current, ancestral, historical, individual, or collective experiences.⁴⁰²

Residential School Syndrome: Symptoms are similar to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) but also include recurring intrusive memories, nightmares, flashbacks, avoidance of anything that resembles a residential school, interpersonal challenges such as detachment from others and challenges in relationships, diminished interest in cultural activities, deficient knowledge of traditional culture and cultural skills, trouble sleeping, poor anger management, impaired

concentration, deficient parenting skills, and a tendency to abuse alcohol or drugs.⁴⁰³

Resilience: Acknowledges that Native people rely on individual and communal strengths to survive difficult experiences. While defined in several ways, at its core, resilience describes a fortitude and ability to overcome adversity. In her work on Haskell, Myriam Vučković writes that “Indian families, communities, and cultures have been altered by the boarding school experience, but they have not been destroyed.” She goes on to note that the descendants of boarding school alumni “feel a particular obligation to prevent the further erosion of Indigenous culture and tradition. They keep their ancestors’ experiences alive and pass them on to the next generation.”⁴⁰⁵ Resilience, as a part of many Native nations’ value systems, has long been practiced and promoted in Indian Country.⁴⁰⁶

Resistance: Rather than seeing resistance as simply refusing to obey the rules, scholars now see it as a more complex set of actions and goals. In her work on Chilocco, for example, K. Tsianina Lomawaima writes that

“Indian people at boarding schools were not passive consumers of an ideology or lifestyle imparted from above by federal administrators ... they ... stretched and penetrated school boundaries. In the process, an institution founded and controlled by the federal government was inhabited and possessed by those whose identities the institution was committed to erase.”

Resistance, in other words, meant using education in ways that whites did not foresee. For example, Native students working on school newspapers resisted assimilation by using English language proficiency as a tool with which to claim

In his 2001 article, Brasfield comments that defining a specific pathology or set of symptoms (i.e., residential school syndrome) to describe the negative experiences of boarding school alumni was slightly misfocused. Rather than labeling alumni as having a “syndrome”, one might describe the specific pathology of those that designed the destructive boarding school system as the ones expressing signs of a “syndrome”.

their own space as Native authors. “By fashioning identities for themselves as writers,” she notes, “students gained control over their self-representations and revised what it meant to educated Indians.” These students weren’t only resisting the schools’ day-to-day rhythms and lessons, they were resisting their assimilationist meanings by inverting how language was used.⁴⁰⁷

ENDNOTES

382. Nutton et al., “Historical Trauma, Substance Use, and Indigenous Peoples,” 839-847.
383. Nutton et al., “Historical Trauma, Substance Use, and Indigenous Peoples,” 839-847; Waziyatawin Angela Wilson and Michael Yellow Bird, eds., *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2005).
384. Brave Heart et al., “Historical Trauma Among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas,” 282-290.
385. Shelley L. Berger et al., “An Operational Definition of Epigenetics,” *Genes & Development* 23:7 (2009): 781-83.
386. Carol Gianessi and Michael Lacy, “Epigenetics,” *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine* 89:4 (2016): 427-29.
387. Berger et al. “An Operational Definition of Epigenetics,” 781; Roxanne J. Argie, “Epigenetics,” in *Biology*, ed. Melissa S. Hill, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (Macmillan Reference, 2016), 46-47; Sarah C.P. Williams, “Epigenetics,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 110:9 (2013): 3209.
388. Brockie et al., “The Relationship of Adverse Childhood Experiences to PTSD, Depression, Poly-Drug Use and Suicide Attempt in Reservation-Based Native American Adolescents and Young Adults,” 411-421.
389. Kirmayer et al., “Rethinking Historical Trauma,” 299-319.
390. Whitbeck, et al., “Conceptualizing and Measuring Historical Trauma Among American Indian People,” 119-130.
391. Whitbeck et al., “Conceptualizing and Measuring Historical Trauma Among American Indian People,” 119-130.
392. T. N. Brockie, M. Heinzlmann, and J. Gill, “A Framework to Examine the Role of Epigenetics in Health Disparities among Native Americans,” *Nursing Research and Practice* 2013 (2013): 2; Brockie et al., “The Relationship of Adverse Childhood Experiences to PTSD, Depression, Poly-Drug Use and Suicide Attempt in Reservation-Based Native American Adolescents and Young Adults,” 412.
393. Carr, et al., “I’m not really healed ... I’m just bandaged up,” 40.
394. Lajimodiere, “American Indian Boarding Schools in the United States: A Brief History and Legacy,” 259.
395. Mohatt et al., “Historical Trauma as Public Narrative,” 128-136.
396. Brave Heart, “Gender Differences in the Historical Trauma Response Among the Lakota,” 1-21.
397. Bombay et al., “The Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools,” 320-338.
398. Bombay et al., “The Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools,” 320-338.
399. Brave Heart, “Gender Differences in the Historical Trauma Response Among the Lakota,” 1-21.
400. Brave Heart et al., “Historical Trauma Among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas,” 282-290; Brave Heart, “The Historical Trauma Response Among Natives and Its Relationship with Substance Abuse,” 7-13.
401. Brave Heart, “Gender Differences in the Historical Trauma Response Among the Lakota,” 1-21; Brave Heart et al., “Historical Trauma Among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas,” 282-290.
402. Linklater, *Decolonizing Trauma Work*.
403. Brasfield, “Residential School Syndrome,” 78-81.
404. LaFromboise et al., “Family, Community, And School Influences On Resilience Among American Indian Adolescents In The Upper Midwest,” 193-209.
405. Vučković, “Voices From Haskell,” 276-277.
406. Goodkind et al., “We’re Still in a Struggle,” 1019-1036.
407. Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light*, 167; Emery, *Recovering Native American Writings in the Boarding School Press*, 23. See also Andrews, “Turning the Tables on Assimilation,” 407-430. Similarly framed responses occurred in many other facets of Native life. See Thomas Carter, Edward Chappell and Timothy McCleary, “In the Lodge of the Chickadee: Architecture and Cultural Resistance on the Crow Indian Reservation, 1884-1920,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 10 (2005): 97-111; Harvey Markowitz, “Converting The Rosebud Sicangu Lakota Catholicism In The Late Nineteenth And Early Twentieth Centuries,” *Great Plains Quarterly* 32 (2012): 3-23; David Rich Lewis, “Reservation Leadership and the Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy: William Wash and the Northern Utes, 1865-1928,” *Ethnohistory* 38 (1991): 124-148.

Appendix: School-Specific Resources

This appendix provides a selected list of boarding school-specific works. There are many more resources that might be of interest. The Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition has a searchable resource database available at <https://boardingschoolhealing.org/resource-database-center/>.

Albuquerque Indian School

Riding In, James. "The Contracting of Albuquerque Indian School," *Indian Historian* 11:4 (1978): 20-27.

Bloomfield Academy (Chickasaw)

Cobb, Amanda J. *Listening to Our Grandmothers' Stories: The Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw Females, 1852-1949* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007)

Bacone Indian School

Neuman, Lisa K. "Indian Play: Indigenous Identities at Bacone College" (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014)

Carlisle

Bell, Genevieve. "Telling Stories Out Of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1879-1918." Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1998.

Fear-Segal, Jacqueline and Susan Rose. "Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations" (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016)

Malmsheimer, L. M. "Imitation White Man': Images of Transformation at the Carlisle Indian School," *Studies in Visual Communication*, 11:4(1985): 54-75.

Pratt, Richard Henry. "Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904" (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003)

Chemawa

Collins, Cary C. "The Broken Crucible Of Assimilation: Forest Grove Indian School And The Origins Of Off-Reservation Boarding-School Education In The West," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 101:4 (2000): 466-507.

Collins, Cary C. "Oregon's Carlisle: Teaching 'America' at Chemawa Indian School," *Columbia: The Magazine of Northwest History* 12 (1998): 6-10.

Parkhurst, Melissa D. *To Win the Indian Heart: Music at Chemawa Indian School* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2014)

Reddick, SuAnn M. "The Evolution of Chemawa Indian School: From Red River to Salem, 1825-1885," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 101:4 (2000): 444-465.

Cherokee Female Seminary (Oklahoma)

Mihesuah, Devon A. "Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education Of Women At The Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909" (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997)

Chilocco

Bess, Jennifer. "More Than a Food Fight: Intellectual Traditions and Cultural Continuity in Chilocco's Indian School Journal, 1902-1918," *American Indian Quarterly* 37:1/2 (2013): 77-110.

Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. "They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School" (Lincoln: University of

Nebraska Press, 1995)

Lomawaima, K. Tsianina. "Oral Histories from Chilocco Indian Agricultural School 1920-1940," *American Indian Quarterly* (1987): 241-254.

Flandreau

Child, Brenda J. *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1998).

Child, Brenda J. "Runaway boys, resistant girls: Rebellion at Flandreau and Haskell, 1900-1940," *Journal of American Indian Education* (1996): 49-57.

M. J. B. Lee. "Turning the Notion of Community on its Head: SDSU Flandreau Indian School Success Academy and Community," in Charles L. Woodard, ed., "Perils and Promise: Essays on Community in South Dakota and Beyond" (Brookings: South Dakota Agricultural Heritage Museum, 2007): 99-116.

Ft. Totten Indian School

Davison, Kathleen, ed. "Fort Totten: Military Post and Indian School, 1867-1959" (Bismarck: North Dakota State Historical Society, 2010).

Ft. Shaw Indian School

Peavy, Linda S., and Ursula Smith. "Full-Court Quest: The Girls from Fort Shaw Indian School, Basketball Champions Of The World" (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008)

Genoa

Goodburn, Amy. "Literacy Practices at the Genoa Industrial Indian School," *Great Plains Quarterly* (1999): 35-52.

Haskell

Child, Brenda J. "Runaway boys, resistant girls: Rebellion at Flandreau and Haskell, 1900-1940," *Journal of American Indian Education* (1996): 49-57.

Child, Brenda J. "Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900–1940" (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

Milk, Theresa. "Haskell Institute: 19th Century Stories of Sacrifice and Survival" (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007)

Rader, Benjamin G. "'The Greatest Drama in Indian Life': Experiments in Native American Identity and Resistance at the Haskell Institute Homecoming of 1926," *Western Historical Quarterly* 35:4 (2004): 429-450.

Schmidt, Raymond. "Lords of the Prairie: Haskell Indian School Football, 1919-1930," *Journal of Sport History* 28:3 (2001): 403-426.

Vučković, Myriam. "Voices from Haskell: Indian Students between Two Worlds, 1884–1928" (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008).

Hampton Institute

Ahern, Wilbert H. "The Returned Indians: Hampton Institute and Its Indian Alumni, 1879-1893," *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 10:4 (1983): 101-119.

Lindsey, Donal F. "Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923" (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995)

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Keams Canyon School

Adams, David Wallace. "Schooling the Hopi: Federal Indian policy writ small, 1887-1917," *Pacific Historical Review* 48:3 (1979): 335-356.

Phoenix Indian School

Parker, Dorothy R. "Phoenix Indian School: The Second Half-Century" (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996)
Trennert, Robert A. Jr. "Peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must: The Phoenix Indian School, 1890-1901," *The Journal of Arizona History* 20:3 (1979): 297-322.
Trennert, Robert A. Jr. "The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935" (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988)

Pipestone School

Eagle, Adam Fortunate. "Pipestone: My Life In An Indian Boarding School" (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012)
Laliberte, David J. "Natives, Neighbors, & the National Game: Baseball At The Pipestone Indian Training School," *Minnesota History* 62:2 (2010): 60-69.
Landrum, Cynthia Leanne. "Acculturation of the Dakota Sioux: The Boarding School Experience for Students at Flandreau and Pipestone Indian Schools." Ph.D. dissertation, Oklahoma State University: 2002.
Child, Brenda J. "Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940" (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998)

Rainy Mountain Boarding School

Ellis, Clyde. "To Change Them Forever: Indian Education At The Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920" (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996)

Ramah Navajo Community School

Manuelito, Kathryn. "The Role Of Education In American Indian Self-Determination: Lessons From The Ramah Navajo Community School," *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 36:1 (2005): 73-87.

Rapid City Indian School

Riney, Scott. "I Like the School So I Want to Come Back': The Enrollment of American Indian Students at the Rapid City Indian School," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 22:2 (1998): 171-192.
Riney, Scott. "The Rapid City Indian School, 1898-1933" (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999)

Santa Fe Indian School

Hyer, Sally. "One House, One Voice, One Heart: Native American Education at the Santa Fe Indian School" (Albuquerque: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1990)

Sherman Indian Institute

Bahr, Diana Meyers. "The Students of Sherman Indian School: Education and Native Identity Since 1892" (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014)
Gilbert, Matthew Sakiestewa. "Education Beyond The Mesas: Hopi Students At Sherman Institute, 1902-1929" (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010)
Keller J.A. "Empty Beds: Indian Student Health at Sherman Institute, 1902-1922" (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 2002)

Trafzer, Clifford E. Trafzer, Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert, and Lorene Sisquoc, eds., "The Indian School on Magnolia Avenue: Voices and Images from Sherman Institute" (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2012)

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Barusch, Amanda, and Christine Tenbarge. "Chapter 7: Indigenous Elders in Rural America." *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* 41, no. 1–2 (2004): 121–36.

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