THE DIFFERENT STORIES OF CREE WOMAN, DALEEN KAY BOSSE (MUSKEGO), AND DAKOTA-SIOUX WOMAN, AMBER TARA-LYNN REDMAN: UNDERSTANDING THEIR DISAPPEARANCES AND MURDERS THROUGH MEDIA RE-PRESENTATIONS AND FAMILY MEMBERS’ NARRATIVES

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Abstract

Mainstream media re-presentations continue to position Aboriginal women as naturally hypersexual and immoral. This discursive strategy justifies, enables, and incites violence against Aboriginal women (Keating, 2006; LaRocque, 1990). In order to explore 1) how media outlets and agents can be responsive to family and friends of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women and 2) how media re-presentations can effectively disrupt rather than re-produce white masculine and colonial hegemony, I conducted this thesis project with my co-researchers, Pauline Muskego and Gwenda Yuzicappi. Pauline is the mother of Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego), a Cree woman from Onion Lake First Nation who disappeared in 2004 and was found, murdered, in 2008. Gwenda is the mother of Amber Tara-Lynn Redman, a Dakota Sioux woman from Standing Buffalo First Nation who disappeared in 2005 and was found, murdered, in 2008. This research process involved 1) engaging in conversations with Pauline and Gwenda about their daughters, 2) conducting an analysis of how mainstream and Aboriginal media outlets re-presented Daleen and Amber’s disappearances and murders, and 3) interviewing journalists who covered these stories.

In this thesis, I relate the stories Pauline and Gwenda shared with me about their daughters and their experiences with journalists. I also examine the ways Amber and Daleen’s stories were framed during the time they were missing: through the justice system’s efforts to find Daleen and Amber, Amber and Daleen’s family members’ search for them as well as their experiences missing Amber and Daleen and not knowing where they were, as well as the broader issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Then, I examine media re-presentations of Amber and Daleen’s murders and the trial of
their (accused) perpetuators. I discuss how the stories of Daleen and Amber’s murders were primarily re-presented through justice system processes and discourses. I take the position that the dominance of justice system discursive materials, spokespeople, and processes in these re-presentations effectively individualizes Daleen and Amber’s murders. I discuss the importance of media outlets and journalists re-presenting family members’ healing journeys in addition to what has traditionally been accepted by media outlets as newsworthy events. Then, I provide recommendations for media outlets, which are also relevant to Aboriginal organizations, family members of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women, and allies.

My purpose in conducting this research and making these recommendations is to add to the dialogue about how media outlets can be more responsive (to family members) and transformative (of white masculine and colonial hegemony) when covering stories of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been found murdered. At the same time, the discursive and material landscape of Canada under the current Conservative government has stifled this conversation. The recent cuts to CBC (2012), Native Women’s Association of Canada’s Sisters In Spirit initiative (2010) and Health Department (2012) as well as the defunding of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (2012) illustrates how the current federal Canadian government, with its morally and fiscally conservative white-settler ideology, is reinforcing Aboriginal women’s marginalization and undermining their safety.
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To Amber Tara-Lynn Redman, Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego), and their families.

I am humbled and honoured to be trusted with your stories and to conduct this research. I put forth this thesis as an act of respectful remembering and envisioning possible futures where Aboriginal women are not targeted for violence.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Complaints have reached us about the squaw nuisance. It is certainly not pleasant, to say nothing of the moral side of the case, to have your porch monopolized by one or more Indian *femmes galantes* every night after dusk and is a matter that should receive attention either from the Council or the Indian authorities. If they are to be tolerated at all off their reserves, why not prohibit them from appearing in town after dark.

*The Regina Leader*, April 12, 1887, p. 1

As Sarah Carter (1997) points out, in the late nineteenth Century, the colonial construction of the Aboriginal woman as “squaw,” hypersexual, drunken, licentious, dirty and insolent, the “beast of burden” of her society emerged on the Prairies (K. Anderson, 2000; Carter, 1997). This image was re-produced through various means and media, including the frontier press. Colonial constructions of Aboriginal women’s hypersexual and immoral “nature” were employed at various times for various reasons, for instance when white men murdered Aboriginal women. In 1889, when Rosalie, a Cree woman was killed by William “Jumbo” Fisk in Calgary, the majority of Calgary

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1 *The Regina Leader* was founded in 1883 by Nicholas Flood Davin, who owned the paper until 1895. Davin had close ties with the Conservative Party as author of the *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds* also known as *The Davin Report* (in 1879), secretary of the *Report on the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration* and finally as a Member of Legislative Assembly (in 1887) (Chapleau and Gray, 1885; Moll, 2005). In examining how *The Regina Leader* and *The Davin Report* constructed Aboriginal peoples during this timeframe, it is evident that both media enable and justify colonialist policies, such as the “pass system.” Introduced after the Riel Resistance in 1885, the “pass system,” required First Nations to get a pass from the Indian Agent in order to travel off of reserve (Carter, 1997).

2 This paper will use both the terms “Aboriginal” when referring to Indigenous peoples of Canada, who are constitutionally recognized as “Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.” (CANADA, 1982). This paper will use the term “Indigenous” when referring to Indigenous peoples internationally or in a location outside of Canada.

3 I use the term “re-production” to draw attention to how these constructs are constantly in a state of production and reproduction. They are not stable, but shift depending on time, place, and context.
townspeople agreed, “Rosalie was only a squaw and…her death did not matter much.”

Similarly, on March 5, 1889, The Regina Leader published an article entitled “An Indian Woman Mutilated After the Style of Jack the Ripper.” This article stated Calgary “was in a great excitement over the murder of a dissolute squaw named Rosalie” (p. 1).

Today, Aboriginal women continue to be positioned as naturally hypersexual and immoral within dominant white-settler Canadian society. This discursive strategy justifies, enables, and incites violence against Aboriginal women (Keating, 2008; LaRocque, 1990). However, this construct is not left unchallenged. In particular, Aboriginal women are making visible the contradictions between the one-dimensional squaw-drudge image and their complex identities (as well as the identities of their female family members). Pauline Muskego and Gwenda Yuzicappi, my co-researchers on this project, are two women who have challenged this construct by raising awareness about their daughters’ disappearances and murders. Pauline is the mother of Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego), a Cree woman from Onion Lake First Nation who was a mother, a daughter, a sister, a wife, an artist, and an education student. In 2004, Daleen disappeared from Saskatoon where she lived with her husband and daughter, she was 25 years old. In 2008 she was found murdered halfway between Martinsville and Warman. Gwenda is the mother of Amber Tara-Lynn Redman, a Dakota-Sioux woman from Standing Buffalo First Nation. Amber was a daughter, a sister, and an important community member who carried with her strong traditional teachings. Amber disappeared in 2005 from Fort Qu’Appelle, a white-settler town near Standing Buffalo First Nation. Amber was found murdered on Little Black Bear First Nation in 2008.

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4 As D. Smith documents in “Bloody Murder Almost Became Miscarriage of Justice,” this Cree woman was only identified as Rosalie in the legal documents and newspapers (as cited in Carter, 1997, pp. 189-190).
During this research process, I 1) engaged in conversations with Pauline and Gwenda about their daughters and the murders, 2) analyzed how mainstream and Aboriginal media outlets have told Daleen and Amber’s stories, and 3) interviewed journalists who were engaged in this storytelling process. In doing so, I addressed the following questions:

a) What stories do the family members of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered tell of their loved ones? How do these stories compare to Aboriginal and mainstream media re-presentations?\(^5\)

b) What are these family members’ experiences with mainstream and Aboriginal journalists? What do they think of media coverage of their loved ones?

c) What are the discursive practices underlying more problematic re-presentations of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered?

d) What are the discursive practices that are more responsive to family members’ concerns and understanding of their loved one?

e) What are the discursive practices that are more disruptive of white masculine and colonial hegemony?\(^6\)

Following the introduction, I begin this thesis with a discussion of violence against Aboriginal women and the constraints and challenges media outlets face in trying to tell these stories. In chapter 3, I outline the *mestizaje* theoretical framework that guides my research approach. In chapter 4, I describe my methodology, which brings together Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis and Indigenous Storytelling. Chapter 5

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\(^5\) I differentiate between represent (as in political representation) and re-presentation as to speak for, or portray within research findings, mainstream media and artwork (Spivak, 1994, pp. 70-71).

\(^6\) Following from Juschka (2009), I use the term masculine hegemony to describe particular formations where masculinity is linked to power even when women deploy this masculine power.
describes the methods that I used to gather, listen to, and analyze these stories. In chapter 6, I relate the stories Pauline and Gwenda shared with me about their daughters, Daleen and Amber. Then, in chapter 7, I analyze how mainstream and Aboriginal media outlets told Daleen and Amber’s stories while they were missing. In chapter 8, I examine media coverage of Amber and Daleen’s murders and the trial of their (accused) perpetrators. In my last chapter, chapter 9, I relay some recommendations for media outlets, Aboriginal organizations, family members of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women, and allies. My purpose in conducting this research is to add to the dialogue about how media outlets can be more responsive (to family members) and transformative (of white masculine and colonial hegemony) when re-telling the stories of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been found murdered. An in-depth analysis of news production is beyond the intent and scope of this project and an area for future research.

In approaching this research, I have repeatedly confronted my own position in relation to Pauline, Gwenda, Daleen, and Amber, as well as other Aboriginal women activists and disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women.\(^7\) Absolon (Anishinabe researcher) and Willett (Cree researcher) (2005) argue that both understanding and explaining ones’ location in relation to the research is essential for ethical research with Aboriginal communities. In recognizing my position in relation to Aboriginal women, I do not claim “sisterhood” with them, as this would render the differences between us invisible. However, I do not view the differences between Aboriginal women and white-settler women as natural. Rather, I understand these differences of perspective and power as discursively and materially constructed (Weedon, 2004). They are discursively constructed through the colonialist, racist, sexist, and heterosexist discourses which are

\(^7\) In approaching this research, I have also confronted the tension between journalists and academics.
circulating in colonial Canada along with counter- and alternative discourses. They are *materially constructed* through our lived experiences, which are shaped by discourses, institutional practices and regulation, as well as social and economic conditions. Further, I am aware that as a white-settler woman residing in Canada, I have been awarded privileges because I am a descendent of colonialists and white-settlers. One of the privileges that I have been awarded is that within the mainstream media dialogue of “us” versus “them,” as unmarked by race, at times I am viewed as a member of us, or the imagined community of the nation-state (B. Anderson, 1991). As I am also a woman and therefore marked by gender/sex, at other times I am positioned as them, or the “other.”

Some Aboriginal women activists do not consider themselves to be feminists and instead consider feminism to be racist and colonialist. I have realized this through my experiences as a feminist activist working in solidarity with Aboriginal organizations, reading Aboriginal women’s writings and through my conversations with Aboriginal women students, professors, scholars, activists, Elders, and community members. I struggle to engage in a feminist analysis that is anti-racist and decolonizing and one that honours Aboriginal women’s voices and experiences. As a part of this struggle, I have engaged in a dialogue with Aboriginal women. That is, I have built relationships with Aboriginal women and am continuously entering into conversations with Aboriginal women about what needs to be done in the struggle against colonialism, racism, and sexism, and what my role as a white-settler woman is within this struggle. My struggle is

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8 For instance, Monture-Angus (Mohawk) states, “The simple truth is feminism as an ideology remains colonial” (1995, p. 171). However, many mainstream feminist organizations have worked hard to build alliances with Aboriginal women organizations. For instance, the Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) has supported Sharon McIvor’s legal challenge of the *Indian Act* since 1985. More recently in Saskatchewan, the Prairie Lily Feminist Society works closely with the Saskatchewan Sisters in Spirit (LEAF, April 2010). NWAC, the largest Aboriginal women’s organization in Canada, is feminist (Jacobs qtd. CBC, July 24, 2008). Also, see J. Green (2007) for a discussion of the resistance to (and disciplining of) Aboriginal feminists and feminisms.
informed by Kuokkanen’s (Sami) work in “The Responsibility of the Academy: A Call for Doing Homework” (2007). Kuokkanen draws on Spivak to argue that academics have a responsibility to engage in “ethical singularity” with Indigenous people, a concept strongly linked to the Indigenous concept of “giving back.” Kuokkanen expands on Spivak’s concept of ethical singularity. It is the commitment to engage with the other not only in times of crisis, in ways that do not essentialize the other, but also in non-salvage, non-hierarchical terms. Engaging with the other in non-salvage terms means “the responsibility toward the other must not emerge from hierarchical relations that assume ‘rescuing’ the ‘other’ or knowing what is best for the ‘other’” (Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 85).

This dialogue and relationship building never ends, but up until this point it has included but has not been limited to: reading Indigenous women’s writings, standing in solidarity with Indigenous women and men in resistance to racialized and sexualized violence, working at an after-school program with Aboriginal girls, learning at First Nations University of Canada from Elders, professors, and students (including my co-advisor for this research project), drumming and singing with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women as part of the Rainwater Singers, and having conversations, as well as working and personal relationships, with Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and women who are working to construct a truly postcolonial world. It is with my position in mind that I turn to discuss violence against Aboriginal women and some of the different factors that shape how these stories of violence can be told.
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Violence Against Aboriginal Women/Intersections of “Race” and Class

Violence is perpetuated against women in many forms, including psychological or emotional abuse, financial abuse, sexual coercion, as well as physical and sexual abuse. “Common sense” understands violence against women as isolated incidents that are perpetuated by crazed individuals, even though research contradicts this (Jiwani & Young, 2006). As many feminists argue, all relationships between men and women, including intimate relationships, are shaped by the naturalization of difference. That is, the different socially determined roles, values, and power seen as part of women and men’s nature. While this is a complex process, as Sev’er (2002) points out, while “all men are not ‘all powerful’ and all women are not just ‘all powerless’ and all men are not abusers, what is noted is that men abuse and kill while women and children get abused and die in disproportionate numbers” (p. 77)

Due to the limitations of quantitative approaches, statistically measuring how violence affects women’s lives in Canada and other locations is simply not possible. Measuring the degree that women experience legally defined physical and sexual assault is difficult in and of itself. Admittedly “[a] subset of police services across Canada is able to track the gender of victims and offenders for crimes reported to them.” (Johnson, 2006, p. 16) However, it has been shown that these police statistics grossly underestimate the prevalence of violence against women since slightly over one-third of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and less than ten percent of sexual assaults are reported to police (Johnson, 2006). While population-based surveys have gotten closer to capturing the impact of this violence, they still underestimate it. According to Statistics Canada, in
2004 seven percent of women reported that they had experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of their partner within the last five years. Similarly, two percent reported being physically or sexually victimized during the last year. In Saskatchewan the rates of reported violence are even higher, with nine percent of women reporting that their partners had either sexually or physically victimized them within the last five years (Johnson, 2006).

Indigenous women activists have long spoken out against both institutions’ and individuals’ victimization of Indigenous women. In Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide, Smith (Cherokee) (2005) reveals how sexual violence has been and is enacted upon Aboriginal women’s bodies through sexual assault, boarding school policies, environmental racism, racist reproductive policies, spiritual appropriation, and medical experimentation. Smith argues that structural and individual victimization of Indigenous women is historically bound to colonial projects.

It is largely accepted that population-based surveys significantly underestimate the physical and sexual victimization of Aboriginal women, even more so than violence against non-Aboriginal women (Johnson, 2006). Even with this limitation, Aboriginal women report experiencing violence at much higher rates than Aboriginal men and non-Aboriginal men and women. In 2004, Aboriginal women reported higher rates of IPV than non-Aboriginal women as well as “the most severe and life-threatening types of [IPV], including being beaten or choked, having had a gun or knife used against them, or being sexually assaulted” (Johnson, 2006, p. 65). Aboriginal women are eight times more likely to be murdered by their spouse (Johnson, 2006). Similarly, in a study with survivors of IPV living in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, almost half of the
women self-identified as being of Aboriginal ancestry, which is disproportionately high (Hampton, Kubik, Juschka, Bourassa & Woods, 2010). In 2006, approximately 16% of women living in Manitoba, 15% of women living in Saskatchewan, and 6% of women living in Alberta identified as Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 2008). White-settler common sense assumes that Aboriginal women are violated more because their partners, Aboriginal men, are inherently violent. However, Smith (among others) points out Aboriginal women have been rendered vulnerable to violence by colonial processes and discourses (Smith, 2005; LaRocque, 2002; NWAC, 2010). Through colonial practices and policies, such as residential school policies, the Indian Act (past and present), partisan frontier press, and today’s mainstream media, Aboriginal communities have been constructed as deviant, under-developed, and in need of the colonizer’s intervention and control. Further, through the imposition of colonial gender norms on Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal women have been devalued, stripped of status and power and, as a result, are more vulnerable to violence (Bourassa, Hampton & McKay-McNabb, 2004).

Smith argues that white men’s brutalization of Indigenous women has been rendered invisible. Instead of recognizing this violence and its link to the colonial project, white institutions often blame these crimes on Aboriginal men or conversely, Aboriginal women themselves (Smith, 2005; Amnesty International, 2004). When Aboriginal women disappear or are victimized, colonial constructs operating through white-settler institutional discourses “make sense” of this violence. This process positions Aboriginal women as responsible for their own victimization, often through evoking the princess/squaw binary and related colonial motifs.
During early contact and colonization, (masculine) colonizers constructed Indigenous women as either hypersexual Indian Princesses or Squaw-Drudges (K. Anderson, 2000; Carter, 1997; R. Green, 2007). Colonizers re-produced the princess/squaw binary as a part of the process of conquest and domination, an ongoing process. The Indian Princess is often pictured with light skin, wearing clothes that combine European and traditional Aboriginal dress. She is an ally of white men and through this alliance and her own nature she is able to transcend her Aboriginality (K. Anderson, 2000; R. Green, 2007). In opposition to the princess, the squaw-drudge emerges as an overweight, dark, and crude featured woman who is drunken, licentious, dirty and insolent, the “beast of burden” of her society (K. Anderson, 2000; R. Green, 2007). As R. Green (2007) points out, since the Indian Princess’ sexuality “can be hinted at but never realized,” the squaw emerges as the embodiment of Indigenous women’s sexuality (p. 22). LaRocque (1990) argues that the “image of the sexually loose ‘squaw’ renders all Native girls and women vulnerable to gross, physical and/or verbal abuse” (p. 90).

This construct is embedded within white-settler common sense, which understands Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to violence as the natural result of their high-risk lifestyle, irresponsible behaviour, and location within dangerous neighborhoods (Jiwani and Young, 2006; Razack, 2002). While classism operates within this construct and the justification of this violence, there is a conflation of Aboriginality and poverty. Often, even Aboriginal women who do not live in poverty or engage in behaviours deemed high-risk are assumed to (McKenzie, 2009). This shapes the experience of women and families in a number of ways, for instance often when an Aboriginal woman
disappears, the justice system constructs her as “choosing to go missing” despite families’ convictions otherwise (Amnesty International, 2004). The naturalization of Aboriginal women’s lifestyle “choices,” behaviours, and location within poor neighborhoods disconnects these situations from the colonial, racist and sexist policies, practices, and discourses that made them possible. As a result, white-settler society is not implicated in these situations or the violence that Aboriginal women are vulnerable to within them (Jiwani and Young, 2006).

However, Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to violence was demystified and denaturalized when Amnesty International (2004) released their influential report *Stolen Sisters: Discrimination and Violence against Aboriginal Women in Canada*. *Stolen Sisters* provided a voice for Aboriginal women’s organizations (including Native Women’s Association of Canada or NWAC) which had recently begun drawing “attention to acts of violence against Indigenous women” in predominantly white communities (Amnesty International, 2004, p. 23). Amnesty International points out a number of factors contribute to Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to violence within these communities. These factors include the historical (and present day) colonialist, racist, and sexist government policies that have marginalized Aboriginal women socially and economically pushing a high number of Aboriginal women into situations of homelessness, survival sex work, and other circumstances of extreme poverty (Amnesty International, 2004).

Amnesty International argues that both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal men are targeting Aboriginal women, because social and economic marginalization has rendered them as “disposable” in the eyes of white-settler society (2004). These men may be
motivated by racism and/or sexism in their attacks against Aboriginal women. However, these men may also choose to attack Aboriginal women based on the assumption that they, as perpetrators, will not be held accountable by the justice system because of white-settler society’s indifference to Aboriginal women’s well-being and safety (Amnesty International, 2004). Indeed, the Canadian justice system often does not pursue violent offenders who attack Aboriginal women as diligently as those who attack white women (Elizabeth Fry Society, n.d.). This is in line with Razack’s (2002) analysis of Alex Ternowetsky and David Kummerfield’s trial for the murder of Pamela George, a Saulteaux woman who worked occasionally in the sex trade on Regina’s Stroll. Razack argues that Ternowetsky and Kummerfield escaped their full legal responsibility in her death due to numerous factors, including their race, class, and masculine privilege as well as the association of George with prostitution, criminality, and degeneracy as presented throughout the trial proceedings.

In 2005, NWAC’s Sister in Spirit (SIS) initiative received funding from the federal government. This “five-year research, education and policy initiative…. [addressed] the root causes, circumstances and trends of missing and murdered Aboriginal women” (NWAC, 2010). As a part of this initiative, NWAC gathered quantitative and qualitative data in order to more thoroughly document Aboriginal women’s experience of violence. As of March 31, 2010, NWAC had recorded 582 Aboriginal girls and women’s disappearances and murders (2010). 153 of these Aboriginal women and girls were murdered between 2000 and 2008, which represents about ten percent of female homicides in Canada. This is particularly concerning since Aboriginal women make up only three percent of all women and girls living in Canada.
Aboriginal women and girls are particularly vulnerable to violence in Western Canada, as more than two-thirds of their recorded disappearances and murders occurred in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Further, the men killing Aboriginal women and girls are just as likely to be strangers or acquaintances as intimate partners (NWAC, 2010). The revelation is especially shocking when revisiting the statistics above which indicate Aboriginal women are much more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be killed by their intimate partners (Johnson, 2006).

The important work conducted by NWAC’s Sister in Spirit initiative, which made visible an epidemic of violence against Aboriginal women by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal (predominantly white-settler) men, abruptly came to a halt in 2010 when the federal government did not renew its funding (NWAC, 2010; Rabson, Nov. 5, 2010). While the federal government had announced in the 2010 budget that ten million dollars would be invested in order to deal with the “disturbingly high number of missing and murdered [A]boriginal women,” none of this money was allocated to renewing the SIS initiative (Rabson, Nov. 5, 2010). Four million dollars was awarded to the Canadian Police Information Center (RCMP) for the creation of a national registry of missing persons and unidentified remains in order to aid police investigations into these cases. The federal government also instructed NWAC that they were to no longer maintain their database of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women, which holds stories that family members have trusted them with (Gergin, 2011). However, according to their website, NWAC keeps their database updated, recording the stories of Aboriginal women and girls who disappear (NWAC, n.d.). The RCMP database will not be functioning for years

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9 According to Statistics Canada (2006), approximately 60% of Aboriginal women live in the Western provinces.
and even when it is, it has been suggested that much will be lost in this database that is captured by NWAC’s (Newlove & Barrera, Nov. 4 2010; MacCharles, March 1, 2011).\(^\text{10}\)

NWAC did receive funding for a smaller initiative from the Women’s Community Fund, but they were advised they could not use the name “Sisters In Spirit,” conduct research, or advocate on behalf of Aboriginal women within Canada (Newlove & Barrera 2010). The refusal of the federal government to renew SIS initiative’s funding, combined with other recent cuts to Aboriginal peoples and particularly Aboriginal women’s health programming illustrates how the current government, with its morally and fiscally conservative white-settler ideology, is reinforcing Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to violence rather than promoting their safety and space within the body politic of Canada.\(^\text{11}\)

2.2 What Constrains Media Responses to Disappeared and Murdered Aboriginal Women?

Within white masculine hegemony, discourses such as medicine, psychiatry, and law intersect with racist, classist, and sexist discourses. These intersecting discourses operate through medical, psychiatric and judicial institutions as well as other contexts and media (Kallio, 2006). They are taken as natural and inform the norms and practices of a number of institutions, including mainstream media outlets.\(^\text{12}\)

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\(^{10}\) For instance, the RCMP often does not gather information about Aboriginal identity (NWAC, 2010). There are some cases in NWAC’s database that the police have closed, but families have doubts about them. There are also some historical cases that the police have never opened, but are recorded in NWAC’s database (Newlove & Barrera, Nov. 4, 2010).

\(^{11}\) As of the 2012 budget, both the National Aboriginal Health Organization and the entire NWAC Health Department have been defunding (CBC, April 9, 2012; NWAC, 2012)

\(^{12}\) Mainstream media includes a number of entertainment and informational elements. When I refer to mainstream media or mainstream media outlets within the body of my thesis, I am referring to mainstream news outlets and their daily news.
It is widely accepted that news outlets and journalists working for them “have an obligation to foster citizenship and civic responsibility” (MacDonald, 2003, p. 55). As J. Green (2009) points out, mainstream media excludes and stereotypes Aboriginal people, while simultaneously operating as a “vehicle for free speech, a right in democratic societies, and explicitly a constitutional right of citizens in Canada” (p. 140). In recent years, more and more people are questioning whether news outlets and journalists are fulfilling their obligation to citizens (MacDonald, 2003). The material and discursive conditions journalists are working in contribute to the recent changes in news coverage and the growing skepticism towards journalists’ democratic role.

Since the 1970s, there have been discursive, economic, and political shifts with journalism being conceptualized more and more as a business. Since this time, the concentration of media ownership has increased substantially across a number of media (ie. television, radio, and newspapers). This has been accompanied by a decrease of most corporate newsrooms’ resources (Soderlund & Romanow, 2005). Public broadcasting has also been affected by this trend. For instance, the Conservative government made another round of severe cuts to CBC’s budget in 2012 (CBC, April 4, 2012). In recent years reliance on social media and other Internet-based information and communications has also increased dramatically. These different elements have contributed to the reconfiguration of journalistic practices and norms (McLean, 2005; Soderlund & Romanow, 2005; Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, 2006). Russel stated in an interview, as a result of the increasing concentration of media ownership and accompanying consolidation of different media outlets, most Canadian newspapers, including the Saskatoon StarPhoenix, have eliminated the Aboriginal Beat,
which has compromised the coverage of Aboriginal issues (as cited in Goulding, 2001). Similarly, in “Reflections of a Northern Saskatchewan Journalist,” Read (2010) writes “there are many reasons that journalists aren’t covering a story [about a missing or murdered Aboriginal women] or are covering it in a particular way.” Read lists staffing shortages and editorial decisions as two factors that shape if and how journalists cover these stories (p. 162).

Myra MacDonald (2003) points out “the media are now at best partial originators of ideas” (p. 2). MacDonald goes on to state:

The demands of accountants and advertisers, spin doctors and other lobby groups, together with audience tastes that require careful and sometimes subtle massaging, ensure that the creativity of the media professional lies more in manoeuvring a way through pre-existing and competing discourses than in inventing anything from scratch (p. 2).

MacDonald’s argument is illustrated by Canadian labour statistics. Between 2007 and 2009, there were over three times as many Public Relations Officers as journalists (Service Canada, 2012a; Service Canada, 2012b). Similarly, MacLean (2005), using CKCK TV (now CTV Regina) as a case study, shows how within reconfigured newsrooms the pressures of the day-to-day news production make certain stories, particularly certain investigative stories that question institutional power, less possible. This, along with journalists, producers, and editors’ reliance on Public Relations Officers and the institutions they work for, creates conditions where the perspectives of the powerful are often re-produced. These institutions and their spokespeople are what Hall et. al. refer to as the “primary definers” of news topics (1978, p. 58). Within Canada, most institutions
continue to be dominated by white-settler masculine ideals and norms. Thus, media sources’ reliance on these sources most often re-produce white masculine and colonial hegemony.

Hall (1975) points out that newspapers choose a style and collective identity “with continual reference to some notion of who their readers are, what they will understand, what their social position is, what their state of knowledge, and so on” (p. 22) Hall argues that newspaper reporters (and I would extend his argument to broadcast journalists) are continually locating themselves in relation to these assumed readers, their knowledge, and interests. In doing so, they consciously and unconsciously take certain approaches in order to address members of their assumed audience (Hall, 1975). Far from being objective, this collective identity produces a set of biases that “make some people feel very much at home and others angry and dispossessed.” (Schick, 2010, p. 137). J. Green relates how in Canada, and particularly, Saskatchewan:

The media write, speak and produce for the “average reader,” the normative working-class or middle-class white model, with its set of social assumptions about the world. The advertisers that underwrite the media pitch to this category. For the most part, Aboriginal people do not exist for the media, except as practitioners of violence or political opposition, as marketing stereotypes or bearers of social pathologies. Virtually no real Aboriginal people write for or are portrayed in the media, especially the private media, for Aboriginal or settler consumption (2009, p. 136).

Journalistic norms and practices interact to shape not only who are considered objective, credible sources and how to present a balanced argument, but also how news
stories can be written and broadcast. The narrow frameworks through which news stories can be told contribute to decontextualized and formulaic re-presentations of events, people, and places, particularly Aboriginal people (Grebinski, 2012; Vall, 2007). There is a dissonance between daily news reporting and Aboriginal approaches, which emphasize the context and multiplicity of perspectives (Cruikshank, 2000).

At the same time, Read (2009) points out “the media” is not a monolithic entity. There is corporate mainstream news programming on radio and television, in newspapers and magazines, and most of these have an Internet presence as well. There is public broadcasting. CBC’s news is published on their Internet site as well as reported on their television and radio stations. There are also a number of alternative media sources, which range from radio to bi-weekly newspapers, to solely Internet podcasts, blogs, and newspapers. These various media outlets have different audiences they speak to, different perspectives they re-present. As a result, they often tell different news stories. For instance, CBC’s mission and values speak to both serving public interest and “reflecting accurately the range of experiences and points of view of all citizens” (CBC, 2012).

Of particular interest to this project is Canadian Aboriginal newspapers and broadcasters. The first of these emerged during the 1970s. The Aboriginal Multi-media Society, which publishes Saskatchewan Sage, was founded in 1983 (Alia, 2010). Aboriginal-controlled media outlets often engage in journalistic practices and formats differently than mainstream media outlets. For instance, the Native News Network of Canada’s statement of principles differs from “conventional journalistic practice” by

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13 The above quote from CBC’s Mission and Values also speaks to the shifting ideals of journalism. In particular, the ideal of objectivity has been and is being challenged, while ideals such as “accuracy” and “responsible reporting” are emerging as more relevant to news reporting today. See page 83 for further discussion.
conceptualizing the journalist “as a citizen and member of the community rather than as a politically pure, neutral bystander” (Alia, 2010, pp. 94 & 95). Another example is Radio Kahnawake CKRK’s use of talk-back radio during the “Oka Crisis.” In 1990, the Mohawk people from Kanehsatake actively resisted the expansion of a golf course onto their burial lands and this resistance was met with a police and military intervention. The nearby community of Kahnawake stood in solidarity with Kanehsatake, but was not under military occupation, allowing CKRK more freedom in their coverage of the crisis. CKRK, particularly the talk-back radio Party Line broadcasts, was instrumental in providing an alternative account of the crisis and informing non-Mohawk people about Mohawk peoples’ position (Roth, 1993). While talk-back radio is known for being confrontational, CKRK opened their talk-back radio Party Line broadcasts with a prayer, avoided rumour, and sought to mediate potential conflicts rather than exacerbate them (Alia, 2010).

At the same time alternative media has a growing presence in Canada, mainstream media coverage remains an important source of information for the majority of white-settler readers/viewers/listeners. This is true not only about events and issues, but also racialized communities most members of the dominant society rarely interact with (Henry & Tator, 2002). Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers (2011) is the only text to date which offers an in-depth analysis of mainstream media representations of Aboriginal people. C. Anderson and Robertson’s analysis, which spans 1869 to 2009, demonstrates “colonial imaginary has thrived, even dominated, and continues to do so in mainstream English language newspapers” (2011, p. 3). C. Anderson and Robertson argue three misconceptions about Aboriginal people dominate
mainstream media coverage. These are the conflation of Aboriginality with moral
depravity, racial inferiority, and a lack of progressiveness. The latter perception situates
Aboriginal people within a “non-evolving past, as if they exist outside of linear time”
(2011, p. 7). There are a number of images linked to these three perceptions including the
“Indian Princess” image.

There has been a link made between media re-presentations of Aboriginal women
and the violence that is enacted upon them. For instance, Keating (2008) analyzed how
mainstream media told the story of three 20-something-year-old, white-settler men’s
violation of a 12-year-old Saulteaux-Cree girl from Yellow Quill First Nation. She asserts
that these media re-presentations evoked the princess/squaw binary and in doing so
“incites, permits and sanctions enactments of violation” (p. 71). Similarly, Kallio (2006),
writing about the StarPhoenix’s coverage of this same trial, relates how this girl is re-
presented “through available stereotypes and narratives” particularly, the princess/squaw
binary. As a result, she is framed as responsible for her own victimization (p. 42).

As previously mentioned (pages 9 and 10), Aboriginal women are victimized at
higher rates than non-Aboriginal women and Aboriginal men, both at the hands of their
intimate partners as well as strangers and acquaintances. In considering media re-
presentations of violence against women, taken for granted media practices, formats, and
norms shape how stories of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women can be told.
However, research suggests mainstream and Aboriginal media outlets engage with some
of these formats differently. Recent research indicates that media coverage of these
stories is problematic and further contributes to Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to
violence. NWAC states, “Efforts to ensure effective responses from the police, the courts,
victim services, the media and other service providers when Aboriginal women and girls go missing or are found murdered are required” (2010, p. 32).

There is a lack of research examining how family members of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women experience their encounters with journalists and media representations of their loved ones. As well, researchers have not yet explored the journalistic practices and norms that underlie 1) more problematic 2) more responsive (to family members), and 3) transformative (of white masculine and colonial hegemony) representations of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. This case study begins this exploration.
3.0 IN THE BORDERLANDS/A WHITE-SETTLER FEMINIST’S MESTIZAJE THEORIZING?

The purpose of this chapter is to outline my theoretical framework. As Tuhiwai Smith (1999) points out, research has been used as a tool of colonization to construct Indigenous peoples as inferior. As such, conducting ethical research with Indigenous peoples demands that we, as researchers, clearly state our methods and methodologies as well as the theoretical framework(s) that precede and inform them.

Anzaldúa (1999) states, “[b]orders are set up to define the spaces that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them” (p. 25). However, there are also spaces between borders, between categories and this is called the borderland. Anzaldúa describes the borderland as:

A vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. Los atravesados live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulatto, the half-breed, the half dead, in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the “normal.” (1999, p. 25)

In this project, I explore the discourses of colonialism, racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism, discourses that construct Aboriginal women as “other” and shape their experiences. Aboriginal women’s experiences often defy categorization and the “confines of the ‘normal’,” locating them in the borderlands. Thus, it seems fitting that the borders of this project and my theoretical framework are not easily defined. Anzaldúa (1990)
articulates the need for theories which “blur boundaries” in *Making Face/Making Soul: Hacienda Caras*:

Theorists-of-color are in the process of trying to formulate ‘marginal’ theories that are partially outside and partially inside the Western frame of reference (if that is possible), theories that overlap many ‘worlds.’ We are articulating new positions in these in-between, Borderland worlds of ethnic communities and academies, feminism and job worlds. In our literature, social issues such as race, class, and sexual difference are intertwined with the narrative and poetic elements of a text, elements in which theory is embedded. In our *mestizaje* theories we create new categories for those of us left out or pushed out of existing ones (p. xxvi).

Anzaldúa does not address the question of whether white-settler writers can also engage in *mestizaje* theorizing. However, it was the only theoretical approach through which I could conceptualize this research. In attempting to occupy the tenuous position in-between (and with-in) several theories and disciplines, I draw on several theories and theorists, including feminist poststructuralism, feminist postcolonialism, Indigenous feminism, and other Indigenous women’s writings that may not be considered academic by all, but whose narrative and poetic forms theorize about racism, classism, colonialism, heterosexism, and sexism. Informed by Chris Weedon’s (1999) work in *Feminism, Theory, and the Politics of Difference*, I draw on poststructuralist and postcolonial feminist theorizing in a way that tries to make space for Indigenous women’s and, particularly, Indigenous feminists’ voices. At the same time, I recognize the tension between these voices. Poststructuralist approaches deconstruct identity categories,
making their shifting, contradictory, and exclusionary nature visible, while identity politics is grounded in the use of these categories to organize based on shared notions of identity. However, since Indigenous women’s experiences are often still disregarded, their voices still silenced, I argue that this research project requires a poststructural and postcolonial approach that considers and draws upon Indigenous standpoint feminist theorizing, and therefore, transverses the space in-between these particular positions.

In order to understand the relevance of *metizaje* theorizing to this project, I will revisit its aims and purposes. This project explores white masculine hegemonic norms that are naturalized as “Canadian,” even though they are specific to my community, the Anglophone white-settler community. It examines how discourses of colonialism, racism, classism, sexism, and heterosexism operate through and are resisted by media representations of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. It also explores how these discourses shape the journalistic norms and practices making certain re-presentations im/possible. Mainstream media re-presentations form the meta-narrative defining a Aboriginal women who disappear and are murdered in Saskatchewan and Canada. In order to counter these constructions, I crossed the border into two First Nations communities to listen to the mothers of Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego) and Amber Tara-Lynn Redman. I am not a member of these communities, but I work in solidarity with First Nations communities and Saskatchewan Sisters in Spirit (SK SIS). In my project, I provide a space for Amber and Daleen’s counter-narratives as told by their mothers, Gwenda Yuzicappi and Pauline Muskego as well as Aboriginal media outlets. This space allows for family members, often silenced or narrowly re-presented in media coverage, to
respond to how media outlets have told their daughters’ stories (and the journalistic practices which have been normalized).

3.1 Contested Theoretical Frameworks/Postcolonial feminisms and Indigenous feminisms

Postcolonial feminism is a contested theoretical framework for many reasons. First, there is debate over the term postcolonial. Some theorists take the position that postcolonial theorizing is only applicable in locations where the colonizers “went home,” and do not recognize white-settler nations, like Canada, as a postcolonial feminist concern (Code, 2000). According to some Indigenous writers, postcolonial theoretical approaches imply that colonialism has ended rather than shifted into a slightly different formation. Other scholars, such as Ponzanesi (2007) argue that postcolonialism as an intellectual movement is marked by an “awareness of oppression that is coupled with the need for articulating resistance to colonial hegemony – a dynamic of power struggle that is still present in today’s society” (p. 88). Following from Ponzanesi, I engage in a postcolonial theorizing which acknowledges the need for ongoing decolonization and resistance to colonialism.

Postcolonial feminisms are not homogenous. Many postcolonial feminist theorists are grounded in standpoint theory (see for instance, Anzaldúa), while others draw primarily on poststructuralist and psychoanalytic approaches. Standpoint feminisms emerged during the second wave of the feminist movement and, at first, largely considered women the primary category of analysis. In response, Black, Indigenous, and other feminists of colour pointed out that rather than theorizing a “woman’s experience,” these standpoint feminists were theorizing about white women’s experiences (Woo,
This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, first published in 1981, was one of the early texts in which Indigenous feminists, Black feminists and other feminists of colour articulated their own standpoint feminisms and problematized the category of “woman.” Through organizing as women of colour, these feminists were able to explore how their lived experiences were shaped by the intersections of racism, sexism and (for some women of colour) colonialism (Cobahee River Collective, 1983). Organizing based on identity politics provides opportunities for self-affirmation and activism. However, standpoint feminists of colour still claim there is an authentic experience of women who belong to this identity category, rendering differences between them invisible. In doing so, these feminists exclude the same women that they seek (and claim) to represent (Weedon, 1999).

Standpoint feminisms remain an important strand of postcolonial theorizing, however in reaction to the exclusionary practices of standpoint and other second wave feminisms, feminists such as Butler (1990, 1993) Weedon (1999), and hooks (1990) have articulated poststructural and postmodern feminist approaches. Similarly, Mills (1991) Weedon (2002, 2004), and McClintock (1995) among others have articulated postcolonial feminist positions informed by poststructuralism and/or psychoanalysis. Mills’ and Weedon’s poststructural, postcolonial feminist theorizing is strongly influenced by Foucault, while McClintock’s (1995) situated psychoanalytic approach (contextualized by culture and “psychoanalytically informed history”) explores how gender, class, and race intersect and, indeed, come into being through articulation with each other (p. 5). In order to articulate my mestizaje theorizing, which attempts to
transverse the borders of poststructural, postcolonial, and Indigenous standpoint feminisms, I will attempt to draw rough distinctions between these approaches.

Similar to postcolonial feminisms, Indigenous feminisms interrogate the intersections of colonialism, racism, classism, and sexism and how the “unpleasant synergy between them” has rendered Aboriginal women vulnerable to violence, poverty, homelessness, ill-health, and other circumstances of social and economic marginalization (Bourassa, Hampton & McKay-McNabb, 2005; J. Green, 2007). Indigenous feminisms are not homogenous, but many Indigenous feminists take a standpoint position, theorizing out of their lived experiences shaped by discourses, institutional regulation and practices, as well as social and economic conditions. Indigenous feminists critique both dominant society’s exclusionary, silencing, and denigrating practices, as well as how these racist, colonialist, and sexist practices have been internalized by their own communities (see for instance J. Green, 2007; Martin-Hill, 2003). Many also argue for a critical reclaiming of Indigenous traditions, which considers “what traditions are, how they affect men and women in their gendered roles” as well as “the implications of this” (J. Green, 2007, p. 27). Indigenous feminists often take the position of anti-colonial versus postcolonial. At the same time, Indigenous anti-colonial feminisms share a lot of common ground with postcolonial standpoint feminisms.

Throughout my theoretical framework and thesis, I consider how anti-colonialist Indigenous, postcolonial, and poststructural feminist theories diverge and come together, agree as well as contradict each other. One convergence is how postcolonial and Indigenous feminisms reinterpret and reshape the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, in order “to shift the object that is scrutinized and spoken for towards a
subjective position” where the Indigenous or colonized other represents herself, speaking back and writing back against the colonizer (Ponzanesi, 2007, p. 88; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). A part of shifting Indigenous peoples towards a subjective position is producing space for their history, their voices and their perspectives within white-settler nations (Weedon, 2002, 2004).

Postcolonial feminists point out that mainstream postcolonial theorizing is “blind to the gender implications of colonial discourse” (Ponzanesi, 2007, p. 89). However, postcolonial and Indigenous feminists point out that “gender dynamics were fundamental” to securing and maintaining colonial and imperialist projects (McLintock, 1995, p. 7; Smith, 2005). These theorists are not only concerned with women’s experiences in colonial and neocolonial nation-states. They are interested in how these relations are gendered. This approach allows exploration into how Aboriginal femininity is constructed in relation to white-settler femininity (Carter, 1997; Stevenson, 1999). Carter explains that on the Prairies during the late nineteenth Century, “the contrasting representations of white and Aboriginal femininity” operated as a part of racist discourses that confirmed the superiority of white femininity, and with it, white-settler society (Carter, 1997, p. 160). These constructions shape white-settler and Aboriginal women’s lived realities. For instance, K. Anderson explores some of the ways that the “squaw-drudge” image is imposed upon Aboriginal women. She relates that “[t]he majority of Native women will tell you that, at some point of their experience they have been called a ‘squaw’...[s]ometimes it is applied in the context of ‘friendly’ joking; often in the form of a violent assault” (K. Anderson, 2000, p. 105). K. Anderson goes onto discuss how
racist, sexist slurs are used against Aboriginal women and girls from an early age, “often before they can even understand the terms themselves” (K. Anderson, 2000, p. 105).

Exploring how Aboriginal women are othered and some of the ways that they resist and negotiate colonial constructions is an important part of this project, but not the only aspect. Drawing on Moreton-Robinson (2010), I propose that when studying white colonial gendered identities, racialized colonial gendered identities, and colonial projects, it is also necessary to theorize the white, masculine hegemonies and epistemologies that precede, inform and construct them. In order to do this, I will draw on Antonio Gramsci’s (1971), Louis Althusser’s (1971), and Michel Foucault’s (1972, 1979a, 1979b) theories, feminist poststructuralist and postcolonial readings and rearticulations of the latter theories, as well as other postcolonial and Indigenous feminists’ writings.

3.2 White Masculine Hegemony and Interpellation

Many cultural studies, postcolonial, and feminist theorists draw upon Antonio Gramsci’s theorizing of hegemony in order to understand how power operates within different societies. In *Antonio Gramsci: A new Introduction*, Ransome explains how Gramsci differentiates between *coercive control*, maintained through force or the threat of force and *consensual control* or hegemony (as cited in Strinati, 1995). Hegemony is the complex interlocking of social, political, and cultural processes that are lived as natural by both the powerful and the disempowered (Williams, 1977). That is, “a lived system of meanings and values—constitutive and constituting” that appears “reciprocally confirming” (Williams, 1977, p. 110). It constitutes a frame of “reality” that, for most people, is very difficult to step outside of. Hegemony is not singular or static. Rather, hegemonies are complex and interlocking, constantly in a state of being “renewed,
recreated, defended, and modified” as well as “resisted, limited, altered, [and] challenged by pressures not all its own” (Williams, 1977, p. 112). Sources of resistance come in many forms including counter-hegemonies or alternative hegemonies. These pressures might be resolved in many ways, including the dominant group’s concession to certain aspects of a counter-hegemony that do not undermine the power of the dominant group (Strinati, 1995). Mainstream media is one institution, along with the family, the church, education, and others where hegemony is re-produced (Strinati, 1995).

This thesis will explore the formation of white masculine hegemony in Canada. This formation is historically grounded in patriarchy, colonialism, and white racism. White masculine hegemony is characterized through the privileging of certain subjects (masculine, heterosexual, white-settler, middle and upper-class). J. Green points out that Canada was “constructed from the colonies by colonial and then settler elites”. Today, Canada remains “firmly grounded on the original and continuing appropriation of indigenous land and resources” as well as the racist and sexist practices that privileged the white, masculine, elite subject, the subjects that still dominate Canada today (J. Green, 2001, p. 716). This understanding of white masculine hegemony is similar to Henry and Tator’s concept of “democratic racism.” According to Henry and Tator, in Canada certain “democratic principles such as justice and fairness” coexist with racism. One of the ways that this conflict is embodied by white-settler Canadians is our lack of support for systematic changes within Canadian society, since changing the political, economic, and social conditions in order to eliminate racism “is perceived to be in conflict with and a threat to liberal democracy.” (Henry & Tator, 2006).
Interpellation is another concept taken up by poststructural and postcolonial feminist theorists, such as Butler and Weedon. Althusser’s essay, On Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation) (1971), articulates interpellation as the process through which one (mis)recognizes themselves as a knowing subject. Althusser relates how one is interpellated through everyday practices, such as when an individual hears a police officer or another voice say, “Hey, you there!” In response, the hailed individual almost always turns around. Through this process, s/he (mis)recognizes him/herself as the one addressed by the call and through this process “becomes a subject” within ideology (Althusser, 1971, p. 163). As through interpellation one is awarded the position as a knowing subject, the only subject considered able to access “truth,” knowledge, and reality, interpellation in and of itself is an important process. Naming is one form of the processes of interpellation, since “[b]eing called a name is…one of the conditions by which a subject is constituted in language” (Butler, 1997, p. 3).

Weedon (2004) employs Althusser’s concept of interpellation in her analysis of how the conservative tabloid press responded to the Parekh Report (2000). The Parekh Report, which was produced by The Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, proposed a number of radical changes aimed at reducing racism, inequality, and reconfiguring Britain in order to reflect the difference and diversity within Britain. In her analysis, Weedon explored the different discursive strategies that hailed readers to (mis)recognize themselves as members of the (imagined) community of the British nation-state. Through this (mis)recognition, readers were encouraged to dismiss The Parekh Report and its findings. According to B. Anderson (1991), the community of the
nation-state is imaginary because while it is impossible to know all the members of a
nation-state, re-presentations and other acts re-produce a sense of belonging. However, it
is largely the dominant groups’ re-presentations, values, and histories that produce this
sense of belonging, which generally excludes marginalized communities. There are times
when marginalized communities are included as part of, or claim their membership to,
this (imagined) community. These instances must not be read homogenously as resistant
acts, as at times hegemonies subsume counter and alternative hegemonies as a part of re-
establishing their dominance (Strinati, 1995; Williams, 1997). Indeed, there are moments
when Aboriginal community members are recognized as valid members of (imaginary)
Canada in order to re-produce hegemonic norms, albeit in a slightly different formation.

3.3 Foucault, Discourse Analysis, Power, and Feminist Interpretations

Foucault presented a number of overlapping definitions of discourse. This project
draws primarily on two of Foucault’s (1972) definitions of discourse. First I will use his
understanding of discourse as “an individualizable group of statements” in order to refer
to discourses on Aboriginal femininity, Aboriginal masculinity, white-settler femininity,
white-settler masculinity, and colonialism in Canada (Foucault, 1972, p. 90). I consider
these different discourses (albeit overlapping and intersecting ones) because they each
seem “to be regulated in some way which seem to have a coherence and force to them in
common” (Mills, 1997, p. 7). These discourses are marked by (groups of) individuals’
systematic ways of thinking, ideas, opinions, concepts and behaving within a particular
context (Mills, 1997, p. 17). I will also use Foucault’s definition of discourse to refer to
discursive structures or formations. A discursive structure is the “regulated practice that
accounts for a certain numbers of statements” (Foucault, 1972, p. 90). Exploring
discursive formations involves being concerned with “the rules and structures which produce [and exclude] particular utterances and texts” and the power play/exchange therein (Mills, 1997, p. 7). For instance, as journalists have a certain range of behaviours when defining themselves as journalists (e.g., how crime reporting is “done,” what sources are “credible,” and what “objectivity” means), it is clear that there is a discursive structure, however shifting and unstable, underlying these behaviours. Indeed, journalists define themselves as journalists through positioning their ways of writing, conversing, and behaving in relation to this discursive structure. These behaviours and norms are not abstracted from the material conditions of newsrooms (i.e., resources, equipment, space), but interact with them. This interaction is not linear or singular. It is a circular process through which discursive re-presentations (i.e., media coverage), the discursive structure of journalism, and the material conditions of newsrooms are re-produced. Through this circular process different conditions, elements, behaviours, norms, and rules shift and change, while certain re-presentations become more or less possible.

Foucault’s understandings of discourse, power, and truth open up a number of questions in relation to this research. For instance, how do discourses that construct Aboriginal femininity as hypersexual and deviant become dominant? How does this become regarded as the “true nature” of Aboriginal women? What is the truth? Foucault does not understand truth as something inherent to a speech act or piece of text, nor as an ideal abstract quality which humans seek to discover. According to Foucault, knowledge linked to power (particularly, institutional power) asserts itself as authority and truth. In this position as the truth, this knowledge has regulating and productive effects on the

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14 This interaction deserves further examination through Massumi’s concept of “regulatory practices” in (2002) “The political economy of belonging and logic of relation.”
world until it *becomes true* (Foucault, 1979b). Foucault refers to this as the “regime of truth” (Foucault, 1979a).

Discourses that become “true” are primarily produced by institutions such as universities, governments, justice systems, and media outlets (Foucault, 1979a). During early contact and colonization, European (masculine) colonizers constructed a truth of Aboriginal women as dirty, lesser-than, disposable, and hypersexual. The princess/squaw motif is one of the discursive strategies used in the re-production of this truth (Carter, 1997; R. Green, 2007). However, in many Aboriginal societies, men, women, and two-spirit people shared significant power and status prior to colonization. While political structures varied from community to community, many First Nations societies “were matrilineal and matrilocal” (Smith, 2007, p. 102). In the Cherokee Nation women traditionally “served as spiritual, political and military leaders and it is likely that Missipian chiefdoms were led by women” (Perdue, 1998, p. 9). Similarly, in some First Nations, two-spirit people had unique social and spiritual roles (Cannon, 1998; Lang, 1997; Roscoe, 1998; Whitehead, 1993).

The princess/squaw binary and other “truths” about Aboriginal women have justified their victimization at the hands of masculine colonizers since the late seventeenth century. Masculine white-settlers continue to murder (effectively disposing of) Aboriginal women based on this truth. As well, Acoose (1995), a Saulteaux Métis writer, relates how many Aboriginal people have internalized this squaw-drudge construct. This contributes to Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to violence within Aboriginal communities and at the hands of Aboriginal men. In her poem “Hatred,” Stólo writer, Maracle (1996) describes the process of lateral violence, acts of violence
committed by Aboriginal people against other Aboriginal people. She makes visible the link between racism, sexism, and colonialism and lateral violence:

If the State won’t kill us
we will have to kill ourselves

it is not longer good etiquette
to head-hunt savages
we’ll just have to do it ourselves

It is not polite to violate “squaws”
we’ll have to find
an Indian to oblige us…

Blinded by niceties and polite liberalism
we can’t see our enemy
so we’ll just have to kill each other. (pp. 11-12)

At the same time, many Aboriginal feminists and postcolonial feminist scholars have deconstructed this regime of truth, revealing its origin in the colonial imagination and the material effects it has on Aboriginal women’s bodies. K. Anderson (2001) writes:

Perhaps people begin to see alcohol abuse, sexual dysfunction and poverty through the lens of these stereotypes. There are many people in our communities who are still using alcohol to drown their shame and confusion that festers within such negative definitions of their ancestry…Yet when we consider our lived
experience, the drunken, easy squaw is not a character that aboriginal people know. I would not describe my Native female relations as lazy and dirty. I don’t know any squaws. (p. 99)

While this “regime of truth” has regulating and productive effects, I argue, similar to K. Anderson, that it is not based on material realities that colonists found on Turtle Island, rather, it has produced the realities of colonial Canada.

Feminist theorists have worked to modify Foucault’s approach to discourse to try “to make the concept of discourse work to serve political ends” (Mills, 1997, p. 77). In order to make the political potential of theorizing discourse more explicit than Foucault did, feminist theorists have considered different aspects, for instance, who has access to certain discourses (Mills, 1997, pp. 77 & 97). Weedon argues that discourses and social practices offer various subject positions that some are hailed to identify with (Weedon, 2004, p. 7). These subject positions “are often restricted to specific groups, usually on the basis of discourses of class, gender and race” (Weedon, 2004, p. 7). As Weedon points out some discourses, and the subject positions they constitute have more power than others. These discourses have widespread discursive and material effects, including defining and shaping “both the materiality and meaning of bodies” (Weedon, 2004, p. 7). In order to address this in more detail, I will draw upon Butler’s theories of performativity and how it relates to the gender/sexed body and the racialized body.

3.4 Butler’s Theory of Performativity/Constructions of Gender/Sex and “Race”

Butler’s deconstruction of the gender/sex binary (sex as natural/gender as cultural) and theory of gender performativity contradicts many feminist understandings of sex as preceding gender (Hall, 2006). Butler (1993) argues, “‘sex’ is “not simply what
one has, or a static description of what one is” (p. 2). Within a society where one can only be masculine/male or feminine/female, “sex” is integral to a body being understood and for an individual to be hailed as a gendered subject (and thus a subject). Further, Butler states that gender/sex “is real only to the extent that it is performed” (Butler, 2010, p. 426). One becomes a gendered subject, however gendered/sexed through repeating gender performances in similar ways, producing the appearance of a unified, gendered subjectivity (or not, in cases such as transgendered individuals) (Butler, 2010, p. 427). Through doing so, individuals internalize their gender/sex subjectivity and the gender/sex system as “natural.” Individuals have limited choices as to how they constitute themselves, as there are explicit and implicit punishments for performing one’s gender “wrong” (Butler, 2010, p. 427).

Butler also acknowledges the regulation of “race” by “racializing norms” and understands Nella Larsen’s Passing as an examination of these norms operating within a racist location and timeframe (1993). However, Sara Salih (2002) argues that Butler’s work does not adequately address the performativity of race or exactly how a racialized subject is interpellated by “racializing norms.” Gates’ (1990) essay ‘The Master’s Pieces’ states:

[I]t’s important to remember that ‘race’ is only a sociopolitical category, nothing more. At the same time – in terms of its practical performative force – that doesn’t help me when I’m trying to get a taxi on the corner of 125th and Lenox Avenue. (‘Please sir, it’s only a metaphor.’) (pp. 70-71).

Salih draws on Gates’ analysis to argue that “the visibly ‘raced’ body (black or white) cannot be understood in exactly the same way as the sexualized, sexed, or gendered
Within Canada, it is important to understand how race, gender/sex, class, and sexuality as well as colonialism have shaped Aboriginal women’s identities. The colonial projects have invested in (and been justified through) constructions of Aboriginal women’s bodies as inherently dirty and disposable. These constructs play out in both the imaginary and material relations between white-settlers and Aboriginal women/appropriated lands. McClintock’s postcolonial theorizing, along with Indigenous women and Indigenous feminist’s writings provide a useful framework for understanding colonial constructions of a singular and essentialized Aboriginal femininity.

3.5 Feminization of Indigenous Lands and Indigenous Women/Constructing Aboriginal Women as Abject/Other

McClintock examines how knowledge and the “unknown” world were framed through gendered power relations during initial colonial encounters. “[V]alidated by the new Enlightenment logic of private property and possessive individualism,” the (masculine) colonizer imagined the world as feminine, spread for male exploration and penetration (McLintock, 1995, p. 23). It is not simply that the colonizer’s framework saw nature and the (virgin) land as feminine. Rather, the colonizer also viewed himself (and other white, colonial subjects) as the rightful possessors and masters of this land and, by extension, the women occupying it (McLintock, 1995, p. 24). K. Anderson points out that Aboriginal women have been “equated with” Indigenous lands by both Euro-Western and Aboriginal communities. The image that the (masculine) colonizer constructed of Indigenous women mirrors his relationship to the land, a relationship marked by “conquest, possession, and exploitation” (K. Anderson, 2000, p. 100).
McClintock points out that the feminization of terra incognita was a “strategy of violent containment” rooted in both the political economy of colonizer nation-states and masculine psychoanalytic anxieties (McLintock, 1995, p. 24). Finding himself in a liminal state, outsider in an unknown world and fearing domination, the (masculine) colonizer displaced his crisis in identity onto this feminized space. The colonizer simultaneously imagined the unknown land as feminine: naked and passive “and riotously violent.” Masculine paranoia fears that the violent terra incognita (and its inhabitants) will engulf him (McLintock, 1995, p. 27).

In order to appease his masculine paranoia, the colonial subject constructed images of Indigenous women as sexual threats, but equally passive. This was largely accomplished through the squaw-drudge construct and other circulating motifs (e.g., the partially assimilated Indian Princess). As Bhabha (1994) relates, the colonizer uses stereotypes (or constructs/binaries) to “fix” the colonized within the colonial imagination (p. 95). Through fixing Aboriginal women as sexual threats, passive, and irrational, the (masculine) colonial subject produced himself as the dominant, the creator of a new society, a new body politic (the white-settler imaginary nation state) Aboriginal women must be abjected from.

McClintock argues that in colonialism, “certain groups are expelled and obliged to inhabit the impossible edges of modernity: the slum, the ghetto…the brothel” (McLintock, 1995, p. 72). Under colonialism, abject peoples are those who are rejected, but whom the colonial state cannot do without. For example, “slaves, prostitutes, the colonized, domestic workers, the insane, the unemployed, and so on” (McLintock, 1995, p. 24). There are abject areas or zones, which are sites of increased police surveillance.
and regulation, such as slums, ghettos, and red light districts. While society rejects and excludes abject peoples and areas, the abject haunts colonial nations, as it is part of its constitution, it is “the rejected from which one does not part” (McLintock, 1995, p. 24). This explains why Indigenous peoples form a “permanent absence” in the colonial imagination of nation-states like the United States and Canada (Shanley as cited by A. Smith, 2005, p. 9).

The reserve system is one of the processes through which First Nations were abjected from Canadian society. In the late nineteenth century, the Canadian government appropriated First Nations peoples’ lands through treaty negotiations. They introduced the reserve system and European immigrants then settled these lands. This appropriation of land and the restrictive farming policies on reserves played a large role in the formation of the export grain economy, an endeavor dominated by white-settler farmers. In 1885, the pass system was introduced to contain First Nations people, particularly First Nations women, on reserve (and to restrict and control their movement off reserve) (Carter, 1997, p. 187). The reserve became an abject zone where an abjected, or othered peoples live, haunting the colonial nation. The white-settler meta-narrative, which begins with the “breaking of the untamed land” on the Prairie Provinces, excludes Aboriginal narratives of history and is haunted by them.

Aboriginal oral narrative memory exposes a history prior to white-settlement. It also provides a counter-narrative that makes the violent nature of colonialism visible. One poignant example is Halfe’s (1998) *Blue Marrow*. In *Blue Marrow*, Halfe serves as a present day Keeper of Stories, an intermediary for the voices of the First Nations and Métis people, particularly the Grandmothers, whose bones lie in the Prairie ground.
Unlike in most written texts, these women do not appear as nameless victims. Instead Halfe names them, relates their stories, the pain caused by colonial violations of their bodies, and the exploitation of their sexuality. As well, she makes visible their resistance to it. Counter-narratives such as the songs found in Blue Marrow’s poetry reveal that white-settlers did not rightfully earn the land, but rather that it was violently appropriated.

The large number of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered in Canada during the last twenty years demonstrates the widespread nature of racialized, sexualized violence against Aboriginal women in Canada (582) (NWAC, 2010). This violence has a long history that is undeniably linked to the colonial project. Wandering Stone Grandmother’s story in Blue Marrow illustrates this:

One night

I felt the axe.

I watched him

bury me.

...I too disappeared like many

of my sisters.

Her white husband responds:

I loved her, this squaw, her brown body...

When the jesuits came

and cursed her, I never looked at her again.

I drank spirits. Lifted my axe...

I remember my savage,
My brown-skinned whore.

I am stained with her skull. (pp. 48 & 49).

His words, as told by Halfe speak to desire and repulsion that even though she is desired, condemned by the Jesuits, she now signifies abjection and is violently expelled.

Racialized and sexualized violence rejects and excludes Aboriginal women from the imaginary (white-settler) nation-state of Canada. However, as many Aboriginal nations were matrilineal and women held important spiritual, political, and military roles (Smith, 2007), Aboriginal women continue to haunt the colonial imagination. Since Aboriginal women were part of the original body politic of Turtle Island, their histories (and continued survival) reveal their abjection and erasure as a result of white-settler masculine anxiety, rather than “natural.” Resisting violence against Aboriginal women and re-telling Aboriginal women’s histories are two necessary projects in the transformation of Canadian society. Monture-Angus (Mohawk) speaks to visioning as another transformative practice:

The experience of racism is one that is done to us. We react to racism. Even our pain and anger are reactions. It is objectification. We must begin to be subjects to the extent that we can be. Effectively, you then end your own silence and to a lesser degree, your exclusion. Exclusion is a different experience. It is what is done to you collectively as members of a distinct group. To end exclusion, we must do more than offer our pain, but we must also offer our visions on what must come. (p. 29)

Monture-Angus’ quote resonates with de Beauvoir’s writing in “Personal Freedom and Others.” De Beauvoir recognizes how the context one is living in determines one’s
possibilities for resistance and what she calls “a perfect assertion of [one’s] freedom” (1947, p. 38). Agency and choice cannot be abstracted from one’s context, but rather exists within it. It is within this context that we are faced with the responsibility to try to “offer visions on what must come.” This envisioning is offered within this thesis, by the co-researchers (who offer and enact these visions through their own activism), by the journalists interviewed (many who offer and enact these visions through their journalistic practice), and by myself.

In this chapter, I discussed the *mestizaje* theoretical framework that informs this project, which travels in-between theoretical boundaries and disciplinary lines. In doing so, I articulated the contradictions and similarities between the theories and theorists that inform this project: feminist poststructuralism, feminist postcolonialism, Indigenous feminism, and other Indigenous women’s writings that may not be considered academic by all, but whose narrative and poetic forms theorize about racism, classism, colonialism, heterosexism, and sexism. In explaining my theoretical framework, I considered Gramsci’s theory of hegemony, Althusser’s concept of interpellation, and Foucault’s understanding of discourse, power, and truth as well as how poststructuralist and postcolonial feminists utilize these theories. Further, I related Butler’s theories of performativity and how it relates to the gender/sexed body and the “raced” body. In order to more fully understand how “race,” gender/sex, class, sexuality, and colonialism have shaped Aboriginal women’s identities, I then drew on McLintock’s postcolonial theorizing, along with Aboriginal women’s and Indigenous feminist’s writings.

This *mestizaje* project explores: 1) how to deconstruct the colonial binaries and constructs imposed on Aboriginal women (as well as the hegemonic norms that re-
produce them); and 2) how to provide spaces for Aboriginal women’s stories and experiences, particularly as re-presented by family members. In my next chapter, I will articulate the methodology that I used in this exploration.
4.0 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I outline this project’s research questions and methodologies. I used two different methodological approaches, drawing on aspects of Indigenous Storytelling Methodology and Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) Approach. This chapter is a part of my aim to make visible the link between my mestizaje theoretical framework, outlined above, my methodology, and my methods, which will be outlined in Chapter Four.

My decision to conduct this project was informed by a number of experiences. For instance, taking classes at the University of Regina and First Nations University of Canada, volunteering with SK SIS and other feminist and Aboriginal organizations, as well as conducting my undergraduate research. My honours thesis was a discourse analysis of the mainstream newspaper coverage of Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s disappearance and murder (McKenzie, 2009). As my analysis revealed, there are a number of ways that the mainstream print media has positioned Daleen. These representations both resisted and re-produced the princess/squaw motif. After that project, I wanted to build on my initial analysis to explore what journalistic practices and norms underlie these different re-presentations as well as allow family members space to discuss what is important to them about encounters with (and responses by) journalists. In order to start this exploration, this thesis addresses five main research questions:

4.1 Research Questions

a) What stories do the family members of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered tell of their loved ones? How do these stories compare to Aboriginal and mainstream media re-presentations?
b) What are these family members’ experiences with mainstream and Aboriginal journalists? What do they think of media coverage of their loved ones?

c) What are the discursive practices underlying more problematic re-presentations of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered?

d) What are the discursive practices that are more responsive to family members’ concerns and understanding of their loved one?

e) What are the discursive practices that are more disruptive of white masculine and colonial hegemony?

4.2 What Does a Mestizaje Project Look Like? Methodology/Approach

As Kovach (2009) states, choosing which methodologies and paradigms to use is deciding which knowledge to privilege. Informed by a mestizaje theoretical framework outlined above, this project will employ two different methodologies in an attempt to privilege both paradigms. Since this project is transversing the borders between two communities, informed by two worldviews, it only makes sense to employ two different methodologies, FPDA (informed by poststructural and postcolonial feminist theories) and Indigenous story-telling (informed by anti-colonist Aboriginal feminisms).

Giddings and Grant (2007) point out that methodologies are designed for use with certain paradigms, “although they can be adapted to work in others” (p. 56). Often, researchers that claim a mixed methodology approach actually mix methods, the tools used in data collection and analysis (Giddings & Grant, 2007, p. 56). Often, when researchers claim a mixed methodology approach, they triangulate their methods. Triangulation is a process of combining and comparing several different methods in order to verify or confirm research findings. It is generally accepted that triangulation produces
findings closer to “the truth” than research processes that utilize only one method (Giddings & Grant, 2007, p. 55). My methodology is best understood as a circle, rather than a triangle, since my methodology, methods, and data analysis lead to and inform one another. In this circular process, conflicts and contradictions are expected to arise, rather than be solved:

- **Figure 2: Mixed-methodological approach**

4.3 Indigenous Storytelling Methodology

Throughout this project, I crossed the border into Aboriginal communities, communities I am not a part of, but work in solidarity with. This project privileges narratives told by mothers of murdered Aboriginal women in order to acknowledge that,
historically and today, these voices are often excluded and misrepresented. In reclaiming space for Aboriginal family members’ voices, I used an approach that is a part of the anti-colonialist Aboriginal feminist movement of reclaiming traditions.¹⁵ This approach is Indigenous storytelling, as traditionally storytelling has been an accepted way of gaining knowledge in Aboriginal communities (Kovach, 2009, p. 94). Through my experiences attending ceremonies and learning from Elders in various other contexts, I have developed an understanding of Indigenous storytelling and the knowledge communicated through stories. I am humble in my approach to this research, as I still have much more to learn about storytelling and Indigenous ways of knowing.

Indigenous methodologies are complex, holistic approaches that consider both inward and outward knowing, the importance of relationships, language, place, and Indigenous/white-settler relationships. In Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts, Kovach outlines the different aspects of her Nêhiyaw methodology:

(a) tribal epistemology, (b) decolonizing and ethical aim (c) researcher preparations involving cultural protocols, (d) research preparation involving standard research design, (e) making meaning of knowledges gathered, and (f) giving back (Kovach, 2009, p. 45).

Using Kovach’s Nêhiyaw methodology as a tool, but not a map, I will address these different elements as I outline my methodology and methods. The most significant divergence I take from Kovach is this storytelling methodology is grounded in anti-

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¹⁵Aboriginal feminists are largely reclaiming traditions with a critical lens, that is, when reclaiming traditions Aboriginal feminists consider and question how these traditions are gendered and the implications of this. In particular, Aboriginal feminists are challenging traditions that prior to colonization (or through colonial influence) have excluded or marginalized women.
colonialist Indigenous feminist standpoint theory rather than a particular tribal epistemology.

One aspect of decolonizing research and research relationships is “gathering data” in ways that are consistent with Indigenous values (Kovach, 2009, p. 48). For instance, Tuhiwai Smith (1999) considers story-telling to be an Indigenous research project (p. 144-145). Similarly, Episkenew (2009) documents the power Indigenous stories have to challenge meta-narratives and as part of Indigenous peoples’ healing processes and Wesley-Esquimaux (2009) writes about the role of First Nations women’s storytelling in decolonization:

We are storytellers. We have an obligation to tell our stories to each other and to other non-Native women. We may have to change the language of our stories and the focus of our discourse. Instead of telling only the stories about trauma and victimization and pain, let us talk about our survival and our undeniable strength (p. 28).

Although mainstream research uses a variety of approaches to analyze and interpret peoples’ stories (life history, oral history, or narrative inquiry), Kovach argues that Indigenous story-telling is a distinct methodology since “the way that a culture employs a story differs” (2009, p. 96). The different relationships Eurowestern and Aboriginal communities have towards oral history produce different engagements with individual stories shared (as well as the storytellers themselves).

The Indigenous methodology of storytelling understands sharing a story places it in the collective memory (McLeod, 2007). Both the story and the storytellers must be treated with respect “in acknowledgement of the relationship from which [the story]
emerges” (Kovach, 2009, p. 96-97). This is in line with the Indigenous views of the world, and research, as relational (Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). In contrast, mainstream Eurowestern methodologies, informed by postpositivism, views research as an individual activity where the researcher seeks “the truth” (Guba and Lincoln, 2004). Within this latter paradigm, as the researcher is the “knower,” they holds the majority of the power, the power to decide the research question, the power to decide how to analyze and interpret data, and the power to disseminate the results. Within this process, the participant’s voice is often lost, fragmented, and/or misrepresented, particularly in research done “on” Aboriginal women (Acoose, 1995; K. Anderson, 2000; Smith, 1999).

Another aspect of decolonizing research with Indigenous peoples is reconsidering relationships. My methodological approach involves building trust and relationships as part of destabilizing the problematic power relations between myself, as an academic researcher, and the Aboriginal families I am working with. As a part of this relational approach, I treat the knowledge gained as a result of our relationship, rather than something I “own” or that was “out there” for me to discover. Viewing this research through a relational lens involves self-reflection of how I listen to and make meaning from Pauline and Gwenda’s stories as well as how I frame the “research results.” It also turns my focus to the role this research can play in transforming white-settler and Aboriginal relations.

4.4 Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis

The other focus of this project is on the white-settler constructions of Aboriginal women thus, this research project must also journey into the white-settler community. As I cross the border into my community, I will engage in feminist poststructuralist
discourse analysis (FPDA) informed by the poststructuralist and postcolonial feminisms I outlined in Chapter Two. Recently, Baxter (2003) as well as Kroløkke and Sørensen (2006) have outlined approaches to feminist poststructuralist discourse analysis. Baxtor considers the main concern of FPDA to be “the ways in which speakers negotiate their identities, relationships and positions in the world according to the ways in which they are multiply located by different discourses” (Baxtor, 2003, p. 10). As Baxtor developed her FPDA approach for conversational analysis, there are a number of ways I reconfigured her approach to make it more relevant to textual analysis in general and my project specifically. This reconfigured FPDA approach draws on elements of Newspaper Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and MacDonald’s (2003) discursive approach to analyzing media (Richardson, 2007; van Dijk, 2000).

In an acknowledgement that Aboriginal women who disappear or are murdered often do not have a chance to speak for themselves, my project will explore how Daleen and Amber are constructed by other speakers in a way that “negotiates their identities, relationships, and positions in the world” (Baxtor, 2003, p. 1). Of particular concern is why some aspects of Aboriginal women’s identities are emphasized while others are silenced and how these shift depending on the newspaper, journalist, particular re-presentation, and source being privileged. FPDA will be particularly useful for this project, because it is concerned not only with discourses, but also with the power relations that are inexplicably linked to these discourses. Baxtor points out that in contrast to Conversational Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, FPDA is particularly useful in revealing “the continuously fluctuating ways” that speakers (and I argue, those spoken
about) “are positioned as powerful or powerless by competing social and institutional discourses” (Baxtor, 2003, p. 58).

Taking a FPDA approach allows me to analyze how discourses operate through mainstream and Aboriginal media re-presentations of Aboriginal women who are victimized and make this analysis political. Through doing so, I can analyze how these multiple and competing re-presentations position Aboriginal women and how these positions are linked to power (Baxtor, 2003). It allows a space to historicize and make visible particular constructs and binaries which emerge in media re-presentations. At the same time, since FPDA recognizes that there are multiple and competing discourses, I do not treat these re-presentations (or the positions they construct) as homogenous. Rather, I explore how they vary according to time, context, journalist, media source, particular women, as well as other factors. I also address how particular journalists position themselves when considering the issue of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women and how this positioning is related to the discursive structure of journalism.

Baxtor acknowledges that discourses are not “necessarily all-pervasive but somehow responsible in the most literal sense for assembling and constructing an external material reality” (2003, p. 9). FPDA does not view discourses as a result of social realities. Also, in contrast to CDA, FPDA does not conceptualize material realities and discourses as having a dialectical relationship. Instead, Baxtor emphasizes how our understandings and experiences of social realities are shaped by competing discourses struggling to “fix” meaning (Baxtor, 2003, p. 9). Further, the discursive structure of journalism cannot be abstracted from the material conditions of newsrooms (ie.
resources, equipment, space), but interacts with them.\textsuperscript{16} This interaction is not linear or singular. It is a circular process through which discursive re-presentations (i.e., media coverage), the discursive structure of journalism, and the material conditions of newsrooms are re-produced. Through this circular process, different conditions, elements, behaviours, norms, and rules shift and change, while certain re-presentations become more or less possible.

Within this project, I examine whether (and how) discourses of racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and colonialism shape the discursive practices of journalism. These discursive practices, along with the other factors discussed above, are what make certain re-presentations of Aboriginal women im/possible. Mainstream media re-presentations form the meta-narrative of who “are” Aboriginal women who disappear and are murdered. It is this meta-narrative (along with counter-narratives put forth by family members, Aboriginal media sources, and Aboriginal organizations such as Native Women’s Association of Canada) that also makes certain political actions plausible or implausible. Through capturing both family members’ and Aboriginal media sources’ counter-narratives and mainstream media’s meta-narratives (as well as journalists’ understanding, justification, and/or critique of these meta-narratives), this \textit{mestizaje} approach will suggest visions for the future.

In this chapter, I outlined my mixed-methodological approach informed by the \textit{mestizaje} theoretical framework I described in Chapter two. First, I used an Indigenous Storytelling methodology to relate Pauline and Gwenda’s counter-narratives of who Daleen and Amber were and their experiences with journalists and media coverage. Then, I used a FPDA Approach in order to analyze the meta-narrative re-presented in

\textsuperscript{16} See note 14.
mainstream media coverage and counter-narratives re-presented by Aboriginal media sources. Next, I outline the methods that I used to capture these meta-narratives and counter-narratives.
5.0 MIXED METHODS APPROACH/DIFFERENT TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSES

In this chapter, I describe the methods I used in this project, that is, how I gathered and shared information about this project through community consultations/conversations with family members, a media analysis, and semi-structured interviews. Although I address these different methods separately, due to the circular nature of this research process, they overlapped in time and space.

5.1 Consultation/Conversations

Ethical research conducted from an Aboriginal feminist epistemology must include Aboriginal community members in the research process as decision-makers. In an interview, Leiss stated that she often approaches Aboriginal communities with a research question or purpose, but she is “a strong believer in including the people [from the community] from the beginning so that we actually do the work together.” If community members disagree with the research question or approach, Leiss works with them in order to “reframe, change, or readjust the research questions” (cited in Saul et. al., 2008). Similarly, Burhansstipanov, a Western Cherokee researcher said when doing research with Aboriginal communities, researchers must “give up some control, give up some power, and give up the money” (cited in Saul et. al., 2008). In conducting my research, I approached family members of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered with my research question, and a proposed research design with the expectation that this research would change.

Once I received approval from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Regina, I approached two members of the SK SIS group whom I had already developed
relationships with. I sent each of them an email outlining my proposed project and asked them to contact me if they would like this research to look at how their daughter’s story was told by media sources and to work with me as co-researchers on the project. That is, if they would like me to analyze how their daughter was re-presented in mainstream media and whether they would like to be involved as storytellers in the project. I also asked them to forward my email to other possible family members. In this email, I explained we would be able to discuss the research project more in depth and change it in order for it to be more relevant and useful to them and other family members.

The first two mothers I contacted, Pauline Muskego of the Onion Lake Cree Nation who was Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s mother and Gwenda Yuzicappi of the Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation who was Amber Redman’s mother, agreed to work with me as co-researchers of this project. Both Gwenda and Pauline agreed that this project is relevant and important. Through discussions during initial meeting and interview, the project shifted slightly in direction and presentation. For instance, initially I had planned to analyze only mainstream print media coverage of Daleen and Amber, but Pauline suggested that I broaden my analysis to include both mainstream and Aboriginal broadcast and print media outlets.

5.2 Media Analysis using FPDA

As I discussed above, my proposed research process involved analyzing mainstream print media coverage of Daleen and Amber. Before meeting with Pauline and Gwenda, I gathered and began to analyze StarPhoenix stories about Daleen and Leader Post stories about Amber. My initial approach was shaped by a number of factors. With the changing landscape of news coverage, today people get their information from a
number of news sources, including television, radio, Internet and newspapers. At the same time, there is evidence that newspaper coverage remains influential, not only because it is still the news source that a significant proportion of people gain their information from, but also in terms of informing and influencing the agendas of other news sources, in particular, television (Soderlund & Hildebrandt, 2005). Greer (2003) argues that the newsworthiness of events is influenced by both the cultural and geographical proximity to the readers.\(^\text{17}\) Since, Daleen disappeared while she was living in Saskatoon and Amber disappeared from Fort Qu’Appelle while living on Standing Buffalo First Nation, my initial plan was to analyze the print mainstream media sources that were closest to where each woman currently lived and disappeared from, that is, the StarPhoenix coverage of Daleen and the Leader Post coverage of Amber. Following from Pauline’s suggestion to analyze mainstream and Aboriginal broadcast and print media sources, I contacted all of the mainstream and Aboriginal news sources in Saskatchewan which were in close geographical proximity to Saskatoon where Daleen lived and disappeared from as well as her home community of Onion Lake First Nation (the closest mainstream media sources to Onion Lake are located in Lloydminster) as well as where Amber lived and disappeared from. Below, I describe what coverage I was able to access, the breadth of the data I analyzed, as well as the FPDA approach I took.

5.2.1 Media and Justice System Discursive Materials

Below, I outline how I accessed the media coverage and justice system materials surrounding Daleen and Amber’s disappearances and murders. Unless otherwise noted, I

\(^{17}\) Cultural proximity is understood to be “the ‘nearness’ of an event to the news reader in cultural terms. It can be thought of as the extent to which a given event resonates within a news reader’s existing framework of values, interests, beliefs and concerns…” (Greer, 2003, pp. 47-48)
analyzed relevant coverage spanning from May 2004 until July 2011 when I conducted the analysis.

5.2.1.1 Mainstream Print Media Coverage

First, I searched the StarPhoenix and Leader Post media coverage electronically through the University of Regina (U of R) database Canadian Newsstand for Amber and Daleen’s names, limiting the results to the Leader Post and StarPhoenix respectively. In order to ensure I accessed all of the relevant coverage, I used a number of variations of Daleen and Amber’s names. When searching for coverage about Daleen’s disappearance and murder, I searched: “Daleen Bosse” or “Daleen Kay Bosse” or “Dahleen Bosse” or “Dahleen Kay Bosse” or “Daleen Bosse (Muskego)” or “Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)” or “Dahleen Bosse (Muskego)” or “Dahleen Kay Bosse (Muskego).” When searching for coverage concerning Amber’s disappearance and murder, I searched: “Amber Redman” or “Amber Tara-Lyn Redman” or “Amber Tara-Lynn Redman” or “Amber Tara Lyn Redman” or “Amber Tara Lynn Redman.” Based on the articles that I found in my database search, I made hard copies from the U of R library’s microfilmed newspapers. Since a number of the articles only briefly mentioned Daleen and/or Amber, I read each article and analyzed the articles that were most relevant to Daleen and Amber’s disappearance and murder. Based on this coverage, I developed a list of dates of when events that were generally considered newsworthy by mainstream media sources occurred (see Appendix A).

I searched the Lloydminster Meridian Booster’s archive using the same possible variations of Daleen name’s spelling (and misspelling) listed above. Then, using these results and the list of dates when newsworthy events occurred, I viewed the microfilm of
the Meridian Booster at the Saskatchewan Archives Board and copied any the relevant media re-presentations.

5.2.1.2 Mainstream Broadcast Coverage

Mainstream broadcast media coverage was largely accessed through the broadcast stations. The one exception to this is I viewed CBC Saskatchewan’s television evening news coverage between April 2004 and July 2007 at the Saskatchewan Archives Board (and some of the news coverage requested was unavailable). I requested the television evening news coverage from CBC Saskatchewan. I was told that they were unable to provide me with copies of this coverage due to a lack of resources and directed me to CBC Learning. CBC Learning said that they were also unable to provide me with copies of the coverage, but they conducted a search using Daleen and Amber’s names and sent me a list of relevant stories. Since the Saskatchewan Archives Board does not have the ability to search CBC television news coverage, I used the search list provided by CBC Learning and the list of newsworthy events I developed through my analysis of the Leader Post and StarPhoenix coverage to guide my viewing of the coverage. I transcribed the coverage that was most relevant to Amber and Daleen’s disappearance and murder.

For my analysis of CBC Radio coverage, I requested any Saskatchewan Current Affairs coverage that included Daleen and Amber’s names and asked for the search to be conducted using the variations of spelling I listed on page 55. I chose to analyze the Current Affairs coverage rather than news stories since CBC Current Affairs stories are longer and more in-depth than CBC Radio news stories. I received a variety of coverage, which spanned The Morning Edition, Blue Sky, and The Afternoon Edition programs. I
listened to each of the different Current Affairs pieces and analyzed the most relevant stories.

For my analysis of *CTV News*, I contacted the news directors in Regina, Saskatoon, and Lloydminster and discussed my request with them. *CTV Regina* and *CTV Saskatoon* allowed me to come in and view the news coverage related to Amber’s and Daleen’s disappearance and murder. I transcribed the most relevant news stories and analyzed them. Instead of having me come in to view the materials, *CTV Lloydminster* provided me with copies of the coverage related to Daleen’s disappearance and murder for a reasonable fee. I analyzed the most relevant news stories. In order to make this process manageable, I provided *CTV news* sources with the list of newsworthy events and range of dates that I developed through my analysis of *Leader Post* and *StarPhoenix* coverage (see Appendix A).

I contacted *Global Regina* and *Global Saskatoon* news directors and requested either copies of their evening news coverage or to view the news coverage related to Amber and Daleen’s disappearance respectively. *Global Regina* provided me with copies of coverage related to Amber’s disappearance and I analyzed the most relevant news stories. *Global Saskatoon* responded that due to a lack of resources they were unable to do so.

I contacted the news director who works with the Saskatchewan Newstalk Radio Stations, *980 CJME* (in Regina) and *650 CKOM* (in Saskatoon). I was able to come into *980 CJME*’s station to view the newscasts and listen to the clips for the relevant news stories aired by both stations. Due to limitations of their archival system, I was only able to access materials from April 2003 until June 2004 and from June 26th, 2008 until
present. As well, some of the news clips were unavailable (particularly, the news clips from 650 CKOM). I analyzed the most relevant news stories that I was able to access.

5.2.1.3 Aboriginal Print Media Coverage

There are two monthly Saskatchewan Aboriginal newspapers, Eagle Feather News and Saskatchewan Sage. I examined the hard copies of Eagle Feather News at the University of Saskatchewan library and made copies of articles related to Amber and Daleen’s disappearances and murders. Through a manual and electronic search of Saskatchewan Sage archives (available through the U of S library), I was able to view and make copies of all of the relevant coverage between May 2004 and July 2011. I analyzed the most relevant articles.

5.2.1.4 Aboriginal Broadcast Coverage

I contacted the news director at Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) Network Radio and requested copies of coverage related to Daleen and Amber’s disappearances and murders. Guided by the list of newsworthy events that I created through my analysis of Leader Post and StarPhoenix coverage, I first accessed stories through their website archive. Also, one of the journalists who covered stories related to Daleen’s disappearance and murder, Darla Read, provided me with copies of stories she had covered. Finally, the news director provided me with copies of stories that I could not access through the web archive, which were stories from the Canadian Press newswire. I analyzed the most relevant stories.

I contacted CTV Indigenous Circle about accessing materials related to Daleen and Amber’s disappearance and murder. I provided them with the list of newsworthy events and date ranges when stories related to these events may have aired. Indigenous
Circle aired only one relevant documentary, *Stolen Spirit*, during these date ranges. I accessed this documentary online and analyzed it.

**5.2.1.5 Justice System Discursive Materials**

I requested press releases and other relevant materials about Daleen and Amber’s disappearances and murders from the relevant justice departments. The “F” Division Media Relations provided me with press releases about Amber’s disappearance and murder along with speaking notes for a Standing Buffalo Missing Persons walk. The Saskatoon Police Service provided me with copies of press releases about Daleen’s disappearance and murder. I used these discursive materials in my media analysis in order to better understand the role they (and the justice system’s discursive structure) played in how the media coverage told Daleen’s and Amber’s stories.

**5.2.2 FPDA Analysis of Media Materials**

Using FPDA, I analyzed these articles from both a synchronic and diachronic approach. Synchronic analysis is “detailed, micro-analysis of short stretches of spoken word” or in this case, of one an article, broadcast news story, or group of news stories that emerged during a peak in the coverage (Baxtor, 2003, p. 73). Conducting a synchronic analysis captured how Amber, Daleen, and their family members were positioned at a particular moment in time as well as how in different moments (or stories by different journalists and/or news sources) they may be positioned differently.

Diachronic analyses are long-term observations examining how particular people “may be more consistently positioned as powerful or powerless whereas others are subject to more shifting power relations” (Baxtor, 2003, p. 74) I used diachronic analysis to explore how Daleen and Amber were re-presented over time and how these re-presentations
disrupt or re-produce white masculine hegemony and colonialist, racist, sexist, and heterosexist discourses.

I also explored the denotative-connotative implications of how Amber and Daleen are positioned and their stories are told. When analyzing the denotative level of media representations, I described in detail these news stories (for instance, an articles’ placement in the newspaper, whether there was a picture, the length of the article, who is acknowledged as a source, and how Amber and Daleen are named) and used analytic tools from CDA (Baxtor, 2003; Richardson, 2007; van Dijk, 2000). While denotative analysis seems quite objective, Baxtor reminds us that “it is always a culturally specific form of interpretation involving at the very least the selection of a focus” (Baxtor, 2003, 76). Then, I moved onto the connotative level of analysis. Baxtor explains that this level of analysis involves “more searching, interpretive commentary of extracts” of representations, which draw “partly from the synchronic, denotative evidence, and partly from…diachronic sources of data” (Baxtor, 2003, 76). This involves identifying the discourses that are operating in and through media sources, even when these discourses may not be immediately visible in the text. The results from this analysis informed my interviews with Pauline and Gwenda as well as my interviews with journalists. In the latter case, this analysis informed which journalists I interviewed and what questions I asked. Similarly, my diachronic analysis was informed by interviews with Pauline and Gwenda and journalists, journalism texts, as well as scholarly work concerning journalism, Aboriginal women, and the racist, sexist, classist, colonialist, and heterosexist discourses that permeate white masculine hegemony.
5.3 Indigenous Story-telling/Listening to family members stories

Kovach states one method that is congruent with Aboriginal epistemologies is a “conversational method that is flexible enough to accommodate principles of native oral traditions, and is thus differentiated from a more traditional interview process” (2009, p. 124). This “open-structured conversational method” respects the story that the teller wants to share and how they want to share it, which allows storytellers more control (Kovach, 2009). These conversations often take longer than semi-structured or structured interviews.

Due to the number of research questions that consider Pauline and Gwenda’s experiences and perspectives, a semi-structured format was used for the interviews (Schensul, Schensul & Lecompte, 1999). At the same time, the interviews were informed by Kovach’s conversational method. As such, these interviews were conducted in a flexible manner. The storytellers determined what they wanted to share in relation to this project’s research questions and prompts were used to guide the interviews when Gwenda and Pauline asked for further guidance. Throughout this process, Gwenda and Pauline become co-researchers, rather than simply “participants” or even “storytellers”. In recognition of their contributions, I offered both Gwenda and Pauline honoraria.

The use of cultural protocols is another important part of conducting research in a respectful way. At the beginning of my interviews with Pauline and Gwenda, I explained the research question, aims, and proposed process, emphasizing that we could redirect or revise this process. Then, I presented Gwenda and Pauline with tobacco and tea. In Kovach’s research, “several researchers of Cree ancestry referenced as protocol the use of tobacco as a gift that signifies respect and reciprocity” (2009, p. 127). While tobacco is
widely viewed in this way, it does not carry the same significance for every Aboriginal person. In Saskatchewan, some Métis people prefer the gift of tea when they are asked to share their stories, knowledge, or teachings (Bourassa, personal communication, Oct. 16, 2007). According to cultural protocol, when a participant accepts one or both of these gifts, they have agreed to share their story and (by presenting them with tobacco) I have agreed to respect their story. After Pauline and Gwenda accepted these gifts, I then explained to them the university ethics protocol and asked them if they consented to the interview according to the university’s process (see Appendix B for the Consent forms).

Then, I began these conversations by informing Pauline and Gwenda about this project’s research questions and asking them to tell me about their daughters and their experiences when their daughters disappeared and were found murdered (see Appendix C for interview guide). I allowed these conversations to develop, responded to the stories and shared my own understandings as necessary, as well as engaged in active listening (Kovach, 2009). When the conversations slowed or were in need of direction, I used questions from the semi-structured interview guide to prompt Gwenda or Pauline or returned to a point that they had made earlier during the interview. Then, I showed Gwenda and Pauline the newspaper coverage about Daleen and Amber in order to prompt discussion around their experiences with members of the media and their opinions of the coverage. I gave this news coverage to Pauline and Gwenda. An Elder and psychologist were available for counseling if Pauline or Gwenda become distressed during or after the interview.

As Indigenous academics criticize mainstream data analysis as “extractive” and “reductive,” I did not use this type of analysis. Instead, after these conversations were
transcribed, I summarized these conversations, producing what Kovach refers to as “condensed stories” (Kovach, 2009). Condensed stories retain the context of the original conversations, “staying as true to each story, to the voice, as possible” (Kovach, 2009, p. 52). I sent Pauline and Gwenda an electronic copy of their condensed stories and they made necessary additions and changes. They also gave me images to be published with them and their daughter’s condensed stories. These stories informed other aspects of my research process, including which journalists I approached for interviews, how I reshaped the questions for my interviews with these journalists, and my diachronic analysis of media materials.

5.4 Journalists/Situating the Interview Results

The table below locates the journalists in relation to their “race,” gender, current or most recent media outlet that they work with, whether they were currently working as a journalist at the time of the interview, as well as whether they covered stories predominantly about Daleen or Amber’s disappearance and/or murder. All but one of journalists gave me permission to use their name in my thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>“Race”</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Outlet</th>
<th>Journalist</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brett Bradshaw</td>
<td>White-settler</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalist 2</td>
<td>White-settler</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Freelance</td>
<td>Former</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merelda Fiddler</td>
<td>Métis</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsey Hoemsen</td>
<td>White-settler</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>CTV Regina</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barb Pacholik</td>
<td>White-settler</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Leader Post</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darla Read</td>
<td>White-settler</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>MBC</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Daleen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5 Semi-structured Interviews with Journalists Using FPDA

Based on my analysis of Aboriginal and mainstream media coverage and interviews with family members, I interviewed six current and former journalists using
semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are characterized by focus and flexibility. That is, they have open-ended questions that allow the interviewer to focus the interview. As well, they are flexible enough that the researcher can ask the participant to expand these answers through probes or further questioning (Schensul, Schensul & Lecompte, 1999). These semi-structured interviews explored: journalist’s opinions about Aboriginal and mainstream media re-presentations of Aboriginal women, their experiences reporting about Daleen and Amber’s disappearances and murders as well as other Aboriginal women’s disappearances and murders, the discursive practices that constrain or enable how stories of disappeared and murdered women are told, as well as whether and how journalistic re-presentations and practices have changed since the release of the *Stolen Sisters* report in 2004 and what changes they would like to see.

My interviews with journalists were guided both by the interview guide and my analysis of the journalists’ stories about Daleen and Amber’s disappearances and murders. We went through these media re-presentations together, discussing the journalistic practices and ideals that underlie them as well as other aspects that informed the journalist’s decision to include/focus on different elements of Amber and Daleen’s stories. Rather than analyzing these interviews in isolation from the media re-presentations, each of the interviews were transcribed and analyzed as part of my FPDA approach (Mills & Mullany, 2011). The interview results informed my synchronic and diachronic analysis as well as denotative and connotative analysis (discussed above). This analysis also took into account women’s stories as told by family members, and the family members’ experiences with journalists and media re-presentations.
5.6 Further Collaboration

An important part of conducting research with Aboriginal communities is the ethical principle of giving back. Wilson (2008) suggests that Indigenous “research must ask how the analysis of these ideas will further build relationships” (p. 119). In order to ethically give back to Pauline, Gwenda, and other family members, this research project had to consider how to disseminate the results and recommendations and how these disseminated results and recommendations should be presented. How can they become a part of the dialogue on how to improve the relationship between the white-settler media and Aboriginal families? This is a question best answered through a dialogue with family members since they are re-victimized by problematic re-presentations of their family members. I produced a summary of the results and recommendations in a draft form and consulted with my co-researchers about what recommendations should be added, changed, or emphasized. Further, we discussed how I could best present them to journalists, educational institutions, and other groups in order to instigate change at a local level. Since there is a number of different ways that we can continue to share this research over the next few years, we will continue to have these conversations.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter described the research process of this project. Informed by Indigenous Storytelling Methodology and FPDA, I used community consultations/conversations, a media analysis, and semi-structured interviews in order to gather, analyze, and share information. In the next chapter, I will present the condensed stories that Gwenda and Pauline shared with me.
6.0 FAMILY MEMBERS’ STORIES

As I planned this project, I considered different ways I could ensure its relevance to Aboriginal communities and families of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. It became clear to me that in order to do so, I needed to listen to family members’ stories and involve them as co-researchers in this project. Kovach acknowledges that storytelling is a process and the story is produced relationally through the interaction between the teller and the listener (2009). This is not only the case for the stories that emerged when I met with Pauline Muskego and Gwenda Yuzicappi, but this project itself. What Pauline and Gwenda shared with me guided my media analysis and interviews with journalists. Therefore, in the first section of the project’s results I will relay the “condensed stories” that Pauline and Gwenda shared with me during the spring and summer of 2011. First, I will share Pauline Muskego and her daughter Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s story. Then, I will share Gwenda Yuzicappi and her daughter Amber Tara-Lynn Redman’s story. These stories will guide the readers’ understandings of Amber and Daleen and their reading of the following chapters, which examine how media outlets told Daleen’s and Amber’s stories.

6.1 Pauline Muskego’s and Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s Story

Daleen’s birthday was March 25th, 1979, she would have been thirty-two this March and her daughter is ten years old now, her birthday was January. When Daleen first had her daughter, she looked after her like a little doll, she just loved her so much and she wanted the best for her. When she was only two years old, Daleen put her into ballet. The entrance age is three, but Daleen managed to convince the ballet school to allow her in. That first year, Daleen went missing in May, so she never saw her daughter have her first ballet recital and Daleen would’ve been so proud to see her daughter.

18 Although it is not generally accepted academic practice to use contractions, following from Kovach I will use contractions within these condensed stories in order to reflect the nature of our interviews/conversations (2009).
Now, her daughter is in baton, she’s in ballet, she’s in jazz and she’s into music as well, she plays piano. She’s really gifted in those areas, she really excels. Daleen would have been so proud of her daughter and I’m thankful that we have the means to continue help our granddaughter.

Daleen went missing on May 18th 2004 and Dana, our son who was living at Daleen and Jeremiah’s house at the time, phoned us two days after she went missing. Right away we took off to Saskatoon. When we got there, Jeremiah and Herb went to the police. I think that when Daleen first went missing, Jeremiah tried to file a missing persons report, but they said, “You have to wait so long.” We found out later that that’s not really true.

It took a while before the police really got the investigation going into Daleen’s disappearance so, we started looking for her with Jeremiah and next thing you know more family members were coming into Saskatoon and everyone was searching the city. We put up missing persons posters and then people phoned in with tips, so we checked them all out, and this went on and on and on until August, when we had to come back to work. We also hired a private investigator maybe a month, maybe two weeks after Daleen went missing.

We had trouble with the police at first. When I look at the police now, I am thankful for them for what they did, but it didn’t start out that way. They were very negative at first. When we had our first meeting with the sergeant, the first thing that I always remember is that he said, “You’re good people.” I mean, what difference does it make, who you are, what walk of life you come from? What does he mean by that? What if I was a homeless person and I reported a loved one missing, is that less important or more important? So, right away he categorized us as “good people”.

The other thing I remember is that when we were in the sergeant’s office, he told us, “We have missing persons files this high,” and he made a motion about a foot high, “and your daughter’s is right underneath there, it’s at the bottom.” Yes, I know little kids are more important and I one-hundred-percent agree that when a child is missing, they really need to do their best to find them. But still, she’s our daughter, our loved one is missing, you need to help us here. So, it went on file that she was missing and they would always tell us, “She’s out and about and she’ll be home. Most people who go missing are out and about.” Then, when we would try to go meet with the sergeant, he was always on holidays, or always on days off, so that would really get to us too, because we would be traveling back and forth to Saskatoon.
So, we hired a private investigator. He was very helpful, he worked hard for us, we got tips from different areas and he went all over checking them out. He went to Calgary, he went to Edmonton, Prince Albert, there were lots of tips from Regina, and from all over Saskatchewan. That private investigator found the person that last saw Daleen and interviewed him. Then, the police interviewed that guy as well. Nothing came of it, because they said he has alibis, “Everything’s okay. He comes from a good family,” That went on for so long that we were just very frustrated, so we kept the private investigator involved quite a while and then we also had Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), involved as well and the person who was involved from there said, when the police found the car, “Something isn’t right.” The police took the vehicle, but they didn’t do a full forensic on it, they only fingerprinted it. It wasn’t until the following year that they finally did a full forensic on that vehicle. It took them that long.

It wasn’t until eight months after Daleen disappeared that the police decided to upgrade her case to major crimes, so it took them quite a while before they actually got things going. In the meantime, we went to the police station maybe once a month or once every two weeks we just kept on their case because, we knew it was their job to help us. There were different Chiefs of Police there and finally when Chief Weighell came on, he was the one who told us personally that he was going to help us find our daughter. He said that he would tell us personally if he ever knew of anything and that’s what he did. I have nothing but praise for him.

Before they found Daleen’s remains, for those four years, we just kept on, made more posters, got reward money, and there’s just so much in between here and there that can be told. We always thought, “Daleen will come home.” We came up with all kind of scenarios and we just kept praying-praying that she would come home. She never came home, but we never gave up hope, so every time we got a tip we would go check it out. We would go where that tip was-a dilapidated place or even the streets of Vancouver-look around and say, “She couldn’t be here, it’s not like her to be here,” but we always felt compelled to check, because what if? What if it was her? What if it’s really her? What if she needs our help to get out of that situation?” As parents, we knew that we had to do that. No matter what the cost, because it was costly not only financially, but spiritually, physically, and emotionally, especially emotionally, it was like a roller coaster. When you have hope, you are up there, but when you know that it’s not her, you just drop right down again. It’s like a grieving cycle, you are stuck in that cycle, but I believe the Lord God gave strength to be able to keep on going, and there was a hidden message in the whole thing, Daleen didn’t die in vain, there was an underlying gift in it all.

Daleen started in Kindergarten at Saskatoon at Confederation School and then they moved her to Faith Alive Christian Academy, where she went until Grade 2 and she excelled, she was a very smart girl. Then, from there, we moved to Lloydminster when I was finished my Bachelor of Education, well not quite, I just had my internship left to do. I did my four-month internship there and she did part of grade 3 there and then we moved to Onion Lake. So she was here from Grade 3 all the way to Grade 12, except, there were some times that we went to Saskatoon for school. But all the way through her schooling, she excelled, she always got A’s, she was always involved in all of the student councils, and she always wanted to be in drama. She joined the drama club in Lloydminster and when she left home, she also did some acting. She was always
involved in Drama and when she was doing her Bachelor of Education, that’s what most of her classes were in.

When she finished Grade 12 she went into university first and it didn’t work out right away. So she went to the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies and she got her Business Administration Degree. Then, she wanted to go on to university and throughout her university schooling she also had drama in the back of her mind. She wanted to be an aesthetician as well, she wanted to do nails, she wanted to hair, she wanted to teach that at a high school to help young people. She was still young herself, but she wanted to help other young people, but that time never came.

We kept a lot of cards she gave us, birthday cards, letters that she wrote to me personally, I kept all of those and I still have them. Letters she wrote to her dad, thanking him for being such a good role model to her, saying she wouldn’t have chosen to be a teacher if it wasn’t for him. She also wrote letters to her brothers, encouraging them to stay in school. She was very loving and she loved her brothers so much. She had two brothers. Dana’s twenty-nine and David’s twenty-six and they miss her so much. It’s been like seven years and they still feel the pain. It’s harder for young people to understand. For them, when they lose a loved one, it’s very tragic. They need to see the big picture where Daleen was loaned to us for twenty-five years. They have to take those good memories and use them to help themselves, not to stay in a rut, it’s a very hard struggle for them and for us too, but we are on a good healing journey. We have had help from lots of people, like even to tell the story one more time. We need to be able to use her story for good, to help somebody else and that’s what my hope is, to help other people so that violence against women will stop. Not only against First Nations or Aboriginal women, but also non-Native women, you see a lot of it happening in this whole world, it has been here since day one. You’d think we’d learn from our mistakes, but we still need God to help us to choose what’s right.

Going back to when Daleen first went missing, my first reaction was, “Stay away from the media.” I didn’t want anything to do with them. I didn’t even want to be interviewed by journalists. Nothing. I don’t know how long I felt like that for, quite a while anyways, because I figured that media was the enemy, I thought that they were just going to blow this out of proportion and they were going to sensationalize it, they were going to make her out to be really bad, stereotype her, label her, because she was a Native woman who went missing from a bar. I felt that way for a while and I do not know what happened along the way, I do not know how long it took me before I realized I could use the media as a tool.

When I started talking to the media, I always tried to present her in a positive light, to keep people from thinking the worst about her. One thing that happened along the way is I became my daughter’s voice, because she didn’t have a voice, she’s missing, and I began to think, “No one can speak for her better than her own mother and if I don’t speak up for her, who will?”

When I finally did start talking to journalists, some of them started to get the stories wrong, they included the wrong information, wrong spelling, and after a while it became so important to me that they spell her name properly and when they spelt it wrong, oh, it would get to me. It’s such an important thing. Even the facts, they get all the facts mixed up, and that would get to me. Then, they interviewed the accused perpetrator’s dad, and they made him like such a nice guy. He said, “Oh, his son
wouldn’t do that” or “his son would have had to have someone help him do it.” You know, so it cast doubt right away, it suggested that it wasn’t him that murdered Daleen.

I really appreciated the journalists when they did a good story. I would phone them myself and thank them when they wrote articles that would present my daughter as a person, not just a statistic, not just another Aboriginal woman who has gone missing. Or, if there was someone who had made a mistake, I would also phone them myself and tell them, “Why did you have to put it this way? Why did you have to write that?” Like, they wrote that her remains were found in a party spot. Yes, it could have been a party spot, but they don’t know if she went there willingly. I don’t know the facts. All I know is that that’s where her remains were found, but I didn’t like it when they subtly implied that she willingly went there and that she was partying. They never wrote back to apologize or anything, but I would write to them when I didn’t like an article and tell them how I felt. I wanted to protect her memory no matter what.

That’s how I started to feel about the media after a while, that the media is a tool and if you tell journalists certain things they will usually respect that. After a while, I could tell if a reporter wasn’t there for real, if they were just there for the story. I could tell when I talked to somebody, by their tone of voice, their body language, if someone was short with me or they cut me off, I could tell that they were just there for the story. But I would still tell my story in the best way I could, hoping they would take something good out of it.

Some of the police officers and journalists do not understand how to treat people, like the police officer in Brandon. I remember that I was so offended when we went there. We got a tip from there, so the first thing we did was go to the police, we always go in and acknowledge the police and tell them we’re here and that we are going to do our own searching. I got to the police station and there was this girl, this young blond girl and she was sitting there and I walked up to the counter, and said, “I need to talk to a police officer, I need to talk to somebody about my missing daughter, but I don’t want to talk about it out here in public” and she said, “I’m sorry, but you have to.” She just was very rude and I walked right out of there. I was so offended, I came out of there crying, because when you have somebody who is missing and you’re in severe pain emotionally and you’re treated like that, it’s almost like a slap in the face. You want somebody to show respect or care a little bit about what you are going through, because it’s trauma what you are going through when you have a missing one. So, I phoned Oliver Williams with FSIN and told him what had happened. He was able to work with the police so that staff member was reprimanded. They need to have training about how to treat people with missing loved ones and cultural training too.

I think that they are starting to have cultural training for the police. I think it would help journalists too, because there are so many different cultures in this world and in Saskatchewan about 15% of the population are Aboriginal. That’s a high number and they need to know how to approach people. It would be nice if journalists could understand that and some do understand.

I think for journalists, its important not to rush. Some of them get in a big rush, because they want to get their story off real fast, but others take their time, they set it up properly, they make you comfortable and tell you about the process. Maybe one more thing they could do is to ask, “Is there anything else I can do for you?” They usually say, “Okay, we are ready to go here.” Maybe they could take it one step further and ask, “Is
there anything else that needs to be done in order for this interview to go smoothly?” I don’t think they need the traditional protocol, unless they are talking with an Elder who requires it.

One of our concerns right at the beginning was, “Why are these Aboriginal girls who are going missing not in the media? Why are only white girls shown?” You know, one example was in Toronto, I can’t remember that girl’s name, but it was splashed all across Canada on CTV or CBC and it was very sensational. Yet my daughter had been missing for over a year and we had maybe gotten some local coverage. So, I got a hold of Bev Jacobs and she phoned Sue Bailey with the Canadian Press and Sue came all the way to Lloydminster when we were doing our first run and our first walk and interviewed us. She wrote a very powerful story about what our run/walk is about. She was able to get the story across Canada, not necessarily on the first page, maybe the second page, but at least it went all across Canada. That’s how powerful of a good journalist she is.

6.2 Gwenda Yuzicappi’s and Amber Tara-Lynn Redman’s story

I really feel that raising awareness should not stop. It needs to continue. I have become a voice for this issue, for all families. If I could change that, if I could have my daughter with me here, I would. I really strongly believe that my daughter’s life meant so much, not only to me, but also to my family, her friends, and the community, and now that this has happened, that she was missing and then found murdered I have to be that voice. When Amber first went missing, the women Elders told me that the media needed to hear from me and that I needed to talk with them. So, that was advice given to me by the women and I respected that.

When Amber’s remains were first located and I went home and told my boys, the first thing I told them was, “I don’t think I’m going to be talking about her anymore, because we know where she is now, we know that she’s in a good place.” Both of my boys said, “No, no Mom, we want you to continue. We want you to continue to talk about her.” That was very hard, very difficult, because I felt that I should stop talking. That I was given that opportunity to know where my daughter is and there are so many families out there right now that don’t have that opportunity. But I listened to my boys and I was able to respect their decision and I continue to speak about Amber. I will continue right until the end, right until my last days here on earth, I will continue to speak about the missing and murdered First Nations women, and I will speak on my daughter’s behalf, as her mother.

The day that Amber was born, her father and I were going to go to Brandon for this big hockey tournament and Amber decided to be born. We were packing to leave and I started to get sick. When she was born she was so beautiful, she had so much hair and she was such a fat baby. I told Amber’s dad, “Go ahead, you have a game you are going to, go on.” So he went to Brandon and I spent all weekend with my baby and I named her. I liked both of the names Amber and Tara and I had to put my middle name, Lynn, in there. So, I went with Amber Tara-Lynn Redman. When he came back, he agreed with me on her name. Her traditional Dakota name is Red Star Woman.

For me there are so many stories, we could sit here all night and I would tell you stories about Amber, her personality and how she was so giving, understanding, loving, caring, considerate, empathetic, intelligent, and beautiful. Amber always had those
teachings, the gifts of an older lady. I don't know what she was before she was born, but she brought so many strong qualities in herself. As she was growing up she could see things that only children can see, the qualities of different people, the aura, the personality of that person.

As I said, when Amber was born she was so beautiful, she had so much hair, and she was a chubby little girl. Every day it was just amazing, she was out there playing with dogs, she would be out there amongst the trees, she was one with everything around her, her whole environment. Going to school, she was definitely spoiled and she was daddy's little girl. Her dad beaded her an outfit. She told her Dad what her favourite colours were and he beaded her an outfit using those colours. As she grew up, like in grade one, two, and three, she was just quiet, this quiet little girl. She was my little girl, so I dressed her up and fixed up her hair all pretty, everyday I would braid her hair differently and Amber would change her clothes like three or four times a day.

With her brother, they are only 14 months apart, so they were very close growing up and Amber confided in Bevin. Things she couldn't tell me, things she couldn't tell anyone, any of her friends, she would tell her brother. The relationship between the brother and sister is very strong. As I said, the relationship between a mother and daughter and father and daughter, you know, every family connection was strong, that is a teaching that Amber has shared with us. She loved writing, she loved singing, and she loved dancing, oh, to see Amber dance. She was so light on her toes, she danced on her tiptoes and her hands matched her movements. I travelled with her to all of these different places for her to dance when she was the Standing Buffalo Junior Princess. We travelled all over, her, her brother Bevin, and me. Then, when Amber became a teenager, I didn’t have any attitude from her. Both Bevin and Amber were just so respectful and they knew the rights and wrongs in life. Amber didn’t even have a boyfriend until she was 17 and she met up with Cody.

After Amber and Bevin found out that their cousins, Leslie and Chris, were in foster care Amber and Bevin talked about adopting them. Then, they talked with me about it and they said that they wanted me to go and get them out of foster care and bring them home, that they would look after them. Amber said that she wanted to adopt Leslie, because she was there when Leslie was born. She had seen Leslie needed that motherly figure and to this day Leslie is a special young girl and her Dakota name is very honourable. Leslie also follows the tradition of the Sundance as she was one of the tree choppers. Amber saw in Leslie what gifts she was going to bring. I see this gift of this young girl who would do anything for anyone and loves kids, like a little mini-Amber.

One of Amber’s goals was to be a teacher. Another one of her goals was to be a police officer. She graduated in 2004. For me, it was a gift and being able to see how beautiful my daughter was and to see how proud she was for dedicating those years as a student. Saying, “Hey, if I can graduate, anyone can!” Because that was Amber’s attitude, if I can do it, you can do it. Amber was very inspirational in that way. To have her three Grandmothers all attend and her dad, that was another gift. Because her dad and I had separated when Bevin was five and she was four. It had just devastated Amber, she just missed her dad so much. For him to come to her grad, for him and I to walk her in, she was the happiest graduate there.

I will always remember that Thursday night that Amber went missing. I stayed up all night and I sat at my picture window. It was a full moon that night and it was so
bright. I sat there crying and praying and asking the Grandmother Nation to be with her, wherever she was, for her not to be alone. Little did I know, until years later, that she was murdered that night. But the light from that moon, it just brought me so much strength. As days went on when there was a full moon, I would offer my tobacco and say a prayer and there would be a Grandmother face in the moon. The Grandmother’s mouth would be moving, she would be telling me something, so I would offer her the tobacco again and ask, “What are you trying to tell me?” No one else could see it. There’s only one brother-in-law who said he had seen the Grandmother’s face in the moon and her mouth moving. And the little kids in my home, they saw it too. To this day they see this Red Star. They will tell me when they see that Red Star shining in the sky. I’ll say, “Where?” and try to look for it, but my vision is not that good. I believe them, I really strongly believe that our children are gifted, each one of them, that they can see and feel and hear things that we as adults can’t, so I always cherish those times and it still happens.

I am still in contact with Cody. I’m very honoured that he was able to make the missing person’s report the Monday after she went missing. I don’t know how long it would have taken me, so I’m always really grateful that he was able to take that step. That he knew in his heart something was wrong. That Amber would be home. When I was at work that day, I didn’t even think about Amber being missing. I thought, “She’s probably just really upset with Cody and she just needs this time.” Then again, she didn’t phone me and that wasn’t like her, but I still had that hope. When I phoned the police, I explained who I was, that a missing person’s report had been made and I wanted to add to it. After I hung up the phone, it hit me. The reality of Amber being missing just hit me. I knew that I had to go home and when I got home I didn’t know what to do. It was just like I was in shock.

I went home and told my kids that a missing persons report had been made for Amber. No one said anything, everyone was just quiet, and then more family came, the news just spread like wildfire, and everyone came over to the house. They were starting the Sundance and the four-day sweats and that’s where I needed to go. I told my family that that’s where I was going to be, “I need to go and sweat, I need to talk to the Elders, to the old women, and I need to let them know what’s going on.” I needed to be there, I
needed to pray. I needed to pray for her, I needed to pray for my family, my community, and I needed to pray for myself. I needed that strength and that was one of many ceremonies that I attended. I felt so close to Amber being there, that was a place that Amber was too, she danced there at the Sundance and she sweated there.

I remember my family coming to me that Monday evening and telling me, “We should be looking for her, why isn’t there a search going on?” I said, “I don’t know, that’s a good question.” They said, “We should start, we should put up a list and a poster and post it and see if we can get any volunteers to come help us.” and I said, “Yes, that’s a good idea, let’s do it then.” I called the police and I let them know what we were going to do. They said that they were still interviewing and it would be a while before they would be able to make a decision about whether search was required. I said, “No, we are going to be searching and we are going to start on Wednesday.” My family felt helpless, they needed to do something and they weren’t seeing it being done by the police. When I let the police know on Tuesday night that we were going to start the search on Wednesday, they said they would like to be a part of it. I said, “You are always welcome to come and be a part of it.” So, how we started the search is that the women, the cousins, the aunts, and the sisters all came forward and said that this needed to happen.

When Amber was missing, four of Amber friends and cousins had babies that they named after Amber within those two years and ten months. The first one, Amber’s cousin, named her daughter after Amber. The second one was Amber’s best friend, the one that she confided in, she had a daughter and she asked if she could name her daughter after Amber. How could I say no? Amber’s younger relatives and friends wanting to name their daughters Amber, because Amber was such an inspiration in their lives they wanted to have that legacy continue. So there are four young girls who are named after Amber who were born within that time that she was missing. The third one, Bevin and I are her godparents. Her middle name is Amber. The mom asked us that if anything ever happened that we would be there to help whoever was going to take care of her little girl.

Today, I feel that Amber is caring for all the babies that the Creator has called home. Amber wanted to give me so many grandchildren. Well, she’s looking after all these children. I know Amber’s best friend, she had lost her daughter when she was not even a year old and she asked if they could place her daughter at rest at the head of Amber’s grave, because they felt that Amber would take care of her. So to this day, Amber has that little baby and I know she’s doing everything she can to teach that baby how the baby’s mom would teach her.

There are so many positive things that outweigh the bad. One of the things that I’ve come to understand is the Creator had this plan for Amber. Amber, being this beautiful young woman with so many gifts, the one important issue within this timeframe was missing and murdered Aboriginal women. She wanted to go home, because the Creator had called her home, but she wanted to bring this issue to the forefront. We have to learn from this experience and as women, we need to be safe, and we need to cope in positive ways in life. We need to remember to always love each other. To respect the seven teachings, and the teachings of how important women’s roles are. Our men who are so unhealthy, they need to learn from this too, especially the men who have taken Amber’s life.

When Amber’s remains were located, I had asked the police if we could go as the family, say prayers, and sing songs, and do what we needed to do in order for Amber’s
spirit to continue on, to make her journey, and my request was granted. I was so impressed with the police. When we went to where her remains were found, the gifted people went first and we followed behind. Then, the gifted people sang songs and lit the pipe and all the family that was there smoked it. Just as we were smoking it and the gifted people were singing the songs, we felt the presence. It was like a big gush of wind coming in from the East and the South, it was coming and we were all standing and it was like crashing. I remember trying to pray and sing the songs with them, but hearing this. When we left, when we were done the ceremony, the sun was shining. It was raining that morning when we went up there and when we finished the ceremony the sun was shining right on where Amber was. We noticed that there were four big rocks and four big trees right around Amber. We feel very strongly that everything has a spirit, everything, the rocks, the trees, the wind, they all have a spirit, and instantly it was all there, the sunlight that shone, everything. So when we left, one of the things the helpers told us was “Don’t look back.” So we didn’t, we walked and I remember us all shaking hands with all the officers and we went home. Of course our family members were cooking and we had to have a feast. The helpers explained the reasons that we heard the wind and the crashing through the trees, that those were our relatives that were coming. That Amber was not alone that night, that she did have relatives with her. That she was able to lift her spirit out of her body when they were torturing her, that she was able to release herself and that was one of the things that the relatives from the spirit world wanted to let us know as the family. Yes, she did suffer, but she was not there. She was able to release her spirit so that the second that they killed her, she was able to go. To me, that was so comforting.

The police were so incredible when we had to do another ceremony preparing Amber for the wake. We had to wrap her remains in cloth and wrap her remains with other medicines and we had to pray and sing. When we were singing the songs, this Buffalo spirit came in. Amber was riding the Buffalo and the Buffalo was dancing. Because that was Amber, she danced, that was Amber’s spirit in the Buffalo. Inside the room when they were wrapping her, they said they saw this red light just going into her remains. Then, when we started singing the songs, the walls started shaking and the floor started shaking. The helpers told us that she was happy that the family was given this opportunity to prepare the remains. The police were right outside the door and when the ceremony was finished, they came in, and they could not explain the shaking that they had felt. Also, when the police had first found Amber’s remains, they had put them in a different box before they actually put them in this one and they had to go get rid of that other box. The police didn’t understand what they were doing and how important it was, but, the helpers explained to them what they needed to do and they did it. So that was amazing, that the police were able to be part of the ceremonies although they didn’t understand.

In the beginning there was no media coverage, it wasn’t until we started searching seven days later that the media came. The media was different on every occasion. My daughter didn’t get the national coverage that other young women that are not First Nations do when they go missing. I wasn’t in my right mind to voice that then, but eventually I did come out and speak and they did start talking about my daughter. After the media knew that Amber was missing, they were right there at everything we planned, the searches, the walks we held.
When I do interviews, I have to be comfortable with the reporter. I have to gain that trust and feel that they are sincere, that they do not want this as just another story or another statistic. I have to feel that it is a part of them that they wanted to personally tell the story about my daughter. So, I need to find that out through speaking to them. Once I know that, I feel that I could trust them and the communication is more comfortable. The interviews are not easy, there’s the roller coaster of emotions, there’s triggers within the interviews, so many things. When my daughter’s remains were found, we asked the media if they would respect our privacy and that was given. I really appreciated that, because we needed that time.

6.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I re-told the “condensed stories” that Pauline and Gwenda shared with me during the spring of 2011. First, I shared Pauline Muskego and her daughter Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s story. Then, I shared Gwenda Yuzicappi and her daughter Amber Tara-Lynn Redman’s story. With their stories in mind, I now turn to examine how journalists and news outlets covered Daleen and Amber’s stories.
7.0 DISCURSIVELY FRAMING DALEEN KAY BOSSE (MUSKEGO) AND AMBER TARA-LYNN REDMAN’S DISAPPEARANCES/HOW MEDIA OUTLETS RE-TOLD THEIR STORIES

In this chapter, I explore how different media outlets and journalists told Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s and Amber Tara-Lynn Redman’s stories from the time they disappeared until they were discovered, murdered, in the summer of 2008. I examine how the discursive structure of journalism and its norms and practices made certain representations of Amber and Daleen im/possible. Following from Baxtor’s FPDA approach, this chapter re-presents multiple voices and accounts (2003). In this analysis, I draw on my interviews/conversations with journalists, Gwenda, and Pauline as part of understanding and complicating how the media told Amber and Daleen’s stories. I pay specific attention to whether media re-presentations were respectful and responsive to Amber, Daleen and their family members. I also explore whether media coverage challenges or reproduces hegemonic norms.

As I have discussed in Chapter One, journalists are, at best, partial originators of ideas (MacDonald, 2003). Their work is part of a broader process whereby “media forms of talking and thinking interact with those of the wider society.” While at times, media outlets set the agenda, often they are “reacting to perceived public desires or concerns” (MacDonald, 2003, p. 2, emphasis added). Furthermore, journalists are operating within a discursive structure that produces “objectivity” as an ideal, along with particular conceptualizations of what count as “credible sources” and “newsworthy” events. One journalist spoke about this notion of “credibility”:
[T]his sounds terrible, but credibility is a huge thing when it comes to the media. And I believe that a lot of times, maybe the most credible family members [of missing Aboriginal women] are not put forward to make the inquiries or speak to the media and then all of the sudden as reporters you think, “I don’t know if I want to put you on TV, because you don’t have [credibility].”

When asked to expand on what she meant by credibility, this journalist listed qualities she said undermine one’s credibility, such as “outright swearing,” being “not well-kept,” or appearing to have been drinking. In comparison, this journalist described Gwenda as always being “so well put together, so well spoken…you could identify with her family as somebody in the mainstream world.” She suggested that these qualities of Gwenda’s contributed to the significant amount of media coverage that Amber’s disappearance and murder received.19

As the quote above illustrates, notions of credibility are based on assumptions that are often misunderstood as common sense. While common sense is lived as natural, it is actually produced through hegemony, in this case, white masculine and colonial hegemony. These common sense assumptions privilege those who embody certain white, middle-class, and heterosexual norms. It is important to acknowledge that this journalist, despite Gwenda’s identity as Dakota Sioux and very traditional, considered her recognizable by the mainstream reader in comparison to many family members of missing or murdered Aboriginal women. This recognizability upheld the reporter’s view of credibility.

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19 At the same time, as Gwenda points out in her story, Amber did not receive the same level of media coverage nationally that other white-settler women do when they disappear. Beverly Jacobs makes this observation as well in an interview with Matarie from CBC on July 22, 2008 (see also Amnesty International, 2004).
In our interviews, several journalists gave ambiguous responses when asked whether racism or sexism influence or shape decisions made in newsrooms. There are many possible reasons for this ambiguity. As I have discussed above, racism and sexism is naturalized and embedded within both Canadian society and journalistic norms and practices. Therefore, it may not be identified or experienced as such. Also, journalists may have feared covert or overt punishment by their superiors, colleagues, and others if they did identify workplaces as racist and sexist. One journalist said that racism and sexism does not play a role in her present newsroom, although it has in the past. However, two journalists did identify racism and sexism as a factor. Brett Bradshaw, who works with CBC said:

Racism and sexism is a filter in how we process things and then so it’s automatically factored in. Even when we think it’s not, it’s obviously a factor in decision-making. It’s also a factor in the information we’re receiving from police or whoever too, because I think in lots of cases, like with Daleen, there are assumptions made.

Here, Bradshaw recognized racism and sexism as not only overt, individualized acts, but as common sense understandings that have been incorporated into different discursive structures, such as the discursive structure of “objective” journalistic practice as well as “objective” police procedure. These common-sense understandings also operate within

\[\text{During our interview, Merelda Fiddler stated this is not an issue in the newsroom she works in now, but it has been in the past: “There are not a lot of Aboriginal women in the media in Canada, let alone in Saskatchewan, so it’s not as if I haven’t heard in the past twelve years… ‘Well, you want to cover that story’ and not just missing and murdered Aboriginal women, but Aboriginal stories in general, ‘Well, you have a particular interest in that.’ Probably I do, yeah, I won’t deny that, but that’s probably not my motivation, probably there’s a whole segment of our audience that is thinking the same thing that I am. I think, I don’t have that issue anymore, actually….Things have changed here. Being an Aboriginal woman in this newsroom, with this group of people, in this station right now is… It used to be that sometimes you had to struggle to get those stories on the air, now you don’t, now the struggle is finding time to tell every story that you want to tell.”}\]
multicultural, liberalist Canada, which is why they make so much sense to some of the journalists interviewed as well as the larger (imaginary) community of white-settler Canada who comprise most of their listeners/viewers/reader. At the same times, these ideals are not constant or static. They shift and change, reconfiguring the discursive structure of journalism. For instance, the ideal of objectivity is under challenge by journalists and non-journalists and other terms such as accuracy or reporting responsibly are emerging as ideals.\footnote{For instance, Bradshaw speaking reporting on court cases such as Albert Bellegarde’s murder trial said, “But, I think at the end of the day, this person and that family is still the most important thing and that’s what the listener can connect to. That human level still has to be front and center, this is somebody’s life…the story is about people, even though this might be the new information coming up in trial…that information is coming out, but say you can describe how Gwenda reacted during this, so the listener is still getting that new information of the trial, but it is very much rooted in that ‘this is somebody’s daughter.’ I just think that has to be front and centre in terms of reporting responsibly about it.”}

As a result, how Amber and Daleen’s stories were told during the time between their disappearance and the discovery that they had been murdered was shaped not only by circumstances, conditions, and newsworthy events (i.e. when family members began engaging with media outlets about Amber and Daleen’s disappearance, the different events that were held to honour and remember them, as well as the different developments in their disappearance and murder cases), but also the discursive frames through which their stories are told. These circumstances and conditions were not directly relayed to the reader/viewer/listener, even though journalists may see themselves as doing so. Rather, the discursive structure of journalism and the white masculine hegemony within which this structure is produced shaped how Amber and Daleen’s stories could be told. At the same time, Foucault (1978) reminds us that wherever there is power, there is resistance and journalists are constantly negotiating these discursive structures, resisting and complying with various different aspects.
During the time Amber and Daleen were missing, their stories were framed in a number of ways, most notably: through the justice system’s efforts to find Daleen and Amber, Amber and Daleen’s family members’ search for them and their experiences of not knowing where Amber and Daleen were, as well as in relation to the broader issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. These discursive frames are not static, nor did they act in isolation. Rather they shifted, changed, and intersected with each other throughout the years that Amber and Daleen were missing. Below, I explore how Amber and Daleen’s stories were framed and how they were positioned within these frames. In my analysis, I do not try to explain why Amber and Daleen were discursively framed exactly as they were. Rather, I examine how journalistic norms, practices, and other factors contributed to how Daleen and Amber’s stories could be told.

7.1 The Justice System as a “Good Institution” Which is Looking For These Women

The justice system emerged as the first discursive frame through which Amber and Daleen’s stories were told. In liberal, multicultural Canada, the justice system is taken for granted as a trusted institution that helps all people and treats everyone equally. It is one of the institutions where power and knowledge intersect to produce a “truth” that is easily recognizable by both journalists and white-settler readers as credible and “objective” (Foucault, 1979a). Public relations or communications departments working with justice institutions are important sites where this discourse is re-produced and circulated to other sites. Indeed, my interviews with journalists made apparent policing institutions’ power in determining who is considered a missing person. When journalists were asked what the process was when covering a missing persons story, it almost always
began with receiving a news release from police institutions’ public relations or communications departments. One journalist working at a mainstream news outlet related:

There are those people who will phone and say their friend or family member is missing and we will typically say, “I’m sorry, we can’t do anything about it until the police [send a media release].” We rely on the police all the time and unless the police have sent out a release or have made it known, we don’t cover it. I am not sure why this is; perhaps it’s resources and the lack of resources leads to less time to chase these things. Setting a rule where we don’t go investigating a missing person before the police do is perhaps something to weed out a bunch of potential stories that may not be [legitimate].

Through her response, this journalist makes visible both the reliance of media outlets on police public relations and communications’ departments. She links this increasing reliance on media outlets’ shrinking resources. The political, economic, and discursive shift towards news as a business has led to a concentration of media ownership and can be traced back to the early 1980s. It is with an acknowledgement of this reliance and the intersecting discursive structures that re-produce it that I turn to examine how Daleen and

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22 Other journalists said they do not regularly receive calls from friends and family of missing people who the police public relations and communications department have not sent out a media releases out about their disappearances. These different responses may have been due to the differences in type of media journalists work for and/or the different positions they have held (the journalist quoted above had worked as an assignment editor as well as a photojournalist).

23 Although journalism has always been a “business,” by discursive shift, I am referring here to the shift in how journalism is now being talked about more and more as a business, rather than as an important part of a liberal, democratic society. In her interview, Hoemson emphasized that in recent years, journalism is being talked about more and more as a business. At the same time that how journalism is being talked about has shifted, there has been a concentration of media ownership and a decrease in the resources of newsrooms (MacDonald, 2003; Herman, Chomsky, & Lewis, 1998).
Amber’s stories were framed through the media re-presentations of justice system materials and institutional spokesperson’s voices.

As I have discussed above, spokespersons from the justice institution emerge as the primary definers in most missing persons cases. The media releases from police public relations or communications departments often determine if, when, and how a story of a disappeared person is told. Indeed, Fiddler comments that “initial coverage between any given radio station, depending on what their format is, between the television stations, even the papers, a lot of that stuff will look the same initially.”

Throughout the media coverage of Daleen and Amber’s disappearance, the police are most often presented as actively looking for them, while family and community efforts are presented as secondary, if they are re-presented at all. For instance, Saskatoon StarPhoenix’s initial media brief about Daleen’s disappearance was published on May 28th 2004, nine days after she was reported missing to the police (StarPhoenix, p. A13). This short news brief was published under the headline “Police search for missing woman” and was largely based on a Saskatoon Police Services’ media release.24 The headline according to the Canadian Press Stylebook, “should tell readers everything they need to know about the story, but still make them want to read more” (Tasko, 2010, p. 80). Within this headline, the city police are positioned as the ones who are actively looking for Daleen. The news brief’s lead goes on to affirm this:

Saskatoon city police are asking for the public’s help in locating a missing 25-year-old woman. Daleen Kay Bosse has been missing since May 18. However, police said she has been seen at several different locations in Saskatoon, and was possibly spotted around 2:20 a.m. on Thursday (emphasis added).

24 This media release was sent to media outlets on May 28, 2004.
In the headline and lead paragraph, the city police are positioned as the active agents who are searching for Daleen, while Daleen’s family’s search efforts for her outlined in Chapter Six are absent. Indeed, Daleen was not even positioned as having a family within this short news brief, nor is there a picture of her. From examining the police communications materials, it appears that the media release did not include a picture either.

Within this media re-presentation, Daleen is named in several different ways. As Richardson notes, how individuals are named influence how they are perceived by the readership (2007). Since every person has a range of identities that they may be named in relation to, the choice of how to name an individual indicates one (or more) social groups they may be identified with. Or at least it identifies the person in relation “to the groups that the speaker/writer wants them to be associated with” (Richardson, 2007, p. 49).

Further, Butler (1997) argues that names (particularly injurious names) have “a historicity, what might be understood as the history which has become internal to the name, has come to constitute the contemporary meaning of the name” (p. 36).

In the headline, Daleen is first named as a “missing woman.” As well, later in the article, she is described as “of Native descent” and therefore, effectively named as Aboriginal. However, this description of Daleen positions her as one of (many) Métis and First Nations women, rather than as a Cree woman from Onion Lake Cree Nation. The Canadian Press Stylebook instructs their writers to “[i]dentify a person by race, colour, national origin, or immigration status only when truly pertinent.” (Tasko, 2010, p. 23). It is likely that members of the StarPhoenix decided that Daleen’s race was “pertinent” to this news brief because the police included it in their media release. However, police
departments’ decisions of whether to identify a missing or murdered persons’ race have been shown to be problematic. As the Sisters in Spirit’s report revealed, often police recording of whether a missing or murdered person is Aboriginal is determined by a “visual assessment” of whether the person “looks” Aboriginal (2010).25 The meaning of visual identifiers of race” is “overdetermined by the history of representation” (Weedon, 2004, p. 15). It is based on the Social Darwinist concept of “race” as a biological entity, which produces phenotypical differences visible to the eye. Through identifying Daleen as “of Native descent,” this news brief suggested to the reader that they could draw on their common sense to understand what she might look like. This conceptualization of “race” does not just extend into expectations of what Aboriginal “looks like,” but also attributes certain behavioural characteristics to Aboriginal women’s “nature”, which I argue are at play within this news brief.

After the sentence, “Daleen Kay Bosse has been missing since May 18”, “however”, is placed in order to extend the previous sentence (Halliday, 1985). This “extension” contradicts what the audience might have assumed from the first two sentences, that Daleen has been “taken”, “is being held captive”, or possibly murdered. Indeed, this extension located her as being seen several times (according to the police, a credible source) with one of these sightings having occurred late at night. When the news brief re-presents her as “being seen” and “possibly spotted around 2:20 a.m. on Thursday” the white-settler reader is led to assume that she is doing what most people do at that time: partying, drinking or using drugs. Therefore, this sentence suggests that Daleen has “chosen to go missing”, that she is “partying” and relatedly, irresponsible. It

25 At the same time, NWAC also states that the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police (SACP) is the only jurisdiction “that has worked to improve reporting of Aboriginal identity” and SACP has detailed statistics about the “race” of missing people in Saskatchewan (2010, pp. 16 &19).
evokes the squaw-drudge image of Aboriginal women as putting themselves at risk or choosing to go missing. Through this news brief, Daleen is associated with the colonial construct of the “squaw,” naturally prone to drunkenness, hypersexuality, and irresponsibility. She is “named” as such without the word being directly used and this indirect naming associates the historicity of “what a squaw is” to Daleen.

I have focused on the *StarPhoenix’s* initial coverage here, but *MBC* and *CTV Lloydminster* aired similar news briefs. The *CTV Saskatoon* coverage awards Daleen’s family members primary definer status and her disappearance is largely framed through their search for her. In the next section, I discuss this discursive frame and how Daleen and Amber’s stories are told through it.

When Amber initially disappeared, media coverage was also largely based on media release materials. However, there are important differences, in particular, the *Leader Post’s* initial article about Amber’s disappearance was accompanied by a picture: one of her graduation photos. This news brief, in its re-presentation of Amber’s photo, not only gives the reader the tools necessary to recognize Amber and report any information related to seeing Amber to the police, but also reinforces to the reader that Amber is someone that they *should* look for.

Similar to Daleen, Amber’s headline and lead paragraph positions police as the active agents who are looking for her as well as the experts on her disappearance. The headline reads: “Fort Qu'Appelle: Police search for 19-year old” (*Leader Post*, July 20, 2005, p. B2). The lead paragraph expands upon the police service efforts as well as hails the public to recognize themselves as active citizens and help the police with their search. The lead begins, “RCMP are asking for the public's assistance in locating a missing
teenage Fort Qu'Appelle girl.” Here, Amber is named first and foremost in relation to her age, as a “19-year-old” within the headline. In the lead, Amber is named as “missing teenage Fort-Qu’Appelle girl.” First of all, this passage contains an important error as it locates Amber as “from” Fort-Qu’Appelle. As her mother relates in chapter 6, Amber was a member of the Standing Buffalo First Nation and lived on that First Nation at the time of her disappearance. In comparison to how Daleen is named as a woman, Amber is named as a teenage girl even though at 19, Amber was legally an adult. Naming Amber as a girl positioned her as someone who is young, vulnerable, and in need of more protection than a woman. This reaffirms the reader’s need to look for Amber and that Amber is really missing.

The difference between the initial coverage of Amber and Daleen’s disappearances could be assumed a result of the information that was communicated to police. However, there is evidence to the contrary. Daleen disappeared on May 18th 2004 and her husband tried to report her missing the next day. However, there was absolutely no coverage until May 27th when CTV Saskatoon aired a story, the Saskatoon Police did not send out a media release until May 28th. Also, the Saskatoon Police did not include a picture with their media release. However, Daleen’s family members were putting up missing persons’ posters with her picture on them all over the city (CTV Saskatoon, May 27, 2004). In comparison, Amber disappeared on July 15th 2005, and was reported missing by Cody on July 18th. The RCMP sent out a media release on July 19th and the news brief discussed above was published in the Leader Post on July 20th. The difference between how Amber and Daleen were named, along with the lack of picture accompanying Daleen’s news brief, and the underlying suggestion that Daleen had
“chosen to go missing” and was partying, evoke different responses from the white-settler reader. In reading the initial coverage of Amber’s disappearance, white-settler readers who do not know Amber are encouraged to look for her. The news brief about Daleen’s disappearance implies that since Daleen probably has “chosen to go missing,” she or someone who knows her or her whereabouts should contact the police and let them know that she is okay.

These two news briefs included the initial publication of what became Daleen and Amber’s “missing narratives.” That is, narratives of when and from where they disappeared. These narratives were re-presented in almost every article written about Amber and Daleen while they were missing. For instance, Amber’s missing narrative is almost always told in the following way: “Amber Tara-Lynn Redman, 19, was last seen in Fort Qu’Appelle at about 2:30 am Friday speaking to someone in a grey older style sedan outside Trapper’s Bar” (Leader Post, July 20, 2005, p. B2). There is some variation in how Amber and Daleen’s missing narratives are told. For instance, the Leader Post article, “Gone, but not forgotten,” written by Jana Pruden, leads with the following paragraph: “On July 15, Amber Tara-Lynn Redman left the Country Squire Inn after spending the evening there with friends. She hasn't been seen since” (Sept. 16, 2005, p. A1). This slightly different version of Amber’s missing narrative positions her as disappearing from the “Country Squire Inn” rather than “Trapper’s Bar” and describes her evening as time spent with friends. This contrasts with stereotypes of bars as spaces of drunkenness and promiscuity. Gwenda suggested that describing Amber’s disappearance in this way “gives it more meaning of who Amber was as a person, as a
First Nations woman. It is more sensitive, instead of being at a bar, she was at an Inn, or the local Country Squire.”

In our interview, Fiddler pointed out why re-presenting women only in relation to when and from where they disappear is problematic:

It felt like at the time, we would hear so much about where these women were when they disappeared, sometimes it involved alcohol or parties or bars. But we didn’t hear about who these women were and that was the part that I felt was missing, because I think that if all you ever do is talk about those last moments, it just becomes so easy to say, “Well, they were in the wrong situation or they were in the wrong place.” And that may or may not have been the case, maybe you are, but we’ve all…gone somewhere, or done something, or been somewhere where we think, “Why was I there? Man, I really shouldn’t have been there.” But that’s not who [these women] were.

Here Fiddler illustrates how the constant reiteration of these “missing narratives” objectifies disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. This objectification reaffirms the colonial motif of Aboriginal women as squaw-drudges, naturally promiscuous, prone to drunkenness, and basically the cause of their own victimization. In her response, Fiddler interrogates this colonial motif, suggesting that these are not situations unique to Aboriginal women or other women who are victimized. Rather, they are situations that “we’ve all been” in.

In media coverage of the initial searches for Amber, the justice system, embodied by city police and RCMP officers, continued to be framed as a “good institution” which was looking for Amber. For instance, in a story that aired July 21st 2005 on Regina’s CTV
News, the viewer is presented with images and quotes from RCMP officers, volunteer searchers (some of who are also Amber’s friends and family), and Chief Rodger Redman who is Amber’s uncle. Early in the story, the CTV journalist Dez Melenka relates that the “RCMP searchers and volunteers are looking for missing teenager, Amber Redman.” Next, Melenka quotes a police spokesperson stating that the search is “[a] routine part of any investigation” and “basically what we are trying to do is get the information we need and get any evidence we can to lead to a successful end to the investigation.” This story goes on to relate the volunteer searchers’ motivation for participating in the search as well as Chief Redman’s perspective as Amber’s uncle and a community leader. This story privileges the police spokesperson as the primary definer of Amber’s story. The RCMP officers emerge as the authoritative “knowers” about Amber’s disappearance as well as the leaders of her search. This is particularly problematic because the impetus for Amber’s search actually came from Amber’s family and community. Yet their efforts and perspectives were subsumed as secondary through the common sense assumptions about who leads searches and who are the experts on missing people.

In interviews, the justice system’s response to missing and murdered Aboriginal women was acknowledged as something that journalists “always follow.” However, as Fiddler points out, these stories predominantly re-present women through their actions leading up to when they disappeared or were murdered. She suggested that media coverage should re-present different aspects of “who these women were.” This involves

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26 At the same time, it is important to note that the justice system’s responses to missing and murdered Aboriginal women are not “followed” in all cases to the same degree. For instance, the coverage of the John Crawford’s arrest and subsequent court case for murdering at least three Aboriginal women in the early 1990s received very little court coverage in comparison to other serial killers. Crawford’s murder victims included Shelley Napope, Eva Taysup, Calinda Waterhen, and possibly Janet Sylvestre, Shirley Lonethunder, and Cynthia Baldhead (Goulding, 2001).
re-presenting family members’ perspectives and concerns. During both Daleen and Amber’s disappearances, journalists’ engagements with Daleen and Amber’s family (and vice versa) made these latter sort of re-presentations possible. Both Amber and Daleen’s families have become activists about the issue of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women and have been involved in a number of walks, vigils, and other events. As these events have received coverage from both mainstream and Aboriginal news outlets, there were a number of stories that privileged their family members’ perspectives of who Daleen and Amber were. Additionally, these stories did not always take the justice system for granted as a good institution that was doing all it could do in its search for Daleen and Amber. Through different institutional, community, and family members’ perspectives, the justice system was critiqued, particularly in terms of the police response to Daleen’s disappearance. I turn now to an examination of how Daleen and Amber’s stories were framed through family members’ experiences and search for them, one of the sites where this counter-hegemonic critique took place.

7.2 “Family”: Open to Multiple Readings

During the time that Daleen and Amber were missing, their family members’ experiences and search for them was an important frame through which their stories were told. The Canadian Press Stylebook instructs mainstream print journalists to “[l]ook for the human angle in every story” (Tasko, 2010, p. 204). Understandings of “human” are not value-free. They are particularly problematic in terms of trying to understand identity “in societies fractured by power relations of class, gender, sexual, racial and ethnic privilege and disadvantage” such as white-settler Canada (Weedon, 2004, pp. 8-9). When the idea of a shared humanity is extended to shared understandings of family, it is
similarly problematic. Family and family relationships are naturalized at the same time that they are deemed to be personal and therefore, beyond politics. In actuality, family is a construct that is classed, raced, and sexualized. The naturalized family ideal is white-settler, middle-class, and heterosexual and it is the very assumption that the family is natural that makes it so powerful and so political. At the same time, white masculine and colonial hegemony has historically, and still often does, deny the humanity of Aboriginal peoples, constructing Aboriginal family relationships as lesser-than or dysfunctional.

Different colonial projects, such as residential schools, were justified through this construct (Emberley, 2007). Today, Aboriginal families remain “naturally” dysfunctional in the colonial imagination and in need of help from the State, through intervention by social services, policing institutions, and other institutional forces. This is despite (or possibly because of) Aboriginal peoples resistance to these colonial projects (Tait, 2009). It is with the political nature of family in mind, especially when considering Aboriginal and white-settler family relations, that I turn to examine how Amber and Daleen’s family experiences and roles were re-presented. As I will examine below, these re-presentations are not homogenous, at times they deconstruct colonial motifs, while at other times they reaffirm them.

A number of news stories focused on family members’ experiences and their searches. This is partially due to Amber and Daleen’s families’ active engagement with members of the media. Their initiatives included hosting media friendly events. For instance, awareness walks that honoured Daleen, Amber, and other disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. However, Daleen’s family did not start engaging with the media until early 2005. According to Pauline:
[M]y first reaction was, “Stay away from the media.” I didn’t want anything to do with them. I didn’t even want to be interviewed by journalists. Nothing. I don’t know how long I felt like that, for quite a while anyways, because I figured that media was the enemy, I thought that they were just going to blow this one out of proportion and they were going to sensationalize it, they were going to make her out to be really bad, stereotype her, label her, because she was a Native woman who went missing from a bar. I felt that way for a while and I do not know what happened along the way. I do not know how long it took me before I realized I could use the media as a tool.

Gwenda and other members of Amber’s family started doing interviews with journalists soon after she disappeared. Gwenda relates that, “When Amber first went missing, the women Elders told me that the media needed to hear from me and that I needed to talk with them. So, that was advice given to me by the women and I respected that.”

Another contributing factor was journalists’ and editors’ decisions of whether or not to cover events such as awareness walks or vigils hosted by Daleen’s and Amber’s families. Darla Read, formally with MBC, spoke about some of the factors that shape these decisions:

[W]hen you have an awareness walk every year…I’m sure that news editors have that discussion of, “Well, what’s new? We’ve covered this before.” I mean, “What’s new?” is probably that you are having an awareness walk and that you [still] need to. You could make that argument. Another argument is that its just another awareness walk, people have awareness walks all the time and some media outlets don’t cover events, just because it’s an event that doesn’t mean it’s
news, you have to go to an event and find the story within the event and it’s a lot more work than just covering the event itself. If you have scarce resources, you are not going to send someone looking for a needle in a haystack to find a story when you have a guaranteed story somewhere else, fair or not.

Read’s response indicates how the shrinking resources among newsrooms, along with other factors, intersect with notions of what is newsworthy to shape newsroom decisions about whether to cover walks or other awareness events.

As I discussed above, Amber’s family emerged as important, valued spokespeople shortly after her disappearance while Daleen’s family largely avoided the media for the first ten months that she was missing. After Herb did an interview in March of 2005, there was a shift in how Daleen’s story was told, and therefore, could be understood by news consumers. This shift is marked by Ken Noskiye’s article that was published in the *StarPhoenix* on March 26, 2005, “Family Awaits Word on Missing Woman” (p. A12). Up until this point in time, there had been a discourse of silence surrounding Daleen’s disappearance. The limited coverage had largely left Daleen’s family roles and responsibilities unspoken.²⁷

The article is the first print coverage after Daleen’s disappearance that included a picture. It began by focusing on Herb’s emotional state. The lead paragraph read, “Pain, frustration and a feeling of hopelessness are reflected in the eyes of a father who is desperately searching for his daughter.” The impact of Daleen’s disappearance on Herb is expanded upon in the next paragraph, which quoted Herb saying, “I haven’t been able to

²⁷ This silence was broken only by a *StarPhoenix* news brief and Crimestoppers report, a *CTV Saskatoon* piece, a *CTV Lloydminster* piece, and a *MBC’s* news brief the previous summer. The only coverage that focused on Daleen’s family during these ten months is found in the *CTV Saskatoon* story that aired on May 27, 2004. In this two-minute story, Jennifer Jellicoe interviewed Jeremiah, Daleen’s husband, about her disappearance and Jeremiah emerged as the primary definer of Daleen’s disappearance.
sleep much” and “I am so concerned about my girl.” This article constructed a narrative of Daleen’s disappearance, Herb and Pauline’s work searching for her, and their emotional ups and down. This article both employed and reproduced common sense understandings of “family,” understandings that are often dismissed by white-settler readers as irrelevant to stories about Aboriginal people. Daleen is named within this article in a number of ways, not only as Herb’s “girl,” but also as a fourth-year university student, a “wife and mother,” and as an Aboriginal woman. Through a direct quote from Herb, Daleen is also positioned in relation to what she is not. Herb is quoted as saying, “She is not a street person, not into drugs and partying.”

The reader was encouraged to use their common sense understandings about family to empathize with Daleen’s family and to recognize their reactions as natural. The feminine white-settler reader could see herself in Daleen through the different roles that they share. As a wife and mother, university student, and daughter. Through doing so, the white-settler reader could realize that Daleen is both a First Nations woman and someone who shares same roles and experiences as she does. As she takes for granted her Canadian citizenship, this recognition effectively deconstructs the boundaries between the First Nations and white-settler communities.

Some media re-presentations that privileged Daleen’s family’s voices questioned the justice system’s reaction to her disappearance. Family members were not the only ones questioning this. Members of different organizations and institutions concerned about disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women were also quoted criticizing not only how Daleen’s missing person’s case was handled, but also how the police have handled numerous other Aboriginal women’s disappearances.
There are a number of stories which re-presented family members’ critiques of the police. One example is Kirk Sibbald’s article “The disappearance of Daleen,” which was published in the *Meridian Booster* on May 8, 2005 (p. A3). This article frames Daleen’s disappearance through her family members’ experiences. It begins with the lead paragraph, “When Daleen Bosse said goodbye to her husband and three-year-old daughter nearly one year ago, they didn’t think it would be forever.” This lead piques the reader’s interest and evokes a common family experience, saying goodbye in the morning. The following paragraphs tell the story of Daleen’s family members’ initial attempts to report Daleen missing to the Saskatoon police:

When the family called Saskatoon police after she didn’t come home on May 18, 2004, they were told to wait. Because of her age, 25 at the time, police treated the case as a non-priority, missing person file. They said the Onion Lake mother, wife and daughter likely wandered off, and as was the case with most missing people her age, would probably return in a matter of months, if not days.

But, according to her father, Daleen had no reason to leave, and the family was suspicious from day one.

“She was cheerful, well-liked, she loved family gatherings, she loved singing and she was very involved with theatre,” said Herb Muskego. “She has a four-year old daughter and a husband who cares. She wouldn’t just take off.”

This article goes onto discuss the initial police search for Daleen, which took place in late April of 2005. Sibbald quoted Saskatoon Staff Sergeant Kelly Cook, who characterized the initial response (or, some would say, lack of response) towards Daleen’s disappearance as “protocol.” His quotes deny any possible allegations of mistreatment,
stereotyping, racism, sexism, or bias. However, this article privileged family members’ experiences and their evidence of why Daleen did not just “choose to go missing.” This article also detailed family members’ search efforts: hanging up missing person’s posters, following up on tips about where Daleen might have been, and hiring a private investigator to help search for her. Through describing Daleen’s family members search for her, this article also makes evident exactly how passive the justice system’s response is in comparison.

This journalistic narrative effectively questioned the police response and Cook’s justification for it. The white-settler reader is encouraged to interpret the police response as a failure of protocol to recognize differences among individuals. I argue against this re-presentation and preferred reading. Instead I suggest that the Saskatoon Police Service’s lack of response was made possible by the hegemonic norms of the justice system and white-settler society. Racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism permeate both Canadian society and the institutions that are awarded so much power within it. These institutions’ practices and norms simultaneously privilege certain bodies and are experienced as common sense. A more systematic critique of the police response is leveled through Herb’s direct and indirect quotes found in Noskye’s StarPhoenix article. Returning to this article, which I discussed above, Nosikye relates that:

One of the concerns the Muskegos have is that the case is not being treated with urgency because it involves a missing aboriginal woman.

After Bosse's vehicle was found, it took more than six months for her case to be upgraded from the missing persons files to a criminal investigation.
"She is not a street person, not into drugs and partying. She is a wife and mother who cared for her family," Herb said (Noskiye, March 26, 2005, p. A12).

Through these few paragraphs, Noskiye frames Herb’s concern: not only is his daughter’s case is not receiving the proper attention, but her disappearance it is not being taken seriously, because she is an Aboriginal woman. It established Daleen’s “race” as the possible reason for police indifference. Although this is framed as one of her family’s concerns not as a “fact,” Noskiye does provide evidence through what one may consider the “cold, hard facts” of Daleen’s missing person’s case. In the second paragraph quoted above Noskiye relates that, “After Bosse's vehicle was found, it took more than six months for her case to be upgraded from the missing persons file to a criminal investigation.” Then, Herb is quoted directly making visible what assumptions that the police may have made about Daleen, "She is not a street person, not into drugs and partying. She is a wife and mother who cared for her family.”

This article interrogated the justice system’s response to Daleen’s disappearance. It suggested that this lack of response was driven by the sexist and racist assumptions that police officers made about Daleen. What is not addressed is that the justice institution itself operates within white masculine and colonial hegemony. As such, it’s norms and practices are not neutral, rather they are laden with hierarchical concepts of difference, which positions bodies marked by Aboriginality and gender/sex as “high-risk” and therefore, not legitimately “missing.” Understandably, Herb’s quote speaks back against the assumptions made about Daleen and Aboriginal women, but it does not interrogate the assumption that women who are in “high-risk” situations are responsible for their own victimization. By emphasizing Daleen’s identity as a wife and mother Herb’s quotes...
make her identifiable to the white-settler reader. His quotes unintentionally reproduce the binary of the salvageable/unsalvageable woman, which “demarcates those who deserve our attention, and thus our sympathy and intervention, and those who remain marginalized, outside the pale of the civilized, normative order” (Jiwani & Young, 2006, p. 912).

As I have illustrated, media coverage concerning the police response to Daleen’s disappearance is not homogenous. Some elements that contributed to this variation include whether family members’ or police spokespeople’s voices were privileged as well as the circumstances surrounding a story. How stories talked about the police’s treatment of Daleen’s missing persons case also shifted over time as the police response became more responsive. In particular it is clear that the Saskatoon Police Services’ treatment of Daleen’s case changed with the appointment of Chief Clive Weighill in 2006. The article “Missing Onion Lake woman still a priority case: Saskatoon City Police” was published by the Meridian Booster on December 11th 2006 (A3). This article marked a shift not only in how the police treated Daleen’s disappearance, but also in how it was covered by members of the media.

This article re-presented a meeting between Chief Weighill and Daleen’s family and community. This article’s lead paragraph stated, “The community of Onion Lake opened its arms last week to welcome the chief of the Saskatoon Police Service, who stressed the search for Daleen Bosse was still a priority for the department.”

In this lead paragraph, Onion Lake is positioned as welcoming Chief Weighill, which contradicts the common sense assumption that Aboriginal communities are secretive, exclusive, and resistant towards the police. It also describes the Saskatoon
Police Service as not just prioritizing Daleen’s missing person’s case, but as still prioritizing it. John Richardson points out, presuppositions such as “still” indicate a “taken-for-granted, implicit claim embedded within the explicit meaning of a text or utterance” (2007, p. 63). Through describing the police as still prioritizing Daleen’s case, this lead paragraph implies that the Saskatoon Police Service has been prioritizing Daleen’s missing person’s case all along. This implication is reaffirmed by a number of Weighill’s quotes throughout the article. In contrast to other articles that critique the police response to Daleen’s disappearance, this article largely re-positions the Saskatoon Police Service as a “good” institution whose members are actively looking for Daleen.

After this article was published, some stories still critique the police’s initial response to Daleen’s disappearance. However, most often this is done in a way that reestablishes the justice system as a “good” institution that is doing all it can to find Daleen.

7.2.1 Appropriating First Nations Families’ Pain

At times, media re-presentations of Daleen and Amber’s family members effectively placed their pain on display. These media re-presentations and the effect they produce resonate with late Mohawk writer Monture-Angus’ (1995) article, “Ka-nin-geh-heh-gah-e-sa-nonh-yah-gah.” Monture-Angus wrote, “I was not ready to have my pain appropriated. I am pretty possessive about my pain. I worked hard for it. Some days it is all I have. Some days it is the only thing I can feel. Do not try to take that away from me too” (p. 16).

Monture-Angus wrote this article about her experiences at a legal conference. A story Monture-Angus shared during a small group discussion was later offered up by a white woman as evidence of the value of experiential learning. This white woman said,
“Let me show you the good stuff that can come out of the experiential, let me show you the good stuff that came out of pain” and then shared Monture-Angus’ story with her white male colleague. In response, her white male colleague said, “The pain of minority people is like television, we can turn it on and off as we want to” (1996, p. 19). His comment is strangely insightful considering what I am addressing is the appropriation of First Nations family’s pain through news coverage, including television news coverage, which is a site where Aboriginal people’s pain is shown, exposed and raw for the “consumer” to view for a short time, but turn it off when it becomes “uncomfortable.”

The appropriation of Amber and Daleen’s family’s pain for the white-settler news consumer is apparent in the media coverage of several mainstream media outlets. It is most common in the *Global Regina* news stories. It is widely accepted that in general there has been a discursive shift towards more sensationalistic news coverage in recent years (MacDonald, 2003; Bourdieu, 2006). However, to claim that the appropriation of First Nations family’s pain is caused solely by this shift would ignore the intersection between racism, sexism, colonialism and capitalist interests. In producing news for consumers, there is a particular consumer in mind (Hall, 1975). For mainstream news outlets this consumer is white-settler and middle-class. When the white-settler, middle-class consumer is encouraged to stare at First Nations peoples’ pain it allows them voyeuristic privileges in the Other’s world, a world where this pain is “normal.” In doing so, the consumer becomes complicit in the commodification of Aboriginal pain.

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28 MacDonald (2003) suggests this shift is more complex and should not be viewed solely as negative. For instance, she argues that when news allows more space for “ordinary people’s concerns to impinge on criteria of newsworthiness, a challenge may be presented to dominant ideologies, especially when the perspectives are those primarily of the subordinate or marginalized” (p. 59). One example of this challenge is how some media re-presentations that value Daleen’s family’s voices critique the police and their reaction to Daleen’s disappearance.

29 Also, within our interview, Hoemson who used to work with *CTV Regina* suggested that *Global Regina* is less likely to cover stories on First Nations then *CTV Regina* partially because *CTV Regina* has 1) a mandate to cover all of southern Saskatchewan news and 2) more viewers who live on First Nations, since they are on Bell Expressvu satellite television and *Global Regina* is not.
so, the white-settler reader, viewer, or listener is able to objectify this pain, since they are not implicated in it. This pain is not something “we” can experience, nor something that “we” have any responsibility for, rather, it is something that happens to “them.”

One news story where Amber’s family’s pain is placed on display for the white-settler viewer is a *Global Regina* news story that aired shortly after Amber’s disappearance, on August 8th 2005. This news story opens with Gwenda sitting with a number of her female family members and Elders while a young girl stands in front of them. This story framed Amber’s disappearance largely by re-presenting Gwenda and Art’s voices, which as I have illustrated above has the potential to disrupt the boundaries between Aboriginal and white-settler communities. However, at numerous points in this story, the focus rests on the instability and pain of Amber’s family, which reaffirms these boundaries. The story opened with Gwenda asking Amber to call home, “Amber please call home. Come back home.” This *Global* piece went onto show images of Amber’s graduation photos while Gwenda’s voice attested to Amber’s character. She described Amber as someone who “likes to stay home and when she went out, she would call if she was going to be late.” The camera then focused on Gwenda who said, “She doesn’t usually go out on a weekend, weekday.” The reporter, Sudha Krishnan asks off-camera, “Like on a Friday night?” And Gwenda responds somewhat shakily, “Even Thursday, Thursday night.” In this brief exchange between Krishnan and Gwenda, the viewer received no new information about Amber, it had all been stated before, but what they did gain is an impression of Gwenda as shaky and upset.

Later in this story, Krishnan talked about the determination of Standing Buffalo to find Amber, but she also addressed their “sense of frustration.” Footage of Art speaking
supposedly captured this sense of frustration, “Everyone just shut up, they don’t want to say anything.” Krishnan goes on to explain that “Amber’s father Art believes that someone in the community knows something, but isn’t coming forward.” It is at this time that the “police” are indirectly quoted. Their quote characterized the community as cooperative, contradicting Art’s beliefs.

The reporter continued to indirectly quote the police, informing the viewer, “Police are still searching, but admit that the longer it takes, the more likely an unhappy ending.” The story then shifts back to Art’s perspective, at this time he responded to the possibility that Amber is dead, “If they find her body someplace, then, you know, we’ll deal with that.” This piece finishes by returning to footage of Gwenda sitting, surrounded by her female relatives and Elders. Krishnan asked, “You still have hope?” And Gwenda responded, “Yes, we do.” But the final image that the viewer is left with is Gwenda crying, being held by her family members.

Through the different images and Gwenda and Art quotes, Amber’s parents are positioned as desperate, distraught, shaky, and (in Art’s case) slightly aggressive. At the beginning of this story, Gwenda’s quotes position Amber as someone who has not chosen to go missing, but rather has been “taken.” Later, an indirect quote from the police suggested that Amber has met with an “unhappy ending,” indicating that she is not only a “victim,” but that she has likely been a victim of murder (or has died from some other cause). The footage of Art saying, “If they find her body someplace, then, you know, we’ll deal with that” solidified the suggested image in the viewer’s mind. Near the end of this journalistic narrative is footage of Gwenda saying her family “still has hope.” However, the story ends with her crying. This final image re-emphasized her pain and
desperation (the reporter begins the piece by framing Gwenda’s appeals as “desperate”). Gwenda and Art’s fear, sadness, and frustration as captured through Global Regina’s story are relevant and understandable reactions to Amber’s disappearance. At the same time, Global Regina’s focus on dramatic and shocking footage of Gwenda and Art as well as their citing of institutional speakers in ways that emphasize the most devastating possible outcomes of Amber’s disappearance produces a journalistic narrative of despair and dysfunction. It also frames Aboriginal communities as responsible for their own dysfunction and despair, since it is inferred that “someone” in the community knows what happened to Amber. This allows white-settler viewers to consume and appropriate Amber’s family’s emotions through the trope of Aboriginal communities as sites of drunkenness, violence, pain, despair, and dysfunction, without feeling any responsibility in the search for Amber or the tragedy of her disappearance.

There was a Leader Post article written by Jana G. Pruden and published on August 9th, 2005 about the same media event (p. B1). In contrast, Pruden’s article focused on Amber’s family’s experiences, their search for Amber, and the support that they had received from the white-settler and Aboriginal communities. There are quite a few differences between the Leader Post article and the Global Regina news story, some which are shaped by the differences between the two media (for instance, the Leader Post article has significantly more words than the Global story). One main difference between the stories and how they are told is that while Gwenda is positioned as keeping

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30 My transcription of the Global News story was 323 words and the Leader Post article was 483 words. At the same time, the number of words is not the only difference between a television news story and a newspaper article. It is also common for reporters covering the same event to re-present them very differently depending on the news outlet and media. As Hoemson said in our interview, “It’s really different, how different the [television and print] media are and the way that we all go to the same things…but we get different information and different stuff and craft it differently.”
vigil in both stories, the *Leader Post* article focused more on how she has dealt with her daughter’s disappearance. For instance, this article’s second paragraph quotes Gwenda as saying, “If I didn’t believe in my prayers and have hope, I couldn’t make it through another day.” The article also stressed the support that Amber’s family had received from people in the neighboring First Nations and white-settler communities. A quote from Amber’s aunt, Lorraine, emphasized the impact that this support has had on their family, “‘It’s comforting to know that people, no matter what race they are, are trying to help…The more we comfort each other the easier the day gets.’” Finally, the article closes, not with an image of Gwenda’s desperation, but through Gwenda “hailing” the reader to help her find her daughter. The third last paragraph reads:

Redman’s mother said she hopes people will continue to look for her daughter and asks anyone with information to call the police. “I just want people to know she’s still out there,” she said. “Please don’t forget her, I just want her home.”

This paragraph is followed by a description of Amber and contact information for the Fort Qu’Appelle RCMP and Crimestoppers. As Pruden’s article illustrates, *Global*’s re-presentation of Amber’s family as desperate, distraught, and victims is not the only story of that day. *Global Regina* is the news outlet that most commonly appropriated Amber’s family’s emotions in their re-presentation of Amber’s disappearance. At times, other mainstream media sources told Amber and Daleen’s stories in ways that appropriated their family members’ pain and reproduced an image of First Nations families as passive victims (Vall, 2007).
7.2.2 The Danger of Reifying “Family”

Now, I will revisit my earlier discussion of media re-presentations that privileged Amber and Daleen’s families’ experiences and search. As I discussed above, these media re-presentations resist colonial constructs about Aboriginal women’s nature. There is no doubt, positioning Daleen as a wife, mother, daughter, sister, and education student disrupts the boundaries between her and the white-settler reader/viewer/listener. The white-settler reader/viewer/listener was similarly affected when Amber is described in relation to her family and community, as popular, kind, giving, and a good daughter, sister, and friend. Most media re-presentations of Amber and Daleen’s families’ experiences and activism also encouraged the white-settler to recognize themselves in the shared experience of “family.” This recognition challenges white-settler hegemonic, or common sense, views of Aboriginal families as sites of dysfunction.

At the same time, it is important to interrogate the extent to which white-settler common sense about the nature of Aboriginal women and families is questioned by these media re-presentations. Yes, this media coverage has the effect of recognizing these First Nations families as legitimate, but in doing so, is the naturalized construct of (white-settler, middle-class, heteronormative) family reified? If family members’ responses and experiences when a loved one disappears are something that can be understood through “our” shared roles which are hinged on common-sense understandings of “family,” then what is implied about Aboriginal (and non-Aboriginal) families who do not have those same responses? Who do not engage in interviews? Who do not share their personal pain? Who do not hold awareness walks and events? Who do not immediately report their loved ones as missing to the police? Who do not actively search for them?
Positioning Amber and Daleen’s families as legitimate challenges hegemonic norms, but hegemony is an ongoing process (Williams, 1977). In this case, the hegemonic norms of what a family “looks like” is extended to some Aboriginal families. However, the binary that positions certain families as normative and other families as dysfunctional is left intact. Similarly, the binary of the salvageable/unsalvageable woman is reconstituted recognizing some Aboriginal girls and women, such as Amber and Daleen, as worthy of being saved (Jiwani & Young, 2006). At the same time, it is understandable why Amber and Daleen’s family members’ as well as journalists challenged hegemonic frames of understanding in this way. Their focus was on the recognition of Amber and Daleen as worthy of being looked for, not on the deconstruction of these binaries.

Other counter-hegemonic critiques can and do make the exclusionary nature of white-settler Canada and the norms produced within it apparent. An article that only briefly discussed Amber and Daleen’s disappearances and focused mostly on Lori Whiteman’s experience searching for her missing mother, Delores “Lolly” Whiteman opens up hegemonic norms for critique. Warren Goulding’s article that was published in Eagle Feather News with the headline, “Families bond over missing relatives” calls into question the universalization of family (April 2007, p. 7). This article begins with Lori’s own personal story. Through her indirect and direct quotes, Goulding relates how Lori, a Saulteaux Dakota-Sioux woman, has reconnected to her birth family, and searched for her birth mother, Delores “Lolly” Whiteman. Through Lori’s direct and indirect quotes, this article analyzes why some families do not search for their missing loved ones. Lori is quoted as saying “I understand this to be what it is; it’s about family not caring…It’s
about what has happened to us as Indian people.” In the next paragraph, a quote from
Lori further expands on this:

The strong circle of Relationship was eroded and this is just one of the legacies of
our colonization as Indian people. It’s also why I feel so strongly about speaking
out about it because it raises awareness and I hope that through public
consciousness we can start to really examine how many of our people have been
allowed to wander away and no one has noticed.

Through speaking back against the assumption that Aboriginal people who do not
actively search for their missing family members simply do not care, Lori’s quote makes
visible the links between colonization and the breakdown of Aboriginal family relations.
As discussed above, the production of the white-settler heterosexual families as the norm
and of Aboriginal family formations as less-developed justified colonial policies, such as
the residential school policy, the same policy that Lori’s quote connects to the breakdown
of Aboriginal family relations.

This journalistic narrative of Lori’s story also questions “the establishment,
including the police agencies who have been ineffectual and seemingly indifferent.”
Goulding relates that Lori’s experience and frustration with the police agencies is
common amongst “families of missing Aboriginal women,” positioning it as a systematic
problem. It goes on to address how societal and police indifference towards her mother’s
disappearance impacted Lori and how Gwenda’s support helped her deal with it. Lori is
quoted saying:

She has been my greatest supporter in helping me find the strength to share my
own story, because all along I carried it silently on my own. I didn’t even realize
how I had isolated myself. I had allowed the police and society and my own family’s silence about the disappearance of Delores Whiteman, to lead to my belief that, one, it was something that I was blowing out of proportion. After all, she was an Indian woman who lived on the streets and used alcohol/drugs, had a child taken away etc. etc. or that I had no right to compare this missing woman on the same level as other missing people who were legitimately – read: not affected by the above things – missing.

This article question the justice system’s response, or lack of response, to families of Aboriginal women. This questioning has come up in a number of articles, particularly articles about Daleen’s disappearance and articles (such as this one) that address disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women as a systematic problem. This article goes beyond other media coverage by challenging hegemonic norms through multiple facets. It not only questions the police as an institution, but it draws the link between police indifference and family members’ responses and search for their missing loved one. As Lori’s quote illustrates, she had internalized police, societal, and her own families’ indifference. Not only does Lori’s quote question the police and societal indifference towards her mother, but it also makes visible the hierarchy that positions some women as deserving attention and search efforts, while others, such as her mother, do not (Jiwani & Young, 2006).

This article also problematizes notions of “normal” family emotions, responses, and caring. It historicizes Aboriginal family’s “choices” not to search for their family member or report their family member missing. Further, it challenges the binary, which positions some women as worthy of saving, or in other words, police and community
search efforts. In the materials I analyzed, this is the only story that problematized common-sense understandings of family and the binary of salvageable/unsalvageable women in this way.31 This article’s counter-hegemonic stance is partially enabled by its location in an Aboriginal news source, *Eagle Feather News*.32 As Read pointed out during our interview, Aboriginal media outlets produce news with an Aboriginal consumer in mind. It is the perception of how most Aboriginal people understand colonization, racism, and the justice institution that make this type of media representation more possible within publications like *Eagle Feather News* than mainstream news sources.

Further complicating norms of family is media coverage that relates family members’ perspectives as grounded in Indigenous worldviews. Indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing were re-presented most commonly in the coverage of Amber’s disappearance. Stories that privileged Amber’s family members’ perspectives did not only involve searches, walks, and awareness events, but also feasts. Traditional ways of honouring and remembering people were integrated into other events and the media representations of them. Gwenda was often quoted speaking about Amber and her disappearance in ways that reflected her Dakota-Sioux spirituality and ontology. It did not play as large of a role in the coverage of Daleen’s disappearance. One probable reason for this is that Pauline herself identifies as Christian and, as Pauline’s story illustrates, she largely became her daughter’s “voice” in the media coverage.

31 There were a few stories that questioned the binary of the salvageable/unsalvageable woman, but no other story also questioned the hegemonic norms of family in the same manner as Goulding’s story.
32 There are a number of elements that may have contributed to the counter-hegemonic stance taken by the article, for instance Goulding’s position on this issue (see for instance his text *Just Another Indian: A Serial Killer and Canada’s Indifference* [2001]), what Lori shared during their interview, as well as Lori’s experiences working in First Nations communities in the education system and being a spokesperson for missing families with SK SIS.
7.3 Indigenous Ways of Knowing the World

Although Indigenous spiritual and philosophical beliefs are diverse and complex, common threads exist among them. Indigenous ontologies view the world as relational; in other words, all aspects of the world are interconnected (Kovach, 2009). In contrast to white-settler hegemony, which considers non-humans inferior elements that need to be controlled and regulated, Indigenous ontologies understand elements of the earth and sky as kin and teachers. This is illustrated by the First Nations practice of referring to rocks, trees, and other elements of the earth and cosmos as relatives: i.e. Grandmother Moon, Mother Earth, Grandfather Tree, and Grandfather Rock. As such, Indigenous worldviews emphasize kinship (including ancestral) relationships, as well as ties to the community, language and land (McLeod, 2007).

Another difference between white-settler and Indigenous worldviews is that Indigenous spirituality and philosophy are inseparable. When exploring how Amber’s story was told, it was unsurprising that Indigenous ways of knowing, Amber’s community and family relationships, and Dakota-Siouxi spirituality emerged as important elements. These elements are most pronounced in CBC Current Affairs stories, but they were also evident in some of Indigenous Circle’s, Leader Post, CTV Regina, Eagle Feather News, and Saskatchewan Sage stories. On January 31st 2006, the Morning Edition included a story about a feast held for Amber on Standing Buffalo First Nation. Fiddler’s Current Affairs piece includes an interview with the late Elder Ken Goodwill, Dakota Sioux from Standing Buffalo First Nation. He says this about Amber:

Yes, I think of her as a grandchild, I have many grandchildren and I think of her in terms of the things that she was involved in. She was bright and happy, she was

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33 There was only one Indigenous Circle piece analyzed, as I explain earlier.
involved in sports, but I think mainly I think of her as being involved in our Sundance, she was a pipe girl, I remember her during those hot days and during the heat and everything and she did really well. I remember her also as a young, vivacious girl, her whole life ahead of her. I really don’t know what to expect.

From our own perspective, the Elders say, we as First Nations people, we believe a lot in the power of prayer, but we also believe a great deal, place a great deal of faith in the power of collective thought and as a community and with the help of people from outside the community, we want to think in positive terms. Because as I said the Elders say that enough thinking positive or thinking about something, then, the universe shifts a little bit to accommodate that. It’s been a long time since Amber went missing and as time goes on it becomes more difficult to remain positive, positive in the hopes for her return, but nonetheless this community and the people around it, we have the Sundances, we have family circles, we pray at pipe ceremonies, for Amber, for the family, all her relatives and friends, and I don’t think we’ve lost hope yet and as I say, we try to remain positive, it does become difficult from time to time, but nonetheless, we hold at least a positive outlook that she will return.34

Through what he shared with Fiddler, Elder Ken locates Amber in relation to her traditional identity as a Dakota Sioux woman, particularly as a pipe girl who participated in the Sundance. He also positions her as complex person who had a number of roles in her life and her community. He makes visible not only community concerns for Amber, but also how traditional philosophy of First Nations collective thought as well as spiritual

34 Like Fiddler, I did not edit or shorten what Elder Ken shared, I transcribed it verbatim and included it in its totality.
practices help the community deal with Amber’s disappearance and maintain hope.

Fiddler describes the experience of interviewing Elder Ken and the importance of what he shared:

\[
\text{[W]hen I sat with him and I said, “All I want you to do is tell me about Amber”}
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and its just this three minute [clip], which we never edited, I just played it on the radio the next day. This three-minute [clip] where he just talked about her and her connection to her community’s spirituality and there were all of these beautiful things and I just thought, “That’s what people don’t understand about missing Aboriginal women, that they are cultural and spiritual leaders in their communities.” Like she would have been the next generation of this whole culture and that’s been stripped away. Like that piece is gone now, you can’t get that back. So there were all of those things, which those things are different than other missing women. Those pieces in Aboriginal culture that won’t be there, somebody who was being guided to take over and that won’t happen now and I think that sometimes people forget that.

Fiddler’s explanation illustrates how Indigenous ways of knowing, spirituality, and community are important to understanding the stories of disappeared Aboriginal women as well as the impact that their disappearances have on their communities. Further, Indigenous ways of framing family and community relationships problematizes the normative notion of family. When the white-settler listener is encouraged to relate to Amber and her family through their shared experiences at the same time that Amber’s families’ experiences are framed through a Dakota-Sioux worldview, the possible disruption of these norms is two-fold. The listener can both recognize Amber’s family as
legitimate and as having different ways of understanding and coping with the loss of family members. Through this process, family as a construct becomes a site of cracks and fissures, of opening to a set of different meanings.

7.4 The Personal and Political Nature of “Naming” the Issue/Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women

Amber and Daleen were framed as missing Aboriginal (or First Nations) women, missing Aboriginal (or First Nations) people, or missing people depending on the story. In recognizing that journalists are only partial originators of ideas, I will outline some of the discursive conditions that shaped how these stories were told. In late 2004 and 2005, there was an increase in the social and political actors speaking out, writing about, and protesting the number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, or as SIS initially referred to it as, racialized and sexualized violence. This increased political action was spearheaded in late 2004 with the release of the Amnesty International’s Stolen Sisters report. This was the first time that violence against Aboriginal women in white-settler communities was made visible on the national and international level. As discussed above, in 2005 both Daleen and Amber’s family started to engage with the media in order to raise awareness about their disappearances. Most of the events, awareness walks, and vigils organized by Daleen and Amber’s families connected their disappearances to the issues of missing persons, missing First Nations or Aboriginal people, or missing (and/or murdered) First Nations (or Aboriginal) women. Other organizations and institutions also

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35 Although some people conflate Aboriginal and First Nations, it is not my intention to do so. NWAC’s (2010) SIS research indicates that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women are disappearing and being murdered at a disproportionately high rate. This is why I address the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

36 NWAC’s SIS initiative no longer refers to the targeting of Aboriginal women because of their “race” and gender/sex identity as racialized and sexualized violence. In their words, they have “shifted away from this language” (2010, p. 4).
held events, vigils, or awareness walks, two of these organizations being Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women’s Circle Corporation (SAWCC), which is the provincial affiliate of NWAC, and SK SIS. SK SIS is a grassroots organization created by family members of missing and murdered people in Saskatchewa. Another significant development during this time was the creation of the Provincial Taskforce on Missing Persons in 2005 and the tabling of its final report in 2007. For the most part, it is through the coverage of these different events, vigils, and organization’s work that Daleen and Amber’s stories are told in relation to their identities as missing persons, missing First Nations (or Aboriginal) persons, or missing First Nations women (or Aboriginal) women.

All of these identities are valid positions that Amber and Daleen simultaneously occupy, but naming is an act of power, of locating an individual as a part of one social group over another (Richardson, 2007). When Amber and Daleen are framed as “one of” the province’s missing persons, this effectually renders the racialized and sexualized nature of their disappearances invisible. In essence, the racism, sexism, and colonialism that contributed to Amber and Daleen’s vulnerability to violence is re-produced. There is a similar effect when Daleen and Amber are positioned as “one of” the missing Aboriginal people in the province or country. Often the intention behind hosting events for missing people or missing Aboriginal people is the inclusion of families who are missing Aboriginal male or non-Aboriginal family members. At times, the media coverage of disappeared people or missing Aboriginal men and women included direct quotes from family and institutional spokespeople that alluded to making the movement “larger” and “stronger” through this inclusion. In our interview, a former free-lance
journalist discussed how calls for inclusivity can also be a part of denying the racist and sexist nature of Canadian society:

[F]rom what I know, which I haven’t been focused on this for a long time, this is happening to Aboriginal women. It’s Aboriginal women that it’s happening to. So, trying to say, “Let’s talk about all missing people,” those missing people matter very much; they are people who are missing, it’s very serious. But it’s a way of being defensive, to avoid laying blame or identifying a problem, because then there is blame, there’s risk, it implies racism and prejudice, [and] people don’t want to admit those things.\(^{37}\)

Even though there are various reasons to organize around the issue of missing people or missing Aboriginal people rather than missing Aboriginal women, is important to be aware of what is lost through doing so as well. In situations where it is necessary to address missing people or missing Aboriginal people, it is crucial to explore methods of creative engagement which make racialized and sexualized violence more visible. A near example is found in the June 2006 issue of the *Prince Albert Grand Council Tribune*. Schaefer wrote an article covering the second annual Prince Albert Grand Council Women's Commission Honouring our Sisters and Brothers Memorial walk in which he quotes several family members. Through a quote of Herb’s, Schaefer relates that Aboriginal women being “picked up and victimized by a sexual predator” is a common story across Canada (p. 6). Therefore, this article both covers an event that includes family members of missing First Nations people and addresses the victimization of

\(^{37}\) As NWAC’s SIS research reveals, Aboriginal women are disappearing and being murdered at a disproportionate rate (2010, p. ii).
Aboriginal women. At the same time, this article does not address the systemic issues that render Aboriginal women more vulnerable to violence.

Many stories from different media sources located Daleen and Amber as disappeared Aboriginal women and framed Aboriginal women as more vulnerable to violence or at a “high risk” of disappearing. Within a number of these stories, Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to violence is decontextualized. It is not connected to racism and sexism or historical and present-day colonial policies. Some of these stories did discuss the efforts of organizations, such as NWAC, SK SIS, SAWCC, and family members to raise awareness about disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. This resists the colonial construction of Aboriginal people as passive citizens complacent, and indeed the cause of, their own victimization (Vall, 2007).

Other stories addressed ways that Aboriginal women can protect themselves from violence, which places the responsibility for violence onto Aboriginal women. These media re-presentations imply that Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered were not keeping themselves safe and as a result, are the causes of their own victimization. Victim blaming as a discursive strategy is a part of regulating women’s bodies and particularly, racialized women’s bodies. Shortly after Amber disappeared, an awareness walk travelled from the place she was last seen in Fort Qu’Appelle to her home at Standing Buffalo First Nation. Although there are a number of discursive frames through which this story is told, I am going to focus on how the issue of missing Aboriginal women is re-presented. The discussion of Aboriginal women as at “risk” of going missing is found near the end of the story. This is where Jason Matity cites a statistic that there are 18 women missing women in the province and 13 of these women
are Aboriginal. Matity goes on to relate how Melanie Geddes disappeared after going to a party and Amber went missing after a night out at the “pub.” This is followed by a quote from Gwenda, which Matity describes as a “message.” She addresses young Aboriginal women, saying, “Don’t go out alone, and please, if you can, put away the alcohol and drugs.”

This story simultaneously re-presents Aboriginal women as “at risk” of going missing and as putting themselves “at risk” for going missing through drinking, doing drugs, and being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Family and community calls for women to regulate themselves in order to prevent their own victimization are understandable although not unproblematic reactions. However, this story re-presents these reactions without focusing any attention on the perpetuators who are violating Aboriginal women or the white-settler indifference that contributes to this violence. The white-settler reader is not implicated in this news story or the larger issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women as this story locates Aboriginal women as the cause of their own victimization.

Some stories did provide a more in-depth analysis of why Aboriginal women disappear and are murdered at high rates. These stories are more common among the CBC Current Affairs coverage and both Aboriginal and mainstream print coverage. One contributing factor to this difference is the constraints faced when working in other

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38 Victim blaming is a prominent discourse in Canadian society and it would be unrealistic to expect that community and family voices would never take it up. It may be experienced by some women and families as empowering since they may (falsely) feel that through following this set of rules they can protect themselves from victimization or at least decrease their chances of being attacked.
journalistic formats. For instance, television news stories are edited so that they are less than two minutes long (and often they are approximately a minute and a half long).  

Two pieces that aired as part of the *CBS Blue Sky* shows on July 22nd and 24th 2008 analyzed this issue in-depth. These shows covered the Missing Sisters Walk that Daleen’s family organized. During the July 22nd show the host, Garth Materie, interviewed Pauline about the walk. This interview did discuss the vulnerability of Aboriginal women to violence and focused on individual actions as part of the solution to this violence. Materie asked Pauline “What would you like to see from the rest of society, what could people do in an individual way that would be meaningful and helpful?”  
Pauline answered:  

Whenever they see a person in distress, it doesn't matter what nationality they are, if they see someone in distress to lend a helping hand, not just to watch someone in need. To do something, to do something and maybe somebody might be sitting on the side of the road and they need help, to help your fellow individual.  

Underlying this part of the interview is a liberal, humanistic discourse that individualizes racism and sexism. However, in the story that ran on July 24th there was a different discursive strategy at work. For this show, Materie interviewed Beverly Jacobs about issues facing Aboriginal women. Their interview largely focused on disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. Jacobs, who related that she was in Saskatoon walking with Daleen’s family as part of the Missing Sisters Walk, answered Materie’s interview questions in ways that made the systematic nature of colonialism, racism, and sexism visible. Out of all the ways that the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women can

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39 At the same time, there are longer pieces that do not address disappeared Aboriginal women as a systematic issue, for instance the documentary *Stolen Spirit* Directed by Ryan Pilon (2009).
be talked about, media coverage such as this Current Affairs piece has the most radical potential.

Materie asked Jacobs whether she thought that missing and murdered Aboriginal women was getting enough attention from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leadership. Jacobs answered that:

I think there is increased [attention] maybe in the last three or four years, but I really don’t think there’s enough nationally or in the non-Aboriginal community or media outlets. You know, it seems a lot of times when Aboriginal women go missing, there may be just a small article in a local newspaper or maybe nothing at all. Or, there’s stereotypes in how it’s being printed in the media. A lot of stereotypes…

She goes on to talk about the SIS initiative’s media analysis and what this media analysis suggests about white-settler Canadian society. Further, she names violence where “Aboriginal women are specific targets” as racialized and sexualized violence. Through naming it as such, the systematic issues that make this violence possible are revealed.

When Materie asks Jacobs “What would you like to see?” Jacobs starts by stating, “I would like to see many things. I would like society to take this as a crisis…”

When systematic issues of racism, sexism, and colonialism are named in stories such as this Current Affairs piece, it contradicts the white-settler listener’s common sense understandings of Canadian society as just and fair. The white-settler is implicated in these systematic issues and in the issue of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. These stories provide opportunities for white-settler listeners to recognize their privilege. That the white-settler dominance within Canada’s body politic was not rightfully earned,
but it was appropriated from Aboriginal people, particularly women. It is with these realizations that the white-settler reader may be engaged as a part of the ongoing movement to transform the Canadian society into a truly postcolonial nation-state that reflects the views, experiences, and identities of all of its members.

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined how mainstream media coverage told Daleen’s and Amber’s stories from the time they disappeared until they were discovered, murdered, in the summer of 2008. This chapter does not just present my analysis of this media coverage. Rather it also re-presents multiple voices and accounts of how Amber and Daleen’s stories were told. In analyzing the media coverage, I drew on my interviews/conversations with journalists, Gwenda, and Pauline in order to explore whether media re-presentations were respectful and responsive to Amber, Daleen, and their family members as well as whether media coverage challenges or reproduces hegemonic norms. I examined a number of ways that Amber and Daleen’s stories were framed during the time they were missing: through the justice system’s efforts to find Daleen and Amber, Amber and Daleen’s family members’ search for them and their experiences of not knowing where Amber and Daleen were, as well as in relation to the broader issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. In the next chapter, I examine how these discursive frames shift after the discovery of Amber and Daleen, murdered, in the summer of 2008.
During the summer of 2008, Amber Tara-Lynn Redman’s and Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s bodies were discovered and men were arrested and charged with their murders. Amber’s body was discovered on May 5th 2008 on the Little Black Bear First Nation. Two First Nations men who lived on Little Black Bear, Albert and Gilbert Bellegarde, were arrested and charged with her murder. Daleen’s body was discovered in a rural, wooded area halfway between Warman and Martinsville on August 8th 2008. A white-settler man, Douglas Hales from White Fox, was charged with her murder on August 10th 2008. At this time there was both a sharp increase in the media coverage about Daleen and Amber as well as a shift in how Daleen and Amber were discussed. In our interview, Bradshaw discussed her experiences re-presenting the discovery of Amber’s body and how this discovery changed how Amber’s story was told:

This would have been another peak, I guess, no matter what people are going to be out at this kind of thing, because it’s a break in the case. So, yes, it was obviously important to be there and…it went from a missing person’s case to a murder case and that changed everything. Then, I think the location of it was pretty important to the story, because I feel that it must have been harder for the family just knowing it was so close to home. Yeah and then I just think in terms of being out there, I mean, I haven’t listened to [the piece], but I hope…you can hear that it was something beyond the facts of “We are at this house, the remains

40 See note 26
were found here” that there is a bit more to what’s happening today and what it means to the community.

This quote of Bradshaw’s hints at the complicated nature of media re-presentations during these peaks. The majority of media outlets covered these peaks and largely these re-presentations centered on the justice system’s processes, spokespeople, and discursive materials. However, as Bradshaw indicated, she and other journalists are also concerned with re-presenting community and family perspectives. Indeed, several journalists made comments during their interviews about the importance of interviewing “real people” as part of telling these stories. Journalists, talking about stories such as Amber and Daleen’s, used the terms “real people” to mean family or friends, someone who can give insight into who the victimized person is or was. Bradshaw explained why this is important:

I definitely think that that connection with “real people,” not necessarily the police is important to making people care, because that is where you get the details about who these women really were and what they meant to people and that makes a big difference.

In terms of re-presenting who Daleen and Amber “really were,” media re-presentations talked about them through their family members’ perspectives and their roles in their family and community. In chapter 7, I discussed how positioning Daleen and Amber in these ways is more reflective of their family’s experiences. I also explored how these media re-presentations deconstructed and reified hegemonic norms. Below, I address the shift in media coverage that occurred when Amber and Daleen’s bodies were discovered. I examine how the stories of Daleen and Amber’s murders were re-told
through justice system processes and discourses. In particular, I explore how this re-telling contributes to the individualizing of Daleen and Amber’s murders. Finally, I discuss the importance of media outlets and journalists re-presenting family members’ healing journeys in addition to what have been traditionally considered newsworthy events.

8.1 Justice System/Primary Frame Through Which the Stories of Amber and Daleen’s Murders are Told

During the time following the discovery of Amber and Daleen’s remains and the charging of their (accused) murderers, the majority of the media coverage focused on re-presenting justice system spokespersons’ voices, discursive materials, and processes. In our interview, Pacholik illustrated the importance that court reporting places on these representations and the discursive structure that guides them. In the article “Life in prison for a murderer” Pacholik describes the discovery of Amber’s body, “When investigators found her body, it was wrapped in a blanket and unburied, her bones had been ravaged by predators, and some were scattered” (2009, Jan. 23, p. A1). When I asked her why she included these details, Pacholik replied:

Again, just giving people an understanding, I mean, murder is not nice or pretty and I don’t think I should pretty it up and I’m thinking of a sexual assault…I mean, I think details in a sexual assault case can get pretty gruesome and we’ve been asked from time to time, “Well, why do you choose to put what you put in there?” Well, for people to appreciate whether the sentence was correct, whether the guilty plea was correct, I think you need an understanding of what that crime is…
But, would I put in a detail like that to be hurtful to her family, no, but at the same time, homicide is not a private matter...I go back to my original comments, which for people to appreciate if justice has been done they have to understand what the facts are of what’s happened...crime is not a private matter, you don’t bring a private prosecution, it’s the State versus the accused and we have that so we have law and order in society. So, in using a comment about how her body was, I think I wanted people to grasp the cavalier attitude again of her killer and I think the idea of what had happened to her body in death and this desecration and stuff, predators being able to pick at it...

Pacholik’s response speaks to not only journalism’s discursive structure, but also to the discursive structure of the justice system itself. The justice system is predicated on white masculine hegemonic ideals. Sexism, classism, racism, and colonialism are normalized and exist simultaneously with the liberal, democratic, multicultural values that are viewed as the foundation of Canadian society (Henry & Tator, 2006). Justice processes, informed by liberal individualism, are based on a “concept of an independent, decontextualized individual [which] functions to suppress our acknowledgement of the profound differences between individuals” shaped by the communities one belongs to and the intersections of our gender/sex, race, age, ability, and sexuality (Razack, 1998, p. 26). According to Razack:

Law relies on the positivist conception of knowledge. That is, there is a straight line between the knower and the known. In law, judges and juries are meant to discover the truth from the array of information put before them. There is only
one objective truth and it is empirically provable. Reason features prominently and emotion is ruthlessly banished. (1998, p. 37)

The justice system’s conceptualization of knowledge is taken for granted within Canadian society as common sense. At the same time that law’s liberal, individualistic ontology positions itself as objective and fair to everyone (Comack, 1999), it is this ontology which privileges certain bodies over others, in particular, white, middle-class men who embody the individualistic ideals.

Returning to Pacholik’s quote, she stated that she includes details, like the description of how Amber’s body had been disturbed by predators, in order for readers “to appreciate whether the sentence was correct, whether the guilty plea was correct…” Her statement is based on the “positivist conception of knowledge” Razack addresses above. It suggests a) through viewing all the relevant facts judge, juries, and wider society can use reasoning to come to the conclusion, and b) readers, as part of the society, have a right to know these details to judge whether the State truly represented their interests in the case. Both mainstream news outlets’ reliance on justice system processes, discursive materials, and spokespeople, as well as the justice system’s discursive structure itself contribute to how Amber and Daleen’s murders were discursively framed.

8.2 Decontextualized Re-presentations: Individualizing Racist and Sexist Acts

News stories’ focus on justice system spokespeople, processes, and discursive materials had the effect of individualizing Amber and Daleen’s murders. That is, the reader/listener/viewer was encouraged to understand them as individual acts of violence, rather than as two stories of violence against Aboriginal women that were made possible
and perpetuated by racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism. Two examples of stories that had this effect aired on Regina’s CTV News May 6th and May 7th in 2008.

The May 6th story by video journalist Lindsey Hoemson focused on the discovery of Amber’s remains, the police investigation, and the charging of Albert and Gilbert Bellegarde with her murder. This story opens with footage of the area where Amber’s body was found and the house that Albert Bellegarde lived in. Hoemson states that “After nearly three years of searching for answers, a sad ending to a young life lies in this lonely stretch of road on Little Black Bear First Nation.” This story then goes on to discuss details of the RCMP investigation into Amber’s death including a quote from a police spokesperson, Sergeant Brian Jones, about Amber’s remains, “the quality of the remains will not be intact, they have been disturbed around the scene, by weather, by animals, as distasteful as it is to say those words, that is the reality.” The story also provides the viewer with a narrative of the mystery of Amber’s disappearance and murder, encouraging the viewer to follow this mystery as it is solved by the police investigation and re-presented by media sources. First, the story describes where and when Amber was last seen. Then, the viewer is informed through video footage and Hoemson’s narration that the RCMP “are still not saying how [Amber] ended up” at Albert Bellegarde’s house on Little Black Bear First Nation. This story goes on to discuss the charging of Albert and Gilbert Bellegarde with Amber’s murder. Neither of the Bellegardes are named in this initial story, but Albert is located in relation to his age and land base.

This story then shifted to talk about Amber through a different frame, re-presenting her family’s emotions in the face of the discovery of her body (as they articulated them in a statement to media outlets) and their actions searching for her while
she was missing. These representations connect Amber to the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. First, Hoemson described the discovery of Amber’s body as “secondary” to her mother’s work organizing searches for her and bringing “attention to missing and murdered Aboriginal women.” Then, Hoemson quoted the statement released by Amber’s family while one of Amber’s graduation pictures is shown. This quote describes the family’s difficulty dealing with their loss as well as how they remember Amber. This story then returned to the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, as Hoemson provided a statistic of the number of missing Aboriginal women in Saskatchewan, followed with the statement that Amber is “the second found in the last year.” This piece ends with Homeson’s statement that these discoveries give “solace for some, but leaving many unanswered questions for others.”

In this story, the justice system emerged as the primary definer in how the story of Amber’s murder was told. The dominance of institutional details about the discovery of Amber’s body, the investigation into her death, and the narrative of her disappearance and murder, has the effect of individualizing her murder. At the same time, Hoemson made an effort throughout her reporting to humanize Amber. Near the end of the story, she shifted its focus to re-present family member’s perspectives and make a connection between Amber’s murder and violence against Aboriginal women. In the coverage surrounding the discovery of Amber’s body, the Bellegarde’s murder charges, and their subsequent appearances, some news stories discuss the issues of racialized and sexualized violence. Most often these stories, such as in the CTV News piece analyzed above, only briefly connect Amber’s death to other disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women.
Understanding the constraints of television news formats, Hoemson and I discussed other ways that television journalists could have talked about racialized and sexualized violence after Amber was found murdered. Hoemson suggested that since violence against Aboriginal women is such a complex issue, television news outlets could have addressed it in a separate story shortly after the May 6th story aired. According to Hoemson, *CTV News* might have planned to do such a follow-up story but it never materialized, possibly because events occurred that were considered more newsworthy, such as a fire. Either way, this part of Amber’s story was not fully told at this point in time by *CTV News*. As I have discussed earlier, brief allusions to violence against Aboriginal women often reinforce colonial imagery of Aboriginal women as naturally “high risk.” This construction positions Aboriginal women as the cause of their own victimization. In media coverage such as the *CTV News* story analyzed above, systematic factors that made this act possible were largely rendered unspeakable, while the justice system, an institution which racism, sexism, and colonialism operates through, was taken for granted as a “good institution.”

Following the discovery of Daleen’s body, news stories which quoted First Nations community leaders, in particular Chief Wallace Fox of Onion Lake First Nation (who spoke on behalf of Daleen’s family immediately after her remains were found) and former FSIN Chief Lawrence Joseph, effectively reified this construction of the justice system as a good institution. For instance, early on in Darren Bernhardt’s *StarPhoenix*

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*41* When I am talking about the limitations of television news formats, one example is that the majority of news stories are under two minutes long.

*42* Fiddler also addressed how more newsworthy events may come up and as a result, a follow-up story about a missing or murdered Aboriginal women may not be told. She gave a number of examples, “The Roughriders are getting a new stadium. The Roughriders got a new coach. There’s a new announcement about healthcare…”
article published on August 12, 2008, Joseph was quoted saying, “We are saddened by the tragic outcome, but pleased and encouraged by the incredible police work done her” (Bernhardt, p. A4). This article mostly re-presents Joseph acknowledging the pain and emotions of Daleen’s family and “repeatedly praising” the police. While this article acknowledges Aboriginal victimization by the police through giving the reader a brief summary of the Starlight Tours and the establishment of the Justice Secretariat’s Special Investigation Unit, this is framed as a problem of the past. The discovery of Daleen’s remains and the charging of her (accused) murderer are held up as evidence the justice system’s problems have been “fixed.”

It is not my intention to undermine changes that the Saskatoon Police Service have made in how they respond to missing persons’ cases and specifically, their treatment of Daleen’s disappearance and murder. Pauline’s story speaks to how the Saskatoon Police Services became more responsive to her daughter’s case and more respectful to Pauline and her family once Weighill became Chief of the Saskatoon Police Service. Rather, my intention is to point out how media re-presentations such as the one above fail to acknowledge and therefore reify racist, sexist, classist, and colonialist norms. In reaffirming the power and trustworthiness of the justice institution, news stories such as the one analyzed above re-place a disproportionate burden onto Aboriginal communities. It conceptualizes police institutions and Aboriginal communities as having equal power

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43 At times, mainstream media re-presentations do question the justice system’s response to Aboriginal people, as I have illustrated in this research. Another example is how mainstream media “did much to bring the matter of Neil Stonechild’s death to the attention of the public and of political elites” (J. Green, 2009, p. 140).
and frames solutions to these problems as improving “relationships” and “communication.”

In contrast, the CBC Morning Edition conducted interviews with two Aboriginal women who framed systematic oppressions as ongoing issues, rather than a thing of the past. These interviews made visible how power relations shape the encounters between Aboriginal communities and police institutions. On August 12th, CBC interviewed both Yvonne Howse, who was an Assistant Professor at First Nations University at the time, and Christine Welsh, a Métis filmmaker whose documentary *Finding Dawn* explored Daleen’s disappearance, her family’s activism, and the early police response to Daleen’s missing person’s case. Howse talked extensively about racism during her interview. When asked whether she thought “the police were doing a better job on these cases,” she answered, “Well, it’s taken four years to find Daleen I believe they may be trying a lot harder…” Later in the interview, she said:

Are they doing a better job? I don’t know, because I think of many other things, I think of the young man who had a stick or something who was shot in the North, I think of the young 14-year-old who was shot because he was carrying a knife. I don’t know if they are trained to do a better job. I’m not certain that they are, I don’t know. I couldn’t say, “Yes, I think they are doing a better job,” but when I hear about the shootings of a 14-year-old child, because he’s carrying a knife or a

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44 There are some media re-presentations that imply this more directly than others. One example of this is found in Simcoe’s article that was published in the *StarPhoenix* about an October 4th vigil that Pauline spoke at. This article was published with the headline, “Missing women remembered; Annual vigil draws attention to missing, murdered Aboriginals” and positions Weighill as doing “his part to counter such perceptions.” Through Weighill’s direct quotes, the Saskatoon Police Service is framed as having “no systematic issues.” The article goes on to indirectly quote Weighill encouraging “aboriginal communities to trust the police and to report missing persons as early as possible,” (p. A3).
young man whose raised a stick and he has this stick and he’s shot, because he’s raising a stick, I don’t know how…

Howse’s quote goes onto speak about “the attitude towards First Nations and Métis people in this province” and the need for improved education to change peoples’ attitudes, particularly police officers. Framing Daleen’s story in this way encourages the listeners to view her murder not as an individual act or an example of how the justice institution “works.” Rather, it provides an opportunity for listeners to recognize their responsibility in the ongoing struggle to eliminate oppressions which have made Daleen, and other Aboriginal women, disposable within white-settler Canadian society. Similarly, as I have discussed above, there were few media re-presentations that situated Amber’s murder in the context of white masculine and colonial hegemony and the societal indifference it produces towards Aboriginal women. One media re-presentation that did so was CBC Blue Sky’s May 6th interview with Theresa Ducharme who was working with NWAC’s SIS initiative at the time. During this interview, Ducharme talked extensively about systematic issues that render Aboriginal women more vulnerable to violence. This interview aired directly after Bradshaw’s story about the discovery of Amber’s remains. This piece is an example of how multiple perspectives and understandings of missing and murdered Aboriginal women’s stories can be re-presented.

The justice system denies the relevance of racist, sexist, classist, and colonialist discourses, at the same time, these discourses play into re-presentations surrounding Amber and Daleen’s murders. While telling the story of Amber’s murder, some media coverage evoked images of Aboriginal communities as spaces of secrecy, dysfunction,

45 During this interview, Howse’s quotes do not address sexism or the intersection between racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism.
despair, and dependency. In particular, these tropes emerged in stories that talked about
the rumours surrounding Amber’s murder. According to some community members,
these rumours had been circulating among Little Black Bear First Nation since shortly
after Amber’s disappearance. I am not dismissing the impact that these rumours had on
the family and both communities. However, I am drawing attention to how the white-
settler viewer/listener/reader was encouraged to draw on their common sense in order to
understand Little Black Bear as a space of secrecy and dysfunction. Also, the question
of whether there was or is community knowledge about Daleen’s murder is largely not
posed. This is the case despite the fact that many people had been in the area where her
remains were found over the years, including police officers. This is despite the fact that
there is a history of white men murdering Aboriginal women and being protected by
white community members, such as in the case of Helen Betty Osborne and Pamela
George (Priest, 1989; Razack, 2002).

While media re-presentations left unquestioned how Daleen’s body was not found
earlier, prior to June of 2009 they did describe the space where she was found in ways
that reified the construction of Aboriginal women as naturally “high-risk.” Media
coverage often framed where Daleen’s body was found as a “party spot.” As Pauline

46 There are also examples of how this trope emerges from the back of the colonial imagination into the
forefront of public discussion, see for instance Bob Hughes’ article “Sorrow mixed with despair” (May 9,
47 In Pruden’s article “Discovery confirmed long-time rumours” she provides the most in-depth media
coverage about this community knowledge. Pruden quotes Noel Starblanket from Starblanket First Nation
at length. He states at one point, “ ‘We call it ‘the moccasin telegraph.’ The people know more than what
the police can actually find out in their investigations...but in a lot of cases what we know in the community
bears out’” (May 7, 2008, p A1).
48 One article addressed that this area is highly trafficked by both youth and police officers. It was written
by Adam for the August 12, 2008 StarPhoenix. This article, which was published with the headline, “Bosse
body found: Man charged in death of woman missing since ‘04” relates that while this is an area where
bush parties are held and “police patrol the area frequently” the police should not have been expected to
find Daleen’s body earlier. A police spokesperson, Sergeant Farion is quoted making the statement police
are “not looking for things like that” while patrolling these parties (p. A1). Farion’s comment discursively
closes further questioning about possible community knowledge of Daleen’s murder.
pointed out in her letter to the editor quoted below, using this phrase implied that Daleen was partying there the night she was murdered and therefore, she was responsible for her own victimization. Victim blaming constructs women, particularly racialized women, as responsible for the violence enacted upon them through their actions such as drinking, using drugs, partying, being out after dark, walking alone, or not locking their doors (Doe, 2003).

Pauline wrote in a letter to the editor that was published in the StarPhoenix on June 16, 2009:

In reporting about my late daughter, Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego), I would like The StarPhoenix to stop using the term: “Her body was recovered from a secluded party spot.”

Words have great power. They can make a person look bad or good, depending on what message you are trying to send. The wording by your reporter is offensive to me as Daleen’s mother. We, as Native women, already are targets for violence, as confirmed by Amnesty International’s report, “Stolen Sisters.” We don’t need a target painted on our foreheads.

We have no idea whatsoever how my daughter ended up at the site. All we know is this is where her (burned) remains were found. Please put yourself in my shoes and try to understand how I feel.

The story can almost make a person imagine that Daleen went there willingly when, in fact, we have no idea whatsoever how things happened… (p. A6)
The StarPhoenix largely stop using the phrase “party spot” to describe where Daleen’s remains were found. Also, through publishing Pauline’s letter, they (and Pauline) made the power and implications of this phrase, and language in general, visible.

Constructions of Aboriginal femininity do not operate on their own, but are produced in relation to white-settler femininity, Aboriginal masculinity, and white-settler masculinity. Kallio (2006) analyzed the StarPhoenix’s coverage of Dean Edmondson’s, Jeffrey Kindrat’s, and Jeffrey Brown’s trials for sexually assaulting a 12-year-old Salteaux Cree girl from Yellow Quill First Nation. Kallio reveals that media coverage “made sense” of this violence through employing tropes of Aboriginality and Aboriginal women’s hypersexual nature. Throughout the trials, Edmondson, Kindrat, and Brown were re-positioned as victims of this 12-year-old girl. She, in turn, was framed as the sexual aggressor as well as a victim, not of these white men, but of her own family and father. Through this process, white masculine privilege and entitlement to Aboriginal women’s bodies was reaffirmed.

Except for the example discussed above, following the discovery of Daleen’s body the media coverage has continued to re-present her in relation to her roles as a mother, daughter, sister, university student, and teacher, and therefore as a worthy victim. In ways Hales is also awarded the position of victim. Similar to media coverage that described Edmondson, Kindrat, and Brown as “clean-cut” boys from good families, some media re-presentations have emphasized his status as a member of a good, middle-class, family who is relatable to the white-settler viewer/listener/reader. Coolican’s article that was published in the StarPhoenix on August 14th, 2008 featured an interview with his father, Richard Hales (p. A3). This article constructed a narrative of Douglas as a good
kid who fell in with the wrong crowd, whose family tried to do what they could for him and now, after years of struggle, has turned his life around. Richard also places doubt on his son’s guilt, positioning him as a “follower” rather than a “leader” and describing the police interrogation that Doug has faced over the years. Coolican quoted Richard as saying “‘It was driving him nuts. I don’t say it was harassment, but…I got a feeling they had an axe to grind and they were always in his face. It’s a very politically charged case…so I certainly sympathize with them.’”

While Richard and Douglas Hales are unmarked by race, the power relations of race operates throughout this article. For instance, Richard and Douglas Hales are positioned as belonging to the imaginary community of Canada, through the middle-class values that they share with most white-settler readers, their unmarked whiteness, and their hometown of Warman, which is similar to many other white-settler small towns in Saskatchewan.

Richard’s quotes in this article also suggest that race is the possible reason that Douglas has been wrongfully charged. He denied the possibility that Douglas is racist, again shedding doubt on his guilt. In the quote above, Richard frames Daleen’s case as “politically charged” and later in the article he is quoted describing his son’s former relationship with an Aboriginal mother of three children. Richard is indirectly quoted remembering “his son attending parent-teacher conferences at the kids’ school and making plans to celebrate Christmas with them.” Coolican goes on to directly quote Richard saying, “Not many guys would do that.” As the Canadian Press Stylebook informs journalists not to note a person’s race unless it’s pertinent to the article, it appears
that Douglas’ race was not judged as relevant to the story, while his ex-girlfriend’s was. Through marking Douglas’ ex-girlfriend as Aboriginal and framing Douglas’ actions towards her as generous, this journalistic narrative suggested a benevolence towards Aboriginal people, since “[n]ot many guys would do that.” Overall, this story positioned Hales as a sympathetic victim of an overzealous police force responding to accusations of bias and racism.

In Western Canada during the late nineteenth century, the image of Aboriginal men as inherently violent “Indian Savages” was fixed in the colonial imagination. Indian Savages were imagined as a threat to the safety of white-settler women and, at times, Aboriginal women (Carter, 1997). As a result white-settler men were positioned as the protectors of these women. More recently, Grebinski explored how the Indian Savage image has played into news coverage about Daniel Wolfe, one of the founding members of the Indian Posse gang (2012). Amber’s status as a worthy victim, a teenage girl who was important to both her community and family, remains largely in place throughout the media coverage of Gilbert and Albert Bellegarde’s court proceedings. She is positioned as the victim of Albert Bellegarde’s violent, dangerous nature, who the white-settler reader/listener/viewer is encouraged to imagine as the “Indian Savage.” This image is hinted at by media coverage that emphasized his violent nature and lack of control when using drugs and alcohol without contextualizing this violence and substance abuse. Even

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49 In a society where whiteness is often left unmarked and Aboriginality is continuously marked, it is likely that whether or not Douglas’ race was relevant to the story was never consciously considered.
50 This article was not left unquestioned. On August 19, 2008, the StarPhoenix published Nicole Mills letter to the editor, which criticized Coolican’s article. Mills writes, “I have to wonder if the news media would be reporting how the accused person's family feels if the victim had been a locally raised white woman …I feel as though the media are trying to generate sympathy for the accused (and his family) when it is not appropriate.” (p. A6). Further, this is not the only way that Hales was re-presented. Some more recent stories covering his appeals have suggested that he is problematic, draining the legal system and taxpayer’s resources (see for instance, Coolican, June 10, 2009, A3).
an article that tries to tell more of Albert Bellegarde’s story and understand some of the reasons for his violence does not explore the possible links between the situations that he grew up in (witnessing physical abuse, subjected to neglect and sexual abuse) and colonial processes, such as residential schools (Pruden, May 12, 2008, p. A1).

At times, this image slipped from the back of the colonial imagination and media re-presentation of it became more explicit. For instance, much of the news coverage of Albert Bellegarde’s sentencing cites explicit details of how Bellegarde described the murder, emphasizing the violence of his act. This description is suggestive of the Indian Savage image; the connection between Bellegarde and this image clearer when News Talk 980 CJME reporter Patrick Book describes Bellegarde as having “savagely” beat Amber. In addition, media outlets re-presented white-settler men who were acting in the State’s interests expressing their empathy for Amber’s family and punishing Albert Bellegarde through sentencing him to life in prison. I do not question that, under the current retributive justice system, his sentence suited his crime.51 Rather, I am pointing out that media re-presentations of his court proceedings evoked a narrative of white men saving brown women and white women from brown men, a narrative that is all too familiar in colonial Canada and other colonial nations (Spivak, 1994).

8.3 Following Family’s Healing Journeys

Since the discovery of Amber and Daleen’s remains, their families have continued to host events that raise awareness of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and honour Daleen and Amber. For instance, Daleen’s family has hosted annual memorial runs in honour of Daleen and other missing and murdered Aboriginal women. On July

51 Gwenda has been re-presented in the media expressing her dissatisfaction with both the staying of murder charges against Gilbert Bellegarde and Albert Bellegarde’s sentence. See for instance, Pacholik, January 24, 2009, p. A1.
15, 2008, Amber’s family hosted a memorial for her. This memorial included a volleyball and basketball tournament, which were two of Amber’s favourite sports, and a traditional feast. Bradshaw used interviews and her experiences at the memorial to tell a story about Amber’s families’ healing journey. This story aired on the Morning Edition on July 16th, 2008. In Bradshaw’s interview with me, she talked about the importance of covering the memorial and continuing to tell these families’ stories of healing:

You know what I do remember and I think this kind of speaks to having continuity in who is covering stories, because I had seen Gwenda so many times by then that I really did see a difference in her in kind of where things were at and I think that’s…an important part of the story, of not just dropping families after the fact either. Because the hub-bub of [the case] might be over for police, the media, or whatever, there isn’t anything major happening for the day, but these things are not over for the families. So, I think it’s neat, I can still picture her that day, her journey through this and I thought that was important to tell people about too.

8.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed how the stories of Daleen and Amber’s murders were re-presented following the discovery of their remains. In particular, I explored how news stories often individualized Daleen and Amber’s murders when justice system processes, spokespeople, and discursive materials played the most prominent role. Finally, I turned to the importance of re-presenting family members’ healing journeys and privileging family members’ perspectives. With this in mind, I turn to some other recommendations

\[52\] It is important to note that out of the media coverage analyzed, only CBC and MBC aired stories about this memorial for Amber.
that emerged from analyzing the media coverage and my conversations with Pauline, Gwenda, and journalists.
9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Merelda Fiddler of CBC Saskatchewan, speaking about Aboriginal media outlets said in her interview, “independent media is fantastic and we partner with them and that can be very rewarding, but mainstream media is still where most people get their information…” Similarly, Henry and Tator state that mainstream media serves as a form of popular education in white-settler society. Not only about events, situations, and issues, but also about marginalized communities whom the dominant society rarely interacts with (Henry & Tator, 2002). With an understanding of this role, this chapter explores how journalists and media outlets can work towards more family-centred and transformative coverage of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. I also discuss some of the ways that justice organizations, Aboriginal organizations, family members, and allies can engage with media outlets throughout this process. As Brett Bradshaw said in our interview:

There are all of these layers of responsibility and everyone needs to contribute to that. So, if it is a community that lost a woman, there is a responsibility in reflecting a range of who that person was as much as you can within reason, and there is a responsibility for a journalist to seek that out and to be conscious of the language they are using and what they’re reporting on and there is a responsibility within the police and how they’re responding, it’s not just in isolation…

These recommendations, which emerged from the conversations with Pauline Muskego and Gwenda Yuzicappi, as well as the interviews with journalists, the media analysis, and the limited literature on the subject, are circular and interrelated.
Broadly, these recommendations serve two different aims: 1) increasing media agents’ responsiveness to disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women, their family, and friends; and 2) disrupting white masculine and colonial hegemonic norms, making visible the intersections of racism, sexism, heterosexism, colonialism, and classism and destabilizing these intersecting oppressions rather than perpetuating them. Below, figure 2 illustrates the circular process that I put forward as a part of the dialogue of undoing the oppression of Aboriginal women by the white-settler majority. Mainstream media institutions could use these recommendations to produce more transformative and responsive coverage, which will contribute to decolonizing white-settler/Aboriginal relationships in Saskatchewan. Although these recommendations are aimed primarily at mainstream media outlets and agents, it has useful information for Aboriginal media organizations, community organizations, families, allies, and justice institutions as well.
9.1 Media Responsiveness When Telling Stories of Disappeared and Murdered Aboriginal Women

My conversations with Pauline and Gwenda as well as my interviews with journalists stress the necessity of being respectful and sensitive to family members and friends of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. Pauline related what being respectful and sensitive to family members can look like at a very basic level:

I think for journalists, it’s important not to rush. Some of them get in a big rush, because they want to get their story off real fast, but others take their time, they set it up properly. They make you feel comfortable and tell you about the process. Maybe one more thing they could ask, “Is there anything else I can do for you?”
They usually say, “Okay, we are ready to go here.” Maybe they could take it one step further and ask, “Is there anything else that needs to be done in order for this interview to go smoothly?”

Similarly, Bradshaw related that it is “about shifting that [perspective], sometimes you might end up spending a lot of time talking to someone and they say they don’t want to be interviewed.” This type of approach can be enabled by supportive newsroom practices and policies, for instance, a) providing journalists with the time and finances to build relationships with family members prior to interviews, b) recognizing that sometimes this work is not going to result in interviews, and c) ensuring that the same journalist follows the same woman’s story when possible. The potential emotional and mental impact of stories like this on journalists should also be recognized and mitigated through making counseling and other supports (ie. paid leave) available for journalists who are covering these difficult stories.

A number of journalists expressed an understanding that family members may not be able to or want to do interviews about their disappeared or murdered loved one. At the same time, they also explained that the willingness of family members and friends to engage with members of the media shapes how much media coverage a disappeared or murdered person receives, and what this coverage looks like. For instance, Barb Pacholik said:

[W]ithin the Leader Post, where I have seen differing stories between the basic missing person report rewrite that comes to us from the police, versus a story like Gwenda Yuzicappi’s who was willing to come out and speak at length to the media or I can think of a few other mothers I’ve talked to over the years. That to
me makes the biggest difference between whether you get two inches or twenty inches in that day’s story, I think by and large people are very sympathetic to those stories. I know, I’m always willing to tell them and I pursue them.

Pacholik also recommended an organization or office act as a liaison between family members and media outlets, providing media outlets with contact information of family members or friends who have identified that they are willing to speak to members of the media about their missing loved one. Pacholik suggested different Police Services’ Media Relations Offices could take on the roles as liaisons. The FSIN Women’s Commission acted as a liaison between some families and other groups including media outlets and in doing so “assist[ing] in managing the communications and media on the family’s behalf” (Saskatchewan, 2007). I recommend exploring the possibility of FSIN Women’s Commission and/or the Media Relations Offices taking on this role of liaison for family members of disappeared and murdered people, particularly Aboriginal women. These liaisons could also connect family members to counselors (Elders, psychologists, and social workers) as well as other support services to help them deal with the trauma of having a missing loved one including their possible re-victimization dealing with journalists and police officers. Considering the historical and current oppression that Aboriginal people face by justice institutions, these two organizations could share these roles and responsibilities as part of rebuilding this relationship.

Some journalists pointed out that there are other factors that contributed to the how well Amber Tara-Lynn Redman’s story was told. For instance, Hoemson indicated that Gwenda’s recognizability to white-settler, middle class viewers/readers/listeners played a role in the amount and type of coverage Amber’s story received. Hoemson also
suggested that when someone is involved in so-called “high-risk” lifestyles, there is less media coverage, since, “it’s less surprising, which gives it less impact when they go missing.”

Bradshaw also noted, in comparison to Amber, some Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered have been re-presented in more problematic ways by mainstream media sources. Bradshaw went on to address a number of assumptions that are often made about these women, that they “were doing something wrong” and that’s why they disappeared, for instance, they were involved in the sex trade or transient.

While media coverage about Amber’s and Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)’s disappearances and murders were largely considered well covered and re-presented by journalists, Gwenda, and Pauline also pointed out that neither Amber’s or Daleen’s story received national media attention when they first disappeared, unlike other disappeared white-settler women.

Media re-presentations that employ colonial constructs to explain violence against Aboriginal women, such as the examples Bradshaw gave above, is not just problematic in and of itself. It contributes to the mistrust that many Aboriginal families and communities feel towards media outlets and their “choice” not to engage with reporters. For instance, Pauline stated that her initial reaction was to stay away from journalists and to refuse interviews with them, because she thought reporters were going to sensationalize her daughter’s disappearance, “make her out to be really bad, stereotype her, label her, because she was a Native woman who went missing from a bar.” While this choice can contribute to the silencing of different aspects of missing and murdered Aboriginal women’s personhood, it is one of the ways that Aboriginal families can enact their
limited choice and agency during a very traumatic time. Pauline and Gwenda discussed other ways they negotiated media relations, for instance Pauline called or wrote journalists who covered her daughter’s story, letting them know her opinion of their coverage. One example is the letter to the editor that she wrote in June of 2009, where she asked the StarPhoenix to stop referring to the location where Daleen’s body was found as a “secluded party spot” (June 16, 2009, p. A6). In the next section, I will address possible processes to disrupt the hegemonic ideals and norms within newsrooms with the aim of not only shifting media re-presentations, but also shifting newsroom culture, building trust and relationships, and improving the representation of Aboriginal journalists, particularly Aboriginal women journalists, within newsrooms.

9.2 Disrupting Hegemonic Norms/Education, Shifting Newsroom Culture, and More Representative Newsrooms

Education emerges as central to recommendations for journalists and organizations. Not only because mainstream media serves as an important source in popular education, but also because professional and university education for journalists has a role in improving media re-presentation of Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal women. Fiddler points out, when non-Aboriginal journalists lack appropriate knowledge about the historical and contemporary realities in First Nations and Métis communities and, as a result, community members feel misrepresented by media coverage, it can lead to further mistrust:

[I]t can be hard to rebuild trust...if [an Aboriginal community member] feels like, “You know what? I actually did this once before and my perspective wasn’t in that story. It was covered like this. And you don’t know this, this, they didn’t
know how taxation works, they didn’t know how band structures work or how
money is divided up or how housing works, and I will want to tell up a story and I
understand how taxation works or I understand how money is divided up or I
understand why people might want to talk about this, but not this. And if they’ve
been burned, even once, then access to that community is almost nil. That’s
probably the biggest challenge is that sometimes maybe very well-meaning
journalists who told a very well-meaning story from a particular perspective did
not actually have a First Nations or Métis perspective in that story and didn’t even
realize that there was one.

Pauline and some journalists identified the importance of cultural awareness
training within journalism education. Learning about cultural teachings, protocols, as
well as the historical and contemporary realities in Aboriginal communities is integral.
However, as Razack argues, cultural diversity theory and education largely supposes that
white and Aboriginal communities can engage in a dialogue, untouched by the “histories
of oppression” (1998, p. 8). Razack points out this “superficial reading of
differences…makes power relations invisible and keeps dominant cultural norms in
place” (1998, p. 9). In addition to educational practices that teach about cultural
awareness, I echo a call from a participant in Johnston and Flamiano’s study (2007). She
suggests professional education in newsrooms should deal with the racist and sexist (to
which I would add, colonialist and classist) nature of our white-settler society and make
these intersecting oppressions visible. This education can help draw the links between
these intersecting oppressions in society, the implications of different words, phrases, and
images used, the perceived audience of different media outlets, and the norms and
practices that are produced through the discursive structure of journalism. For instance, notions of “credibility,” “objectivity,” and “newsworthiness.”

Media outlets, universities, and other training institutions can integrate cultural awareness and anti-oppressive education both as separate coursework or training (ie. UBC’s course Reporting In Indigenous communities, which practicing journalists can take as an online course) and integrated into other courses and training (ie. Journalism Ethics coursework) (Troian, September 21, 2011). In order to make this education more possible in both media outlets and educational institutions, I recommend that media owners commit CRTC tangible benefits funding to these initiatives.

Newsrooms can also explore ways naturalized racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism inform their processes and practices. Deconstructing power imbalances and hierarchies in newsrooms and reconstructing these spaces in ways that are more culturally relevant to Aboriginal peoples and egalitarian will aid process of recruiting and retaining Aboriginal staff, particularly Aboriginal women. Several journalists stressed the importance of improving the representation of Aboriginal people in mainstream media. A number of different initiatives are necessary to recruit Aboriginal people into journalism programs and positions as part of transforming the workforce into a more representative space. These strategies involve reducing the barriers to journalism diploma and degree programs (for instance, through offering more scholarships for Aboriginal students). It also involves offering accessible training and mentorship programs for Aboriginal people who are interested in journalism outside of postsecondary educational institutions. Bradshaw, who was working at the CBC North Bureau in La Ronge when we conducted our interview, related:
[B]ecause like a lot of places we are struggling with actually being diverse with our employees, it was meant so that I could foster interest in journalism and public broadcasting in different First Nations communities and…I’ve taken interns from the INCA program from First Nations University and then done some different training with locally interested people.

Bradshaw’s work in La Ronge ended when CBC closed its northern operations bureau at the end of February 2012 as “a part of a reorganization of some of its bureaus” (CBC, January 17, 2012). This closure has implications not only in terms of working towards more representative newsrooms in Saskatchewan, but also in terms of telling stories and re-presenting northern communities’ concerns. As part of moving towards more representative newsrooms and ensuring more responsive coverage to Aboriginal communities, I recommend CBC reopen their northern operations branch. Similarly, I recommend the Canadian government reverse their funding cuts to CBC for a number of reasons. First of all, to make reopening the northern operations branch more possible. Secondly, so CBC is able to maintain and improve their coverage of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women and other issues relevant to Aboriginal communities. Out of all the coverage analyzed, I found CBC Current Affairs programs most frequently connected violence against Aboriginal women to systematic issues of racism, sexism, and colonialism and therefore, had the most transformative potential.

Another strategy for recruiting and retaining Aboriginal people as journalists is increasing wages and benefit packages so these positions are more competitive with government and corporate public relations positions. As Merelda Fiddler, related,
I am the only Aboriginal person who is a full-time employee of CBC Saskatchewan. It’s for a variety of reasons; the job market is super tight, so it’s hard to get people in. We have a couple of other casual/contract Aboriginal people, but it’s also getting people in the door and keeping them here, because young, educated, Aboriginal people are the hottest thing on the job market right now, it’s hard to keep them in one place.

In order to advance this strategy, public subsidization of media outlets (both public and private) may be necessary.

Increasing the representation of Aboriginal people in newsrooms can significantly alter media coverage of Aboriginal communities and issues relevant to Aboriginal communities. This is particularly the case when Aboriginal journalists have connections and relationships with different Aboriginal communities. Further, some Aboriginal families and communities feel more comfortable talking to Aboriginal journalists, whether they have a prior relationship with them or not. Fiddler, who is the only Aboriginal full-time employee at CBC Saskatchewan, suggested that news consumers should push for Aboriginal reporters to be front and centre covering stories for CBC. Then, stories that are relevant to Aboriginal communities, such as stories about missing and murdered Aboriginal women “will always be covered.” Fiddler goes on to explain:

[T]hen you will have people there who are tapped into more [of the community], I can only be tapped into the parts of the community that I’m tapped into. Of the seventy-four First Nations, I’m not going to be tapped into all of them, of all of the community organizations or groups I won’t be tapped into all of them.
The above discussion illustrates that recruiting Aboriginal journalists often brings people into newsrooms who already have connections and relationships with Aboriginal communities. However, it is also important for white-settler journalists to build these relationships. The shift towards journalism as a business has led to decreased resources within newsrooms and the loss of the beat structure at media outlets such as the Leader Post. As a result, journalists spoke about it being more difficult to build relationships and do more community-centered stories than in the past. Media outlets can make relationship-building more of a priority in their newsrooms through providing resources in support of relationship-building activities, events, and meetings without the expectation of there always being a story coming out of them.

One journalist spoke extensively about feeling excluded or unwelcome in First Nations communities, while other journalists suggested that sometimes their colleagues perceive more of a barrier between Aboriginal and white-settler communities than actually exists. This speaks to how discursively separated these communities are and how this separation can be re-produced or resisted. Journalists discussed a number of ways to improve and build relationships with Aboriginal communities, such as: going to events in Aboriginal communities (for instance, walks and vigils for missing Aboriginal women), reporting a wide range of stories that are affecting Aboriginal communities and addressing the historical context of these issues within these stories, as well as being sensitive, responsible, and personable when researching stories about Aboriginal people. Some journalists relayed that when building relationships with Aboriginal communities or covering stories involving Aboriginal communities, they find themselves in situations that are uncomfortable with, but that this uncomfortability is part of the process.
Journalists also spoke about the role that Aboriginal organizations, family members of disappeared and Aboriginal women, and allies can play in keeping media outlets informed about stories that are relevant to Aboriginal communities and the issue of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women.

Currently, Aboriginal media outlets are limited by their lack of resources. Aboriginal broadcasters and newspapers report the news with an Aboriginal consumer in mind. Journalists working with these outlets often engage in journalistic practices in ways which are more relevant to Aboriginal people than mainstream media (Alia, 2010).

Therefore, I recommend the federal government and other institutions increase funding to Aboriginal media sources. This will add to the diversity of how disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women’s stories are told. It will also lead to increased coverage of other issues relevant to Aboriginal communities.

I recommend future research exploring how media coverage can be more responsive to family members of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women as well as how coverage can deconstruct or re-produce the racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism which is naturalized as part of Canadian society. Future research could include:

a) More media analyses of how disappeared or murdered Aboriginal women’s stories have been covered.

b) Qualitative interviews with families of disappeared or murdered Aboriginal women about their experiences with journalists and responses to media coverage.
c) Interviews with journalists who have covered stories of disappeared or murdered Aboriginal women about their experiences doing so, the constraints they face in telling these stories, and how they negotiate these constraints.

d) Interviews with police communications officers their role in telling the stories of these women’s disappearances, what constraints they face in telling these stories, and how they negotiate these constraints.

e) In-depth analyses of news production and practices and how these shape the coverage of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women.

e) Evaluations of cultural awareness and anti-oppressive educational initiatives in journalism schools and media outlets.

In summary, the recommendations I am making are:

1) Journalists can make efforts to be sensitive and respectful towards family members when covering stories about their disappeared and murdered loved ones. This can involve a number of elements depending on the situation and journalists, for instance making an effort to slow down the process and making sure family members are comfortable, and taking time to build relationships with family members before conducting interviews. This type of approach can be enabled by supportive newsroom practices and policies, for instance, a) providing journalists with the time and finances to build relationships with family members prior to interviews, b) recognizing that sometimes this work is not going to result in interviews, and c) ensuring that the same journalist follows the same woman’s story when possible. The potential emotional and mental impact of stories like this on journalists should also be recognized and mitigated through making counseling and other supports (ie. paid leave) available for journalists who are covering these difficult stories.

2) The media relations offices at different policing institutions and FSIN Women’s Commission could work together as liasons between family members and media outlets in order to connect journalists to family members who want to speak with them and to prevent journalists from contacting family members who do not want to share their stories. These liasons could also connect family members to counselors (Elders, psychologists, and social workers) as well as other support services to help them deal with the trauma of having a missing loved one including their possible re-victimization dealing with journalists and police officers.
3) Professional and university education for journalists has an important role in improving media coverage of Aboriginal communities as well as disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. Learning about cultural teachings, protocols, as well as the historical and contemporary realities in Aboriginal communities is integral. It is also important to address the racist, sexist, colonialist, and classist nature of our society. This education can help draw the links between intersecting oppressions that are naturalized as part of Canadian society and normalized, but problematic, media representations and practices. In order to make these educational initiatives more possible at both media outlets and educational institutions, I recommend that media owners commit CRTC tangible benefits funding to these education initiatives.

4) Media outlets can continue moving towards a more representative workforce through a number of strategies. These strategies include:
   a) Reflecting on and shifting newsroom practices and environments so that they are more egalitarian and culturally relevant to Aboriginal people. 
   b) Offering accessible training and mentorship programs for Aboriginal people who are interested in journalism. 
   c) Increasing wages and benefit packages for journalists so that these positions are more competitive with government and corporate public relations positions. In order to advance this strategy, public subsidization of media outlets (both public and private) may be necessary.

5) White-settler journalists can continue to work to build relationships with Aboriginal communities in order to tell these communities’ stories better. Journalists discussed various strategies to improve and build relationships with Aboriginal communities, going to events in Aboriginal communities, for instance, walks and vigils for missing Aboriginal women, reporting a wide range of stories that are affecting Aboriginal communities and addressing the historical context of these issues within these stories, as well as being sensitive, responsible, and personable when researching stories about Aboriginal people. Some relayed that when building relationships with Aboriginal communities or covering stories involving Aboriginal communities, they find themselves in situations that are uncomfortable with, but this uncomfortability is part of the process.

6) I recommend the federal government and other bodies increase funding to Aboriginal media sources as these organizations lack resources in comparison to both mainstream corporate media outlets and CBC. This will add to the diversity of media coverage about this and related issues. I also recommend the federal government reverse recent funding cuts to CBC.

7) Aboriginal organizations, family members of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women, and allies can also play a role in increasing relevant and responsive coverage to missing and murdered Aboriginal women through keeping media outlets informed about relevant stories.
Researchers should further explore how media coverage can be more responsive to family members of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women as well as how coverage can deconstruct or reaffirm the racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism which is part of Canadian society. Future research could also examine news production and how different models of news production deconstructs or re-produces white masculine hegemony.

9.3 Conclusion

This chapter makes several recommendations, which emerged from the conversations with Pauline and Gwenda as well the interviews with journalists, the media analysis, and the limited literature on the subject. The recommendations above served two different aims: 1) increasing media agents responsiveness to family and friends of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women when covering these women’s stories; and 2) disrupting white masculine and colonial hegemonic norms.

This research and particularly these recommendations seek to be one small part of decolonizing the relationship between the mainstream media and Aboriginal communities, particularly Aboriginal women. As such, it is important to share this research with both media organizations and members of Aboriginal communities. A summary of this research project and the resulting recommendations will be made publically accessible. The recommendations will include a contact list of Aboriginal organizations that are taking an active role to address the issue of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women. I will provide all of the news outlets in Saskatchewan with this research summary, recommendations, and contact list. I will also contact these media organizations and discuss the possibility of presenting this research to their staff. Further, I will provide a summary of this research and recommendations along with a contact list of news outlets in the province to Aboriginal organizations, such as SAWCC, SK SIS, and NWAC. I will also engage these organizations in a discussion about how I can
present them with this research in a form that is most useful for them. Media institutions could use these recommendations to produce more responsive and transformative media re-presentations of Aboriginal communities and particularly, Aboriginal women, which will contribute to decolonizing white-settler/Aboriginal relationships in Saskatchewan.
My purpose in conducting this research is to add to the conversation towards more responsive (to family members) and transformative (of white masculine and colonial hegemony) coverage of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been found murdered. At the same time, the discursive and material landscape of Canada under the current Conservative government has stifled this conversation. For instance, this thesis has illustrated CBC Current Affairs is able to tell stories of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women in ways mainstream corporate media outlets cannot. However, in the 2012 the Conservative government made another round of severe cuts to CBC’s budget, which will compromise their ability to do so.\(^{53}\)

Other budget decisions made in recent years have also discursively closed the issue of disappeared Aboriginal women to debate and contributed to Aboriginal women’s vulnerability to violence. In the 2010 budget, the Conservative government stated that ten million dollars would be invested in order to deal with the “disturbingly high number of missing and murdered [A]boriginal women,” however, none of this funding was awarded to SIS, which was a research, education, and policy initiative aimed at 1) conducting research that was relevant to violence against Aboriginal women and 2) raising awareness of this violence (NWAC, n.d.). Instead, four of these ten million dollars was awarded to the Canadian Police Information Center (RCMP) for the creation of a national missing persons’ information database. The federal government also instructed NWAC that they were to no longer maintain their database of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal

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\(^{53}\) The 2012 federal budget stated that CBC’s funding would be cut by 115 million dollars over the next three years. As a result, CBC is planning to cut 650 jobs over this time frame, reduce programming significantly, and has applied to the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission to air advertisements on its music stations, CBC Radio 2 and Espace Music (CBC, April 4, 2012).
women they had established as part of SIS (Gergin, 2011). The RCMP database will not be functioning for years and even when it is, it is suggested that much will be lost in this database that has been captured by NWAC (Newlove & Barrera, 2010; MacCharles, 2011). This funding decision, combined with other recent cuts to Aboriginal peoples and particularly Aboriginal women’s health programming illustrates how the current government, with its morally and fiscally conservative white-settler ideology, is reinforcing Aboriginal women’s marginalization and undermining their safety. At the same time, as Foucault reminds us, where there is power there is resistance. These attempts to discursively close questions about Aboriginal women’s disappearances and their link to white masculine and colonial hegemony have prompted further questioning by Aboriginal family members, Aboriginal organizations, particularly Aboriginal women’s organizations, and allies. After all, Aboriginal women have survived and resisted over 500 years of oppressive colonial violence that these recent cuts are not a part from, but a part of:

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54 See note 6.
11.0 REFERENCES


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12.0 APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix A

*Dates for search for "Daleen Bosse" or "Daleen Kay Bosse" or "Dahleen Bosse" or "Dahleen Kay Bosse" or "Daleen Bosse (Muskego)" or "Daleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)" or "Dahleen Bosse (Muskego)" or "Dahleen Kay Bosse (Muskego)"

2010

July 12-13- News about the Daleen Bosse Muskego Awareness Walk/Memorial Run*

March 13-18- News about Douglas Hales’ preliminary trial for Daleen Bosse’s murder

2009

November 25-26- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder

August 13-14- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder

July 22-23- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder

July 13-18- News about the Daleen Bosse Muskego Awareness Walk/Memorial Run

July 9-10- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder

April 27-28- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder

April 20-21- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder

May 27-28- News about the posthumous education degree that was presented to Faith, Daleen’s daughter, for Daleen

2008

November 6-7- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder

October 1-2- News about Douglas Hales’ trial/hearings/appeals for Daleen Bosse’s murder
August 11-15-News about finding Daleen Bosse Muskego’s remains, the Saskatoon police charging Douglas Hales with her murder, and first court appearance (as well as anything else related to it).

July 19-25 News about Daleen Bosse Muskego Awareness Walk/Memorial Run

2007

July 22-28- News about Daleen Bosse Muskego Awareness Walk/Memorial Run

2006

July 23-29- News about Daleen Bosse Muskego Awareness Walk/Memorial Run

2005

October 3-5-News of Herb and Pauline travelling to Ottawa to raise awareness about the issue of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women

July 16-23- News about Daleen Bosse Muskego Awareness Walk/Memorial Run

April 27-May 2-News of a volunteer search near Saskatoon for Daleen, other news related to her missing person’s case.

2004

May 18-28- News of Daleen’s disappearance

*Over the years, this was also known as the Missing Sisters Walk, I am not exactly sure when the name changed.

Dates to search for: “Amber Redman” or “Amber Tara-Lyn Redman” or “Amber Tara-Lynn Redman” or “Amber Tara Lyn Redman” or “Amber Tara Lynn Redman”

2009

January 21-24- News of Albert Bellegarde’s verdict

2008

December 11-13-News of the stayed charges against Gilbert Bellegarde
May 6-June 10-News of the discovery of Amber’s bodies, the charges against Gilbert and Albert Bellegarde, their appearances in court, and responses from the family and community.

2007

May 15-21st-Gwenda’s trip to Stanford university to talk about Amber and the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women

2006

January 23-27-News about a feast to honour Amber.

April 15-News about a community search for Amber.

July 14-17-News about a feast to honour Amber.

2005

July 18-August 18th-News about Amber’s disappearance and police/volunteer/community searches

September 9-17th-News about a walk in honour of Amber and other missing First Nations women.
12. 2 Appendix B

Consent for Participation (Family Members)

Project Title: The Different Stories of Aboriginal Women Who Have Disappeared or Been Murdered: Exploring Mainstream Media Re-presentations and Family Members’ Stories of Their Loved One

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Purpose and Objective of the Research:
As a part of my Master of Arts in Canadian Plains Studies, I am conducting this research project which will:

1) Explore family members’ stories of Aboriginal women who have disappeared and/or been murdered and family members’ experiences with Saskatoon Star Phoenix and Regina Leader Post coverage of these women’s stories

2) Explore the journalist practices that underlie both stereotypical and non-coverage as well as more respectful (as defined by family members) and sensitive coverage of Aboriginal women who have disappeared and/or been murdered.

I will be providing a summary of the project findings and recommendations to the Saskatoon Star Phoenix, Regina Leader Post, the University of Regina Journalism School, the Native Women’s Association of Canada, along with other interested parties.

Procedures:
1) Holly will talk to you about the study and what she is planning to do as a part of it, giving you a chance to provide recommendations and suggestions for changes

2) Holly will interview you, this interview will discuss your family member who has disappeared and/or been murdered, as well as your experience with reporters and what you think of the media coverage of her story, including your personal experiences with
journalists covering her story. Copies of the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and *Regina Leader Post* coverage of her will be available for you to look over during the interview.

This interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed word for word. The interview is expected to take 2-3 hours. It will be arranged at a location that you and Holly agree upon.

3) Holly will provide you with a draft of the study’s recommendations and ask you either by phone or in-person whether you have any suggestions or questions about them. She will also discuss with you how you think the summary and recommendations should be presented to journalists and other interested parties.

**Funded by:**
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the University of Regina.

**Potential Risks:**
Participating in this research project should be of minimal risk. However, it is important for each participant to decide if sharing their story could cause feelings of emotional stress, have potential negative consequences if using their name, or any other negative social consequences which may result in telling their stories. It is the participant’s right to end the interview at any time.

**If you become distressed during or after the interview:**
Arrangements have been made so that a clinical psychologist and Anishnabe Elder are available for counseling in case you have become distressed during or after the interview. You can reach Dr. Mary Hampton, clinical psychologist at (306) 585-4826. You can reach Elder Betty McKenna at (306) 692-3261

**Potential Benefits:**
You will benefit by being able to talk about your experiences and feelings and express your opinions about the media coverage of your family members. In order to recognize the time and knowledge you are sharing as part of this study, you will be provided with an honourarium of $50. These interviews will inform scholarly and teaching publications as well as community presentations at the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix, Leader Post*, U of R journalism school, Native Women’s Association of Canada, and other organizations who request them.

**Confidentiality:**
All personal data obtained as part of this project will be kept confidential. Individuals will not be named in any reports or publications. Audio tapes and transcripts of interviews will be kept in a locked file at the Prairie Women’s Research Centre, Centre of Kinesiology and Health Studies, University of Regina during the project and for five years afterward. In the thesis and other published materials, your family members’ story will be shared and she will be named. However, your contribution to her story will remain anonymous. Every precaution will be made to protect your identity, however,
anonymity cannot be guaranteed as there is a chance that direct quotes or the summary of your family members’ story will identify you.

Storage of Data:
Both the researcher (Holly McKenzie) and the co-supervisors (Dr. Carrie Bourassa and Dr. Wendee Kubik) will ensure that the data remains locked for the required 5 years. Audio tapes and transcripts of interviews will be kept in a locked file at the Prairie Women’s Research Centre, Centre of Kinesiology and Health Studies, University of Regina during the project and for five years afterward. At that time it will be destroyed.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort. Should you wish to withdraw, please contact Holly by email at hollymckenz@gmail.com or (306)541-5881 and the data will be destroyed.

Your right to withdraw data from the study will apply until July 30, 2011. After this it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred and it may not be possible to withdraw your data.

Follow up:
Holly will be providing all family members who participate with a summary of the results. If you wish to view the entire thesis or any other published materials from this project, then contact Holly at hollymckenz@gmail.com or (306)541-5881

Questions or Concerns:
This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the UofR Research Ethics Board. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the committee at 585-4775 or research.ethics@uregina.ca. Out of town participants may call collect. You may also contact Holly by email or phone.

Consent:
Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the description provided and that you have had an opportunity to ask questions and these questions have been answered.

I, ________________________________, have read the above protocol and voluntarily agree to participate. The researcher has explained the objectives and the procedures of this project to me. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this project at anytime without penalty. In the future, I will give my consent orally during any follow-up interviews or other involvement in this project (e.g. discussion of the draft of recommendations). I understand that the data from this project, including audio recordings and dialogue will be used in the creation of future scholarly, teaching
publications, as well as community presentations and written summaries for organizations such as the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and the Native Women’s Association of Canada.

For any other use of the material, (other than scholarly research, community presentations, and written summaries for organizations), all people interviewed will be contacted and must agree to new conditions in writing.

Name: ________________________________________________________(print)

Address: _____________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

Telephone: _____________________________ Email:_________________

Signed: _____________________________ Date: ________________

I wish to have my name associated with my statements: ______yes ______no

I wish to have a pseudonym associated with my statements: ______yes ______no

I wish to not have any name used in any published material: ______yes ______no

**Oral Consent during follow-up interviews/other involvement:**

Nature of involvement:

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A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.
Consent for Participation (Journalists)

Project Title: The Different Stories of Aboriginal Women Who Have Disappeared or Been Murdered: Exploring Mainstream Media Re-presentations and Family Members’ Stories of Their Loved One

Researcher:
Holly McKenzie
Master of Arts Candidate in Canadian Plains Studies
hollymckenz@gmail.com
(306)541-5881

Supervisors:
Dr. Carrie Bourassa
Associate Professor
Science, FNUniv
cbourassa@firstnationsuniversity.ca
(306)790-5950 (ext. 3331)

Dr. Wendee Kubik
Associate Professor
Women’s and Gender Studies, U of R
wendee.kubik@uregina.ca
(306)585-4668

Purpose and Objective of the Research:
As a part of my Master of Arts in Canadian Plains Studies, I am conducting this research project which will:

1) Explore family members’ stories of Aboriginal women who have disappeared and/or been murdered and family members’ experiences with Saskatoon Star Phoenix and Regina Leader Post coverage of these women’s stories

2) Explore the journalist practices that underlie both stereotypical and non-coverage as well as more respectful (as defined by family members) and sensitive coverage of Aboriginal women who have disappeared and/or been murdered.

I will be providing a summary of the project findings and recommendations to the Saskatoon Star Phoenix, Regina Leader Post, the University of Regina Journalism School, the Native Women’s Association of Canada, along with other interested parties.

Procedures:
Holly will interview you, asking you a series of questions about mainstream media in general and more specifically about journalist practices when covering stories of disappeared and/or murdered women. You will be also asked about a series of questions about the media coverage of this particular women’s stories (copies of the Saskatoon Star Phoenix and Regina Leader Post articles about her will be available for you to look over during the interview).
Funded by:
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the University of Regina.

Potential Risks:
Participating in this research project should be of minimal risk. However, it is important for each participant to decide if sharing their story could cause feelings of emotional stress, have potential negative consequences if using their name, or any other negative social consequences which may result in telling their stories. It is the participant’s right to end the interview at any time.

Potential Benefits:
You will benefit by being able to talk about your experiences and feelings and express your opinions about the media coverage of Aboriginal women who have disappeared or been murdered.

Confidentiality:
All personal data obtained as part of this project will be kept confidential. Individuals will not be named in any reports or publications. In the thesis and other published materials, the particular woman who disappeared and/or was murdered will be shared. She will be named and the Star Phoenix and Leader Post articles that covered her disappearance and/or murder will be analyzed. Every precaution will be made to protect your identity, however, anonymity cannot be guaranteed as there is a chance that direct quotes or the fact that you are one of the journalists who covered this particular women’s disappearance and/or murder will identify you.

Storage of Data:
Both the researcher (Holly McKenzie) and the co-supervisors (Dr. Carrie Bourassa and Dr. Wendee Kubik) will ensure that the data remains locked for the required 5 years. Audio tapes and transcripts of interviews will be kept in a locked file at the Prairie Women’s Research Centre, Centre of Kinesiology and Health Studies, University of Regina during the project and for five years afterward. At that time it will be destroyed.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort. Should you wish to withdraw, please contact Holly by email at hollymckenz@gmail.com or (306)541-5881 and the data will be destroyed.

Your right to withdraw data from the study will apply until July 30, 2011. After this it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred and it may not be possible to withdraw your data.

Follow up:
Holly will be providing all participants a summary of the results. If you wish to view the entire thesis or any other published materials from this project, then contact Holly at hollymckenz@gmail.com or (306)541-5881.

Questions or Concerns:
This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the UofR Research Ethics Board. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the committee at 585-4775 or research.ethics@uregina.ca. Out of town participants may call collect. You may also contact Holly by email or phone.

Consent:
Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the description provided and that you have had an opportunity to ask questions and these questions have been answered.

I, ________________________________, have read the above protocol and voluntarily agree to participate. The researcher has explained the objectives and the procedures of this project to me. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this project at anytime without penalty. I understand that the data from this project, including audio recordings and dialogue will be used in the creation of future scholarly, teaching publications, as well as community presentations and written summaries for organizations such as the Saskatoon Star Phoenix and the Native Women’s Association of Canada.

For any other use of the material, (other than scholarly research, community presentations, and written summaries for organizations), all people interviewed will be contacted and must agree to new conditions in writing.

Name: ________________________________________________________(print)
Address: ____________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
Telephone: _____________________________ Email: ____________________
Signed: ________________________________ Date: ____________________

I wish to have my name associated with my statements: ___yes ___no
I wish to have a pseudonym associated with my statements: ___yes ___no
I wish to not have any name used in any published material: ___yes  ___no

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.
12.3 Appendix C

**Interview Guide for Interviews with Family Members**

Part of this project is to explore family members’ stories of Aboriginal women who have disappeared and/or been murdered and families’ experiences with *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* and *Regina Leader Post* coverage of these women’s stories. So, I would like you to share whatever you would like about your daughter, her disappearance, how the newspapers wrote about (or didn’t write about) her disappearance and/or murder, the pictures they used (or didn’t use) and your experience being interviewed by journalists.

Probing questions about the family member:

1. Can you tell me about your daughter?
   a. What was she like as a little girl?
   b. What were her hobbies in high school?
   c. What were her dreams? Her goals?
   d. Can you tell me about what she was like as a mother? Sister? Daughter?

2. Can you tell me about when she disappeared?
   a. Can you tell me about the discovery of her body?
   b. Can you tell me about the court case involving her death?

3. Is there anything else that you want to share about your daughter, her disappearance, the discovery of her body, the court case, or anything else?

Probing questions about the media coverage of the family member

4. I have brought a scrapbook of the media coverage of your daughter’s disappearance, the discovery of her body, and the court case, can we go through it together? While we are going through it, please share anything you want, maybe what was going on during the time of the article, or if you remember the article coming out, what you thought about it, or even if you remember talking to the journalist and what that was like.

5. Based on your experience and the experience of other family members that you know, do you have any suggestions for how reporters could better report on stories like your daughter’s or other disappeared or murdered Aboriginal women?
   a. How about in the way that they do interviews?
   b. How about in the way that they write articles?

6. Do you have anything to add?
7. Is there anything that you think I should change about the interview?
   a. Do you have any other suggestions?
Interview Guide for Interviews with Journalists

The following questions explore mainstream media in general and specifically, mainstream media practices around covering stories of Aboriginal women who have disappeared and/or been murdered.

1) Do you have any opinions about the coverage of disappeared and murdered Aboriginal women in the media?
   a) Has there been any change in the last few years?
   b) If so, what do you think has changed?
   c) Are there some new problems arising (for instance: the release of Sisters in Spirit was in 2004, is it becoming older news)?
   d) Are there changes that you would like to see?

2) Can you walk me through the process of what happens when you find out that someone has gone missing?
   a) How do you decide whether to include an article about it?
   b) How do you decide who you contact for sources for the article?

3) Can you walk through the process of what happens when you find someone has been murdered?
   a) How do you decide whether to include an article about it?
   b) How do you decide who you contact for sources for the article?

4) Can you tell me about some of the differences between how you would write a feature story, or report on a crime?

5) Do you think that racism and sexism play a role in the choices about which stories are written about and how they are written about?
   a) If so, how?
   b) How about where they are placed in the newspaper?

6) What are some of the challenges when covering stories involving Aboriginal communities?
   a) What has contributed to this?
   b) How do you think reporters can overcome these challenges?

7) What are some factors that you think limits how well journalists can cover stories of missing and murdered Aboriginal women?

8) Now, I have brought the articles that were written by the Regina Leader Post and Saskatoon Star Phoenix about (woman’s name). Can we go through and discuss the coverage together? I will talk about some things that I noticed and you can share
anything you think is important. For instance, any reasons why certain articles write about (woman’s name) in a particular way, why an article was a certain length, why it was placed where it was, and why certain pictures were used or not used with the article.

9) Do you have anything to add?

10) Do you have any suggestions on any questions I should change?
    a) Is there any questions I should add?
    b) Is there any other suggestions you want to make?
12.4 Appendix D

OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES
MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 22, 2011
TO: Holly McKenzie
1 – 2912 Victoria Avenue
Regina, SK S4T 1K7
FROM: Dr. Bruce Plouffe
Chair, Research Ethics Board
Re: The Different Stories of Aboriginal Women Who Have Disappeared or Been Murdered: Exploring Mainstream Media Re-presentations and Family Members' Stories of Their Loved Ones (File #7451011)

Please be advised that the University of Regina Research Ethics Board has reviewed your proposal and found it to be:

☐ 1. APPROVED AS SUBMITTED. Only applicants with this designation have ethical approval to proceed with their research as described in their applications. For research lasting more than one year (Section 1F), ETHICAL APPROVAL MUST BE RENEWED BY SUBMITTING A BRIEF STATUS REPORT EVERY TWELVE MONTHS. Approval will be revoked unless a satisfactory status report is received. Any substantive changes in methodology or instrumentation must also be approved prior to their implementation.

☐ 2. ACCEPTABLE SUBJECT TO MINOR CHANGES AND PRECAUTIONS (SEE ATTACHED). Changes must be submitted to the REB and approved prior to beginning research. Please submit a supplementary memo addressing the concerns to the Chair of the REB. ** Do not submit a new application. Once changes are deemed acceptable, ethical approval will be granted.

☐ 3. ACCEPTABLE SUBJECT TO CHANGES AND PRECAUTIONS (SEE ATTACHED). Changes must be submitted to the REB and approved prior to beginning research. Please submit a supplementary memo addressing the concerns to the Chair of the REB. ** Do not submit a new application. Once changes are deemed acceptable, ethical approval will be granted.

☐ 4. UNACCEPTABLE AS SUBMITTED. The proposal requires substantial additions or redesign. Please contact the Chair of the REB for advice on how the project proposal might be revised.

Dr. Bruce Plouffe

cc: Dr. Carrie Bourassa – FNUHv; Dr. Wendee Kubik – Women’s and Gender Studies

** supplementary memo should be forwarded to the Chair of the Research Ethics Board at the Office of Research Services (Research and Innovation Centre, Room 109) or by e-mail to research.ethics@uregina.ca

Phone: (306) 585-4775

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DATE: March 27, 2012

TO: Holly A. McKenzie
213 – 2315 McIntyre Street
Regina, SK S4P 3Y8

FROM: Meigen Schmidt
Research Ethics Board

RE: Annual Research Status Report

Thank you for submitting the required Annual Research Status Report on your project entitled, "The Different Stories of Aboriginal Women Who Have Disappeared or Been Murdered: Exploring Mainstream Media Re-presentations and Family Members’ Stories of Their Loved Ones." File # 7451011.

This memo confirms ethical clearance for an additional 12 months, beginning March 22, 2012.

Sincerely,

Meigen Schmidt
Senior Research Officer
Office of Research Services

Cc: Dr. Carrie Bourassa – First Nations University of Canada
Cc: Dr. Wendee Kubik – Women’s and Gender Studies