

*Indigenous Electoral Candidates in the Canadian Media:
The Reproduction of the Assimilationist Politics of Recognition*

by

Seth Tagle

Bachelor of Arts
The University of Victoria
2021

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the Graduate Academic Unit of Political Science

Supervisor: Joanna Everitt, PhD, Political Science,

Examining Board: Suzanne Hindmarch, PhD, Political Science, Chair
J.P. Lewis, PhD, Political Science
Glenn Icton, PhD, History

This thesis is accepted by the
Dean of Graduate Studies

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

October, 2023

© Seth Tagle, 2023

Abstract

Research on media coverage of candidates in Canadian elections has generally focused on gendered, racialized, and LGBTQIA+ candidates. Past research has found that political reporting often frames politics as a masculine, white, and heterosexual domain when candidates who do not conform to these norms are seen as novel in politics.

Despite all this research into different identity groups of electoral candidates, little research has been conducted on how the media portrays Indigenous candidates. This thesis builds on the existing literature surrounding how electoral candidates are covered in the news media in order to examine the types of coverage that Indigenous candidates receive. Ultimately, I find that the news media employs moral craftwork in a manner that tends to reduce Indigenous candidates to representatives of their Indigeneity and symbols of progress and inclusion. This thereby helps to reinforce the Canadian state's approach to Indigenous assimilation through recognition.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	iv
1. Introduction	1
2. Literature review	10
News media in Canada	10
Gender, Sexuality, and Election Coverage	14
Race and the Media	19
Indigeneity, Settler-Colonialism, and Canada	23
Indigenous People in Canadian Media	26
Discussion and Conclusion	30
3. Methodology	35
4. Content Analysis	43
Candidate Visibility	45
Candidate Identity and Indigenous Novelty	55
Symbolic Annihilation or Opportunity for Change	63
Summary	69
5. Discourse Analysis	72
Media Objectivity and Moral Craftwork	73
Novelty, Candidate Self-Presentation, and Symbolic Annihilation... ..	76
Discourse Analysis Moral Craftwork	83
Discourse Analysis Novelty and Symbolic Annihilation	90
6. Discussion.....	98
Indigenous Peoples and the Canadian Settler-Colonial State	98
Indigenous Candidates, the Media, and the Politics of Recognition .	101
Moral Craftwork: Assimilationist Approach to Reconciliation	102
Novelty and Symbolic Annihilation	105
Candidate Visibility and Respectability	107
7. Conclusion	113
 Bibliography	 119
 Curriculum Vitae	

List of Figures

- Figure 1.1 – Number of Indigenous Candidates by Federal Election - 3
- Figure 4.1 – Number of Articles by Source Type - 43
- Figure 4.2 – Candidates Mentions per Article by Party - 47
- Figure 4.3 – Mentions per Candidate by Province/Territory - 49
- Figure 4.4 – Candidate Information Provided (percent of articles) - 51
- Figure 4.5 – Type of Candidate Mention by Gender - 54
- Figure 4.6 – Percent of Articles Mention Identity of a Candidate - 57
- Figure 4.7 – Percent Mention Identity when Quoted by Source Type - 59
- Figure 4.8 – Article Policy Focus by Type - 65
- Figure 4.9 – Article with non-Indigenous Policy Focus by Subject - 66

Chapter 1. Introduction

The news media plays a crucial role in political communication. It has been described as the primary source of information for both politicians, political candidates, and the general population (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). The media is an important, if not the only, point of access to information about who and what is relevant in politics. News media can influence a candidate's viability to the public, (Hopmann et al., 2010).

Visibility in the media can influence voters' assessments of parties and their candidates as voters are more likely to vote for a candidate who is familiar to them (Hopmann et al., 2010; Wagner, 2017). In fact, Duval (2023) has even found more visibility in the media can lead to more votes for a candidate. With their near monopoly on information, the news media have the power to gatekeep who are what gets talked about and to fame stories however they wish (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019).

Media has the power to both create and block narratives from forming, as well as the power to promote or restrict the voices of minorities (Alia & Bull, 2005). Research on media coverage of candidates in Canadian elections has generally focused on gendered, racialized, and LGBTQ candidates. Wagner and Everitt (2019) found that political reporting often frames politics as a "masculine domain" where women are seen as novelties in the otherwise masculine world of politics. Others argue that they receive more coverage regarding their physical appearance and/or marital status than their male counterparts (Trimble, 2017). Lalancette and Tremblay (2019) found that being openly a part of the LGBTQ community was rarely framed as an issue as long as the candidates were deemed "respectable" in that they "fit perfectly within the heterosexual lifestyle."

Finally, Tolley (2015) found that media coverage of racialized candidates is likely to be more negative and less likely to depict them as concerned with issues that “matter.”

What is absent from these analyses of media coverage of minority politicians is attention to how the media portrays Indigenous candidates. Indigenous electoral candidates are some of the most prominent public-facing Indigenous people in Canada. Therefore the way the media discusses them has the power to both shape public perceptions and reinforce existing stereotypes of both Indigenous people and candidates alike. This becomes increasingly important as the number of Indigenous candidates continues to increase (see Figure 1.1). In the 2021 election a record 77, up from 62 in 2019, 54 in 2015, and 31 in 2011, Indigenous candidates ran for office (Hobson, 2021; Fontaine, 2015). And given the fact that the Indigenous population is among the fastest growing demographic group in Canada it is becoming increasingly important to study their representation in Canadian political institutions.

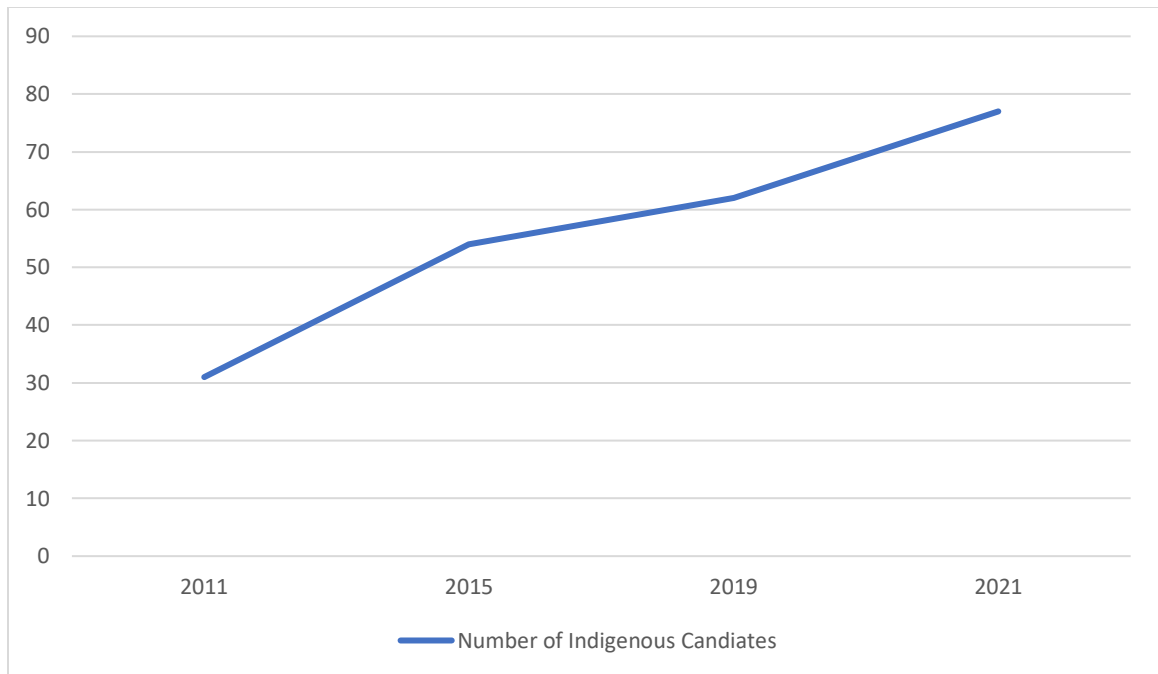


Figure 1.1 Number of Indigenous Candidates by Federal Election

Just as gendered, racialized, and sexual modalities of discursively constructed identities all intersect in unique ways (Goodyear-Grant, 2013), media coverage surrounding the Indigeneity of electoral candidates ought to have its own distinctive patterns of discourse. For example, many scholars have pointed out that contemporary discourses surrounding Indigenous people in Canadian media are “colonial archetypes” having appeared in news since before confederation (McCue 2022; Anderson and Robertson 2011). The likelihood that Indigenous candidates will be covered in ways that highlight their indigeneity is heightened by the fact that Indigenous people have a unique relationship with Canada and its institutions, rooted in settler colonialism, and it remains a contentious issue whether Indigenous people should participate in “colonizer elections” (Palmater, 2020).

Past research on how Indigenous people in general have been presented in Canadian media highlight the fact that Canada is a settler-colonial state (Anderson and Robertson 2014; Brady and Kelly 2018; Burns and Shor 2021). Reflecting on the nature and purpose of residential schools and the treaty system in Canada, Anderson and Robertson (2014) argue that these policies were not only intended to assimilate Indigenous people into western colonial culture, but they also served to promote Aboriginal inferiority and the logics of colonialism to the settler population. Thus, it is argued, the logics of settler colonialism are present not only in the normative culture of Canada, but Canada itself is founded on and promotes settler-colonial ideals.

Canada's settler-colonial ideals manifest themselves in Canadian media, in relation to Indigenous people, in several ways. Anderson and Robertson (2014), in examining news coverage from 1869 to 2009, have found that colonial imagery surrounding Indigenous people have continued to thrive in Canadian newspapers. In fact, in contrast to research that has suggested that American newspapers have become less blatantly racist, there is little evidence that Canadian newspapers have done the same in their coverage of Indigenous people. Though tone has changed over time, Anderson and Robertson argue that the colonial imagery remains. Anderson and Robertson attribute this tonal change to the facts that tolerance and inclusivity have become part of the cultural identity of Canadians thus making them more attune to colonial and racial language. However, stereotyping and racialized imagery is still quite present.

Anderson and Robertson (2014) describe what they call the "Rule of Three" in categorizing the colonial language and imagery used to describe Indigenous people in the press. These are moral depravity (dishonesty, laziness, whorishness, ungodliness), innate

inferiority (stupidity, childish, irresponsible, rooted in racial science and social Darwinism), and stubborn resistance to progress (“progress” is framed as a virtue and is lacking in Indigenous culture). Many of these characteristics can likewise be found in Burns and Shor’s (2021) analysis of similar e-coli poisoning events in Walkerton, Ontario (majority white community) and Kashechewan, Ontario (majority Cree community). In both these cases the community water supplies were contaminated by manure getting into the water upstream, both communities had untrained water operators, and both communities had broken chlorination machines. Despite these similarities in everything from the water operators, to the towns, to who was responsible, to how the problem should be solved was describe differently. For instance, the water operator in Walkerton framed as responsible by the media with calls hold him accountable. On the other hand, the operator in Kashechewan was framed as infantile and incapable with suggestions that outside experts were needed to “take over regulation” (Burns & Shor, 2021)

This thesis addresses this gap in the literature of media coverage of Indigenous candidates by applying exiting theories from the research on how gender, sexual, and ethnic minority candidates are covered in the media to the coverage of Indigenous candidates. These theories include: *candidate visibility, moral craftwork and media objectivity, respectability, novelty, and symbolic annihilation*. I utilize these theories and employ both content analysis (CA) and discourse analysis (DA) methods in order to tease out how the news media in Canada frame Indigenous candidates. I then analyse my findings through a lens of settler-colonial assimilationist politics in order to fully contextualize how the media coverage of Indigenous candidates is problematic.

Chapter two of the thesis provides a literature review that explores the existing research in five relevant areas. It begins by examining the nature of the news media in Canada, how it communicates information to the public, its relationship with dominant public discourses, how it understands and employs objectivity, and finally how this understanding of objectivity impacts news coverage. Section two and three of the literature review cover the existing research on how candidate gender and sexuality, and race are discussed in election coverage respectively. Here I cover how female and LGBTQIA+ candidates' election coverage differs from candidates who are either male or straight or both. Specifically, I discuss how female and LGBTQIA+ candidates are often framed as outsiders in a masculine and heteronormative realm, how they are bound by a nation of 'respectability', and finally, how despite this negative coverage, the media can also present opportunities for members of underrepresented groups to challenge dominant social norms. Then I move on to discuss how members of racialized groups are often covered in the media in relation to their race. For instance, headlines frequently emphasize the negative roles of minorities, visible minorities are less quoted than their white counterparts, and visible minorities are more often associated with a limited number of stereotypical topics, including immigration, crime, violence, and ethnic relations.

The fourth section of the literature review covers some of the arguments in the existing literature on the relationship Indigenous people have with settler-colonialism and Canada. Here I primary focus on the work of Sean Glen Coulthard (2014) to describe contemporary colonial tactics of the Canadian state. In particular, the main conclusion of this section is that while Canada has, for the most part, moved away from violent

methods of Indigenous assimilation, they still seek to assimilate Indigenous people into Canadian political institutions through the politics of recognition. Finally, the literature review concludes with a section on how Indigenous people are covered in Canadian media. Here, I draw on the work of Duncan McCue (2022) and Anderson and Robertson (2014) to highlight patterns of coverage that Indigenous people receive. I conclude this section by stating that Indigenous candidates are constrained by the same dominant cultural norms of masculinity, heterosexuality, and whiteness that other under-represented groups face when entering politics. Added to this however are the logics of settler-colonialism and racial stereotypes specific to them as Indigenous people. It concludes by arguing that the imposition of settler-colonial logics and ideals on Indigenous people through the news media highlights the importance of examining how Indigenous electoral candidates are covered by the media.

Chapter three of this thesis covers the methodological approaches that are employed in examining the election coverage of Indigenous candidates in the 2021 election. It begins by outlining the key elements of content analysis and discourse analysis, the two methods that this thesis employs. Next, it describes how content analysis and discourse analysis can be used together as methodologies. Lastly, chapter three concludes with an outline of how I employ these methods in chapters four and five.

Chapter four employs content analysis to examine 305 unique online and print news articles about 54 Indigenous candidates that could be identified out of the 77 candidates that parties claimed were running. This chapter analyzes this news coverage through several specific lenses. First, I explore how the news coverage affects the visibility of Indigenous candidates both between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outlets

and along gender, party, and regional lines. Next, I go on to investigate how media coverage associates Indigenous candidates with their identity and how they are often framed as novel in Canadian politics. This chapter then concludes with an analysis of the impacts of the coverage that Indigenous candidates receive and a discussion about how the coverage can lead to symbolic annihilation while also creating opportunities for Indigenous candidates to voice against their oppression.

Chapter five uses discourse analysis to explore how the media discusses Indigenous candidates and issues and how they enable Indigenous candidates to present themselves and discuss these issues. This chapter takes a case study approach to examine the coverage of four high-profile Indigenous candidates in the 2021 Canadian federal election to better identify how understandings about candidates' indigeneity are constructed by the language used by the media. These four candidates include: Blake Desjarlais (NDP), Yvonne Jones (Lib), Marc Dalton (CPC) and Lori Idlout (NDP). In chapter five the discourse analysis highlights how the news media employ moral craftwork and how this moral craftwork creates a novelty surrounding Indigenous candidates in Canadian politics. However, I also find that candidates' association with their Indigenous identity can depend upon their party. Here I will explore how even though some candidates may play into their Indigeneity in the media, their ability to do so may be limited by not just the media's but also their party's expectation of respectability in their public persona.

In chapter six I bring together the findings of the content and discourse analyses and analyze the results through a lens of the settler-colonial of recognition and land dispossession. In this chapter, I argue that the way the media covers Indigenous electoral

candidates serves to reproduce and reinforce these politics of recognition towards Indigenous peoples and their relationship to Canada. This is by no means an argument that Indigenous people should not be involved in politics, but rather an attempt to highlight the fact that they should be aware of what can be accomplished through representation in Canadian media or in Canadian political institutions.

To finish off, chapter seven consists of a brief conclusion. Here I argue that the manner in which the news media in Canada covers Indigenous electoral candidates serves to help reproduce and reinforce assimilationist politics of recognition towards Indigenous peoples and their relationship to Canada. I then highlight some of the limitations of this project including: the limited scope of both the content and discourse analyses, my investigation's lack of understanding of how media potentially editorializes candidate's voices, and its narrow focus on Indigenous electoral candidates instead of other Indigenous public figures. I then conclude with some suggestions for future avenues of research that could strengthen our understanding of the implications of media coverage for Indigenous political actors.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

News Media in Canada

News media is often described as the central information source for both political actors and the public alike (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). It serves as a crucial, if not the only, point of access to information about what is important and who is important in politics. With this stranglehold on information, news media are often seen as gatekeepers with the power to frame stories how they see fit (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). Newsrooms and journalists often like to think that they can be neutral and objective observers of the social world and thus offer a clear reflection of events as they are to the public (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). This, however, is not accurate. News media, more broadly, and journalists, more narrowly, are situated in and a part of the social world they write about (Everitt, 2003; Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). Thus, their reporting is shaped by and reproduces societal norms and biases.

In order to understand how the news media's understanding of objectivity is problematic, I must first understand how the news media functions in the first place. Tolley (2015) argues that news media can be seen as a connector, a shaper, and a mirror. Media is a connector in that, as our primary source of information, it connects to politics and political life. Following that, news media is a shaper in that it informs and shapes the public's opinions of certain topics (Tolley, 2015). This is not to say that the news media directly influences individuals' opinions, but rather, through story selection, it limits what things are talked about and how they can be talked about (van Dijk, 1991). Finally, news media is a mirror in that it reflects the interplay between journalists and the subjects they cover (Tolley, 2015). This 'mirror' should not be considered a perfect reflection of reality,

however. Instead, this mirror provides a distorted reflection where what is covered by the news media is chosen based on what the news media thinks will resonate with viewers. The news media, in turn, frames, for the consumers, those chosen topics as important or worth talking about (Tolley, 2015).

Anderson and Robertson (2014) note that it is difficult to identify the exact contours of the relationship that the press has with the culture it reflects. Scholars like Noam Chomsky, for instance, argue the press is influenced primarily by its corporate owners and interests, whereas post-structuralists like Stuart Hall and Edward Said argue that because the press is grounded in a culture that, it necessarily promotes that culture's core attributes (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Hall, 1997; Said, 1993). Here the cultural attributes that the news media reflect become hegemonic in that they seem natural (Anderson & Robertson, 2014). This hegemony, combined with the news media's principles of neutrality and objectivity, means that the press in Canada is often unable to be critical of itself. Consequently, problematic, or outright incorrect ideas can be reported on as fact and received by the audience as common sense (Anderson & Robertson, 2014).

To put this more succinctly, the Canadian news media, like all media, reflects the culture they are situated in (Anderson & Robertson, 2014; Brady & Kelly, 2018). Journalists, reporters, and the news media, in general, are embedded in and a part of the culture and society on which they report. Thus, it follows that journalists, reporters and the news media will reflect back at their viewers, through story selection and story framing, the same normative values that are already pervasive in a society's culture (Anderson & Robertson, 2014).

Along with this, the news media has an agenda-setting capability. Through their selection and framing of stories, they inform their viewers about what types of stories are important to think about and how to think about them (Anderson & Robertson, 2014). However, the news media also selects and frames their stories based on the cultural norms and ideals they are immersed in. This creates a sort of feedback loop where the media and the culture in which they are situated build on and reinforce each other. As Anderson and Robertson put it, "the press has both reflected naturally and regurgitated spontaneously and necessarily the culture from which it emerged at the same time as reinforcing and teaching prevailing social norms to youth and newcomers (2014, p. 6).

Duncan McCue, in examining the news media's concept of objectivity, offers up the concept of "the view from nowhere" (2022). The view from nowhere suggests that not only are reporters capable of stepping outside of their own biases and incorporating other viewpoints, but they *must* do so. DeCillia (2021) mirrors this argument by arguing that journalists position themselves as both objective and dispassionate observers. This, according to McCue (2022), has led to reporters taking on bad habits in their reporting. For instance, McCue notes that reporters tend to rely on a 'he said, she said' 'both sides' structure in their stories which generally fails to make any statement on which side is more accurate. Here journalists may not portray bias, but they also fail to push the story closer to the 'truth' (McCue, 2022). DeCillia notes that this type of objectivity allows journalists to make moral claims without appearing to do so. This, for instance, can be done by favouring certain sources (police, business, government) or certain solutions (privatization, tax cuts, assimilation) over others.

This notion of objectivity is especially a problem when, like most Canadian newsrooms, a newsroom is dominated by one kind of person. In this case, Canadian newsrooms are overwhelmingly white and male. This white male dominance is an issue because it creates an environment where white male perspectives, which are often rooted in colonialism, are taken to be neutral. Take Indigenous focused news stories as an example. Even the notion of framing a story as an ‘Indigenous story’ creates and reinforces the idea that white is the default and Indigenous is the other (McCue, 2022). DeCillia goes as far as to argue that investigative journalism is inherently conservative (in that it is resistant to change) because it tends to reinforce and re-legitimate dominant societal values by “publicizing and helping to punish those who deviate from those values” (2021, 591). Further, remembering that journalists often think that they are being objective, they are unable to confront their own biases and correct them.

DeCillia, in a similar fashion, describes the news media’s notion of objectivity as ‘moral craftwork’ (2021). There are three components to this moral craftwork: objectifying, privatizing, and narrativizing. Objectivizing refers to the idea that journalism tends to use language in a way that turns moral claims into empirical claims. In other words, journalists tend to judge wrongdoers based on the wrongdoer's own set of values. DeCillia uses the example of violent arrests being judged based on police standards (2021). Privatizing refers to the practice of journalists using irony or metaphor to distance themselves from what they are trying to say. Essentially journalists want to remain faithful to the facts of the story while at the same time signalling their own ideas about the story (Decillia, 2021). Finally, narrativizing refers to the ways in which journalists frame stories to create a narrative. Here reality is not seen as a given, but

rather it is brought into existence by the ways in which journalists tell a story (DeCillia, 2021).

Here I have demonstrated how the news media operates in places like Canada. The news media acts as a connector, a shaper, and a mirror. It is one of the public's key points of connection to information about politics and political life. The news media, through story selection and framing, shapes our options of the topic that they cover. Likewise, the news media reflects back at us, albeit imperfectly, and reinforces our shared culturally held normative ideas about the topic that they cover. Further, media as a connector, shaper, and reflector becomes problematic when combined with the news media's principles of neutrality and objectivity. Building on the ideas of 'the view from nowhere' and DeCillia's "moral craftwork" we have seen that, through trying to distance themselves from their reporting, the news media ends up being unable to identify and thus unable to resist with its own biases. Consequently, the news media in Canada, as has been suggested, often falls into some problematic habits such as prioritising 'official' sources of information or perpetuating harmful stereotypes. This has real-world consequences with regards to coverage of electoral candidates as well as with coverage of Indigenous people as will be demonstrated in the next sections.

Gender, Sexuality, and Election Coverage

As discussed previously, newsrooms and journalists like to think that they are objective observers of the events and people that they cover. However, this is not correct. News media and journalists are a part of and influence the social world they write about. As such, their reporting is shaped by and reproduces societal norms and biases. For instance, straight men, and consequently, heteronormative and masculine norms have dominated

politics and the newsroom. This normative masculinity and heteronormativity are reflected in political candidate news coverage by male and female reports alike (Everitt, 2003; Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019).

While candidate gender and sexuality are not explicitly framed as an issue in election coverage, masculinity and heterosexuality are often portrayed as default characteristics against which female and LGBTQ candidates are compared (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019; Trimble & Everitt, 2010). Here heterosexual and male leadership is both normalized and unquestioned. At the same time, female and LGBTQ candidates are often framed as novel (Everitt and Camp 2009; Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). Framing of women and LGBTQ candidates as novel to politics demonstrates both how media is subject to and reproduces societal stereotypes.

Similarly, Trimble and Everitt (2010) argue that female political candidates are often subject to the same sort of sensationalized coverage that female celebrities in the fashion and entertainment industries are subject to. There is an increased focus on their appearance, sexuality and personal relationships that male candidates are not subject to (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Trimble & Everitt, 2010). Beyond that, when all else is equal, female candidates receive less, and less favourable coverage than male candidates (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Trimble, 2017). These disparities in candidate coverage can impact how candidates behave and how the public perceives them.

This celebrity coverage not only normalizes politics as a masculine realm but also serves to delegitimize female candidates by creating a sense of superficiality to female candidates leading to more negative evaluations of their candidacy (Goodyear-Grant,

2013; Trimble & Everitt, 2010). Correspondingly, because of these negative associations between femininity and female candidates, female candidates often seek to uproot gendered stereotypes by behaving in a more masculine way so as not to be seen as incompetent (Trimble & Everitt, 2010). This, however, can place female candidates in a sort of "double bind" where behaving in traditionally feminine ways can frame them as not belonging or as incompetent and behaving in more masculine ways can create a sort of dissonance among readers leading to more negative assessments (Gidengil and Everitt 1999, 2003; Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Trimble & Everitt, 2010).

Likewise, again while gender and sexuality are not typically framed explicitly as an issue by the media, this is only true if the candidate is seen as "respectable." If a female or LGBTQ candidate conforms to existing norms in politics, for instance, they dress "appropriately" or are subtle about their sexuality; they are seen as respectable, and thus their identity is not framed as an issue (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). In other words, being a woman and/or LGBTQ in politics is usually fine so long as one can pass as "normal" and do not represent a threat to established social norms surrounding gender and sexuality.

This idea of respectability relates to the notions of descriptive and substantive representation and "symbolic annihilation." Because female and LGBTQ candidates are still seen as a novelty by the media, there is an argument to be made that being involved in politics can break down normative barriers and make space for more female and LGBTQ candidates. In fact, self-section is one of the main barriers to women running for office (Goodyear-Grant, 2013). There is, however, a concern that because symbolic representation is seen as legitimizing the political regime, participating in this way will

not only lead to little substantive change but render female candidates tools used to legitimize current systems. Because female and LGBTQ candidates need to be seen as respectable, there is not enough substantive change coming from representation alone (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019).

Correspondingly, treating the election of more female and LGBTQ candidates as a victory in and of itself can lead to “symbolic annihilation.” Symbolic annihilation happens when elected members of underrepresented groups, especially those in influential positions, have their credentials and qualifications undervalued because of their identity in favour of someone who better conforms to the masculine and/or heteronormative political norms (Goodyear-Grant, 2013). The act of electing a member of an underrepresented group often does not lead to substantive policy change because, in order to maintain a respectable appearance in the media, they find themselves unable to challenge the status quo.

In contrast, Trimble (2017) argues that, while there are many issues with how the news media portrays candidates of underrepresented groups, the media framing women and other underrepresented groups as unusual in politics can create space to expose their underrepresentation. Having women represented in positions of power can make visible the norms of “hegemonic masculinity” (Trimble, 2017). This argument makes clear the subjective nature of discourse. While Trimble is correct in that the existence of these gendered norms in political discourse can make them visible and thus able to be challenged, it depends on who the viewer or reader is. Just as someone who is attuned to critical gendered issues will be able to identify and challenge the use of gendered stereotypes in media, someone who is less attuned to gendered issues will only become

further entrenched in their gendered view when exposed to them. The same discourse can have different effects on different people.

Equally, Trimble (2017) applies this logic to challenge the gender and sexuality binaries. Gender and sexuality are often portrayed, even in academic literature, as binaries. One is either male (masculine) or female (feminine) or heterosexual, or homosexual. These stereotypes are, according to Trimble (2017), portrayed and normalized in the media as well. While this is an issue, it also creates space to challenge these binaries by drawing attention to them (Trimble, 2017). The issue for Trimble is that academic scholars have not been attuned enough to this issue to challenge the gender binary and have ended up helping to reproduce it.

This same logic can be applied to the news media. A journalist who is attuned to their biases surrounding gender and sexuality may be able to create space in their coverage to challenge gender and sexual binaries. However, as has been discussed, the news media's notion of objectivity limits journalists' ability to challenge cultural norms. Making a claim about gender and sexuality that goes against the dominant understandings of gender and sexuality will likely be perceived as a personal bias. Instead, journalists will often ignore what is perceived as their bias and in the process reproduce the dominant cultural norms.

This section highlighted the way in which women and members of the LGBTQ electoral candidates are covered in the news media. As I have shown, masculinity and heterosexuality are often used as standards against which female and LGBTQ candidates are compared. Similarly, this coverage normalizes politics as a masculine realm but also serves to delegitimize female candidates by creating a sense of superficiality to female

candidates leading to more negative evaluations of their candidacy. This leads to the idea of respectability. Being a woman and/or LGBTQ in politics is usually fine so long as one behaves in a respectable manner and does not represent a threat to established social norms surrounding gender and sexuality. Because female and LGBTQ candidates need to be seen as respectable and conform to established norms, their involvement alone is not enough to create substantive change. It is through this notion of respectability that symbolic annihilation happens.

Finally, despite the problematic coverage of women and LGBTQ candidates by the news media, media coverage can be a place for members of underrepresented groups to challenge dominant cultural norms. This, however, is tempered by the fact that journalists and their understanding of objectivity in the media limits how journalists can and are able to challenge their own biases; thus, they tend to reproduce dominant cultural norms instead of challenging them.

Race and the Media

Comparable with the coverage we see with gender and sexuality Tolley (2015) and van Dijk (1991) both point out that there is little blatantly racist coverage of viable minorities in the news today. Instead, racism in the news media appears in more subtle ways. The news media wants to be seen as both neutral and value-free (Tolly, 2015). This desire for objectivity, however, denies the reality that journalists and the media organizations they work in are situated and influenced by the society they report on (Tolley, 2015).

It is important here to remember the concept of news media as a connector, shaper, and mirror when examining how visible minorities are covered. As is the case for

gender and sexuality, the news media connects people to ideas about race through their racialized coverage and consequently can shape peoples' opinions about race. News media is situated in a society that has specific ideas about race. Thus, in a search for objectivity, the news media reflect those same racialized ideas back on their viewers.

News media's reproduction of society's ideas about race manifests itself in multiple ways. For instance, van Dijk (1991) found that headlines in newspapers not only reflect what topics journalists see as important but also tend to emphasize the negative roles of minorities in the headlines. Similarly, visible minorities are less quoted than their white counterparts. This remains true even in cases where the visible minority is the expert on the topic (van Dijk, 1991). Lastly, visible minorities are associated, in the news media, with a restricted number of stereotypical topics, including immigration, crime, violence, and ethnic relations (van Dijk, 1991).

In a similar fashion, news media often frame whiteness as the norm in both their stories and in the newsroom (Tolley, 2015; van Dijk, 1991). In the newsroom, visible minority journalists remain underrepresented in comparison to their overall demographic makeup of the population (van Dijk, 1991; Richardson, 2022). In news stories, because whiteness is framed as the norm (as is true with masculinity and heterosexuality), that which deviates from whiteness is viewed as newsworthy (Tolley, 2015). This normative framing of whiteness creates a skewed context in which stories are selected along racialized framing and presented in a manner where visible minorities are discussed as different, thus reinforcing whiteness as the standard (Tolley, 2015).

Visible minority election candidates are also often framed in particular ways. As an example, minority candidates are limited in that they are seen as only being interested

in a limited number of special interest issues related to their ethnic backgrounds (Tolley, 2015). Similarly, non-incumbent visible minority candidates must also prove themselves as viable candidates if they want to be taken as seriously as their white counterparts by the news media (Tolley, 2015). Also, Black candidates have been subject to the same bounds of respectability as women and LGBTQ candidates have (Pitcan et al., 2018).

These biases towards visible minority candidates in the media should not be seen as intentional on the part of journalists. This does not, however, mean that it is accidental, either. Rather, as alluded to earlier, these discrepancies in coverage are a manifestation of two things. First, the already existing racial biases that exist within society. Journalists are socialized in the same society and cultural context as their readers and thus often have similar ideas surrounding race. They then, often unconsciously, reproduce and legitimize those ideas in their news coverage. Second, the news media's claim of neutral objectivity. The news media talk about race in particular ways because they believe it is newsworthy. They cannot combat these biases because they view the norms of society as neutral and/or natural (Tolley, 2015; van Dijk, 1991).

Finally, the news media, even liberal-leaning papers, tend to ignore or downplay the existence of structural racism. This is not to say that the news media denies the existence of racists and racism altogether. Instead, when they cover incidents of racism, the news media often frames them as individual events that come out of personal intolerance, as "natural ethnic competition," or attribute them to the over-sensitivity of visible minorities (van Dijk, 1991). Here widespread racism is viewed as a thing of the past. Thus, the new media essentially denies the existence of structural racism indirectly by not contending with it and framing issues on the individual level (van Dijk, 1991).

This again demonstrates how the news media shapes not only what stories are talked about or how they are talked about but also how they are able to be talked about. As Tolley (2015) points out, there are several barriers preventing visible minorities from being more represented in public office. These barriers include self-selection, financial resources and qualifications, and social networks. All of these barriers have structural components to them. However, they are too often framed by the media as individual issues. Because of this, the very ways the public can discuss these issues are in relation to the individual.

To put this all succinctly, like with gender and sexuality there is less blatantly racist coverage of racial minorities in the media than there was in the past. This is not to say, however, that ideas surrounding race do not influence how visible minorities are covered in the media. News media's reproduction of society's ideas about race manifests itself in multiple ways. For instance, headlines in newspapers tend to emphasize the negative roles of minorities, visible minorities are less quoted than their white counterparts, and visible minorities are more often associated with a limited number of stereotypical topics, including immigration, crime, violence, and ethnic relations.

On a similar note, in the newsroom, visible minority journalists are discriminated against in hiring, promotions, and story assignments because of this discrimination whiteness is seen as the norm against which visible minorities are compared. This normative framing of whiteness creates a skewed context in which stories are selected along racialized framing and presented in a manner where visible minorities are discussed as different, leading to a reinforcement of whiteness as the standard. These inconsistencies in coverage are the result of two important factors: the already existing

normative ideas about race and the media's notion of objectivity. Members of the news media carry these biases, repeat them in their coverage, and are unable to contend with them as they must separate themselves from their coverage in to conform with their understanding of objectivity. Finally, the news media tends to downplay structural issues. When issues surrounding race are covered, the news media often frames them as individual issues rather than as fundamental issues with the structure of society or institutions.

Indigeneity, Settler-Colonialism, and Canada

If, as has been shown, the news media in Canada reflects and reproduces dominant cultural norms back onto their readers, how then does the news media in Canada discuss Indigenous people? In order to answer this question, one needs to first understand Canada's and Indigenous peoples' relationship with settler-colonialism. In conceptualizing settler-colonialism and Indigenous people's relationship to a settler state such as Canada, Coulthard (2014, pp. 6-7) describes settler-colonialism as a "structure of domination predicated on the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands and political authority." This relationship, he argues, is foundational to understanding Canada's contemporary approach to engaging with Indigenous peoples. Integral to settler-colonial projects, including the Canadian settler-colonial project, is the goal of gaining access to Indigenous lands in order to make way for capitalist enterprises.

This concept of land dispossession is rooted in the Marxist notion of *Primitive Accumulation*. Primitive Accumulation, in Marxist literature, describes a process whereby capitalistic accumulation is facilitated through the violent dispossession of the worker from the means of production, including the land, and opening it up to privatization.

While Coulthard (2014) does borrow from Marx here, he also recognizes that a Marxist conceptualization of Primitive Accumulation fails to adequately describe settler-colonialism as it is seen in Canada today.

First, Coulthard (2014) strips Primitive Accumulation of its "rigidly temporal character." Here the process of dispossession is being seen as an ongoing process rather than as a historical set of events which set the state for capitalist production. Similarly, Coulthard (2014) also sees it as necessary to strip Primitive Accumulation of its "normative developmentalist character." While it is accurate to say that Primitive Accumulation has been essential in the production and ongoing reproduction of Capitalist modes of production, it should not be seen as essential to developing the modes of consciousness necessary in conceptualizing and constructing alternatives to capitalism in the settler-colonial context. Here, it is important to note that Indigenous cultures conceptualized and practised modes of being related to collective consciousness prior to European arrival and the imposition of capitalist modes of production on Indigenous peoples. Third, as Coulthard (2014) makes clear, colonial power should not just be thought of as coercive, repressive, and explicitly violent, as it is usually conceptualized in Marxist thinking. Instead, settler-colonialism should be conceived as deriving its power not just from repressive means but also from its ability to make the hierarchies that settler-colonialism produces seem natural. This can be thought of as a sort of normative power. Applied to the Canadian context, settler-colonialism exercises this normative power in the form of Indigenous recognition. Rather than relying on violent assimilation techniques that it used in the past, the Canadian state now prefers to recognize the existence of Indigenous nations but only through the state itself. Thus, the Canadian state

is able to maintain control over Indigenous lands without the use of the violent assimilationist tactics of the past.

Alfred (2009) takes a similar position on Indigenous recognition by arguing that it also creates a state of psychological, financial, and political dependency of Indigenous people on that state. For Alfred, Indigenous communities are facing a “psychophysical crisis” caused by their dependency on the state. Indigenous people and communities have become dependent on the very institutions that have sought to erase them. This, Alfred says, has generated a sort of spiritual crisis or state of anomie in Indigenous communities caused by historical trauma. This spiritual crisis has led to an Aboriginal legal and economic response that has been designed by non-Indigenous people and only serves to reinforce both colonialism and capitalism and Indigenous suffering. Thus, Alfred has argued that Indigenous resurgence should focus on community healing first, so as to eliminate the state dependency that only perpetuates their oppression.

Finally, Coulthard (2014) turns to Indigenous feminist scholar Leanne Simpson. As Coulthard describes it, Simpson challenges the heteropatriarchal conditions that she sees as being perpetuated in Indigenous resurgence movements (Simpson, 2012). This includes but is not limited to the imposition of colonial gender roles, insisting that women wear certain types of clothing at ceremonies, the exclusion of women's LGBTQ individuals' voices from leadership, and the dominance of male-centred narratives. As Simpson and her colleagues (2012), in their own work, point out, Indigenous women and LGBTQ individuals have always been involved in Indigenous resurgence movements. However, the patriarchal logics of colonialism have served to oppress them consistently by placing their issues outside the realm of politics and into a "place of perpetual

victimhood". Starblanket (2018) takes this argument a step further by arguing that the current politics of Indigenous resurgence that focuses on inward communal means of achieving their goals, as opposed to a state-centric approach, as argued for by (Alfred, 2009), tends to understand any gendered aspects of Indigenous resurgence as peripheral or as an add on to their anti-colonial methods. Instead Starblanket (2018) argues that any gendered approach to resurgence must not only be a core part of the approach but also it must also challenge the many power relations that exist between institutions and communities and within communities themselves.

In short, while Canadian settler-colonial methods have shifted away from violent policies of explicit assimilation to policies based around recognition, they are still oriented toward the goal of Indigenous land dispossession for the purpose of facilitating capitalistic expansion. These new policies of recognition are designed for the Canadian state to appear to be fulfilling its legal obligations towards Indigenous people while at the same time being structurally designed to benefit their own interests. On top of that, for Indigenous people, participating in these acts of recognition only serves to legitimize these acts of recognition to both the Canadian public and Indigenous peoples themselves. Thus, these policies of recognition are accepted as the normative means of Indigenous-Settler relations and are thereby reproduced. Finally, in order to break this cycle, Indigenous nations ought to look inward toward their own communities to break cycles of economic dependency and patriarchal oppression.

Indigenous people in Canadian Media

Settler-colonialism, as has been shown, is an ongoing process that is an integral part of how Canada functions in relation to Indigenous people. As a result, the logic that

drives settler-colonial practices are deeply ingrained in Canadian culture. This is reflected in news media coverage of Indigenous people. In 2015 the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission found that Canadian media coverage of Indigenous people is often inflammatory and racist in nature (McCue, 2022). McCue, in his own examination of media coverage in Canada, notes that coverage of Indigenous people can almost always fit into one or more of what he calls the “5 D’s” (2022). These are Defiance, Drumming, Dancing, Drunk, and Dead. Anderson and Robertson (2014), in their book *Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers*, detail how news coverage of Indigenous peoples can fit into three broad categories, moral depravity, innate inferiority, and stubborn resistance to progress. Anderson and Robertson also note that, in keeping with the idea that settler-colonialism is an ongoing process, there has been little change in this coverage since the 1800s.

Using a now famous photo titled "Face to Face," which depicts a young white soldier and an Anishinaabe man staring at each other so close that their noses are nearly touching from the Oka crisis in 1990, McCue notes that that the conflict was portrayed through a lens Indigenous defiance with the sides locked in conflict. What the coverage failed to convey was the power imbalance. Here over 4000 soldiers with armoured vehicles, helicopters, artillery, and boats confronted 40-50 Mohawks and supporters (2022). McCue does concede that protests and conflicts are newsworthy and that Indigenous actors do often take advantage of the media's hunger for drama, but this alone is insufficient to explain why Indigenous people are covered so differently (2022). Instead, McCue argues that this coverage is rooted in a long-standing colonial narrative

where Indigenous people are set up in opposition to the progress of the Canadian state (2022).

Why, then, if this bias is so well documented, does the Canadian news media continue to rely on and promote harmful stereotypes when covering Indigenous people? The answer, like with gender, sexuality, and race, lies in how the news media in Canada tends to understand objectivity. To reiterate, the view from nowhere suggests that reporters are capable of stepping outside of their own biases and incorporating other viewpoints. This has led to reporters taking on bad habits in their reporting. For instance, reporters tend to rely on a 'he said, she said' 'both sides' structure in their stories which generally fails to make any statement on which side is more accurate. Here journalists may not portray bias, but they also fail to push the story closer to the 'truth' (McCue, 2022).

Building on the three components of this moral craftwork; objectifying, privatizing, and narrativizing, we can see how the Canadian news media portrays bias against Indigenous people. In Rebecca Wallace's paper exploring news coverage of welfare recipients in Canada (2021) she finds that Canadian's perception of Indigenous welfare recipients is more negative than that of non-Indigenous recipients, including other racial minority groups (2021). To find out why this is, Wallace examined Canadian news media coverage surrounding Indigenous welfare recipients. Through her research, Wallace found seven relevant themes in the media coverage that they received; employment and education; costs and standards of living; justice and crime; health and wellness; dependence and mismanagement; land, cultures, and resources; and mental health and substance abuse (2021).

Looking more closely at just two of these themes allows us to see how journalists employ the three components of moral craftwork. First, it is made visible how the media can objectify moral claims by reflecting the values of the culture back at the audience. The employment and education theme, for instance, notes that 'solutions' to Indigenous welfare dependence are often centred around the assimilatory idea of increasing participation in the settler economy (Wallace, 2021).

Here stories surrounding Indigenous welfare recipients are not framed in relation to structural barriers and cultural needs. Rather, it is assumed that reducing welfare dependence and joining the market economy as a member of the workforce is an objective moral good. In accordance with the view from nowhere the audience of this type of news coverage is not directed to think about alternative solutions or perspectives on welfare. Instead, they are directed to assume the view of the journalist without explicitly being told to do so.

It is important to restate that this does not necessarily represent an intentional call for assimilation on the part of journalists. Contrarily, these journalists probably hold participation in the settler economy as a normative good. This combined with their notion of objectivity means that they are then unable to identify and confront their bias towards market resolutions. Regardless of intent, the result is the same. The media, in this case, directed, with bias, their readers towards assimilationist policies that are rooted in settler-colonialism.

In a similar fashion, Wallace's theme of land, cultures, and resources makes visible how journalists employ the moral craftwork components of Privatising and Narrativizing. The land, cultures, and resources theme centres around portraying

Indigenous communities and cultures as third-world and archaic (Wallace, 2021). The framing creates a narrative where Indigenous people are poor victims in need of help, while also belittling their agency in regard to community leadership and development (Wallace, 2021). Hiding behind the metaphors of archaic and third-worldly allows journalists to create a narrative where the solution is necessarily assimilation into the Canadian state because they cannot help themselves, while at the same time privatizing their racism, distancing themselves from the racism that this viewpoint rests on.

All of this is to say that the way the news media in Canada conceptualizes objectivity is fueling harmful racialized coverage against Indigenous people. At the same time, the core component of this notion of objectivity, the view from nowhere, separates journalists from their biases, thereby giving neither them nor their reading any means of critically engaging with those biases. In response to the view from nowhere, McCue offers an alternative; "The View From Somewhere" (2022). In this view, McCue argues that journalists should be upfront about who they are and where they come from (2022). This is not just about where the journalists live and work but also how they are connected to their community, their ancestry, and what values have been passed down to them (McCue, 2022). This framework would allow not only journalists to more thoroughly confront their biases and adapt, but it would also allow the reader to situate themselves in relation to the journalist. Readers could then contextualize what they are reading in relation to what they now know about the author.

Discussion and Conclusion

As has been stated, the news media serves as a connector, shaper, and reflector in that it connects people to information, shapes their options about what information is important

and how to interpret it, and reflects, albeit imperfectly, dominant normative values back on their viewers. This is why understanding the relationship between Canada, Indigenous people, and settler-colonialism is crucial to understanding and interpreting how Canadian news media talks about Indigenous people and how they might talk about Indigenous electoral candidates. Settler-colonialism is an ongoing process, and the Canadian state is, in many ways, structurally oriented toward the assimilation of Indigenous people for the purpose of land dispossession.

This structural orientation toward settler-colonial practises, along with the Canadian media's long and continued history of producing and reproducing racial stereotypes, has created a culture in Canada where settler-colonial logics along with racial prejudices centred around moral depravity, innate inferiority, and stubborn resistance to progress are seen as natural and thus often go unquestioned. As a result, Indigenous people often receive coverage in the media that causes harm to them and their communities through naturalizing assimilationist logics and racial stereotypes.

As it relates to media coverage of electoral candidates, many similar processes can be seen with coverage of female, LGBTQ, and racialized candidates. While it is rarely overtly portrayed as an issue by the news media, being a woman, LGBTQ, or racialized candidate running for office often means that one will receive unequal types of coverage. Masculinity, heterosexuality and whiteness are dominant in Canadian society and are thus used as standards against which female, LGBTQ, racialized candidates are compared. For these groups, their behaviour is often regulated by how they are portrayed in election coverage.

This leads to the idea of respectability. Being a woman, LGBTQ, or racialized is usually fine so long as one can pass as "normal" and does not represent a threat to established social norms surrounding gender and sexuality. Behaving in a respectable manner can be beneficial to the coverage a candidate receives in the media but can limit how substantive their representation is. Because female or LGBTQ candidates need to be seen as respectable and conform to established norms, their involvement alone is not enough to create substantive change. It is through this notion of respectability that symbolic annihilation happens. Candidates often find themselves in a position where they are used as a symbol of diversity but are unable to call for or make any substantive change toward gender or sexual equality.

Correspondingly, visible minority election candidates are also often framed in particular ways that can limit and affect how they behave. As stated previously, minority candidates are limited in that they are seen as only being interested in a limited number of special interest issues related to their ethnic backgrounds. Similarly, non-incumbent visible minority candidates must also prove themselves as viable candidates if they want to be taken as seriously as their white counterparts by the news media. Here whiteness is the cultural norm, and racialized candidates are bound to prove that they are respectable in that they fit into white cultural norms. Like with women and LGBTQ candidates, this can be limiting in how they can go about challenging oppressive systems.

Indigenous candidates are constrained by these same dominant cultural norms of masculinity, heterosexuality, and whiteness, along with the logics of settler-colonialism and racial stereotypes specific to them. In fact, as alluded to previously, patriarchal ideals and misogyny are concepts introduced to Indigenous cultures through settler-colonialism

as it was not until European contact that Indigenous cultures were introduced to misogynistic gender roles (Boyer, 2006). The imposition of English common law on Indigenous communities displaced women from their traditional roles through processes such as the professionalization of health care and the disappearance of Indigenous midwifery (Douglas, 2022). At the same time, the public sphere of politics and the market were made open to Indigenous men but seldomly to Indigenous women (Douglas, 2022).

The imposition of all of these settler-colonial logics and ideals on Indigenous people through the news media highlights the importance of examining how Indigenous electoral candidates are covered by the media. Research on media coverage of candidates in Canadian elections has generally focused on female, LGBTQ, and racialized candidates. However, there remains a gap in this field of research with regard to Indigenous candidates. Consequently, there is also a gap in the literature on how the intersectionalities between candidate gender, sexuality, and Indigeneity might play out in the media coverage that they receive. For instance, is the media more interested in a candidate's gender or sexuality than the fact that they are Indigenous and how does this play out in their coverage of female or LGBTQ+ Indigenous candidates?

Indigenous electoral candidates are some of the most prominent public-facing Indigenous people in Canada and the way the media discusses them has the power to both shape public perceptions and reinforce existing stereotypes. This becomes increasingly important as the number of Indigenous candidates continues to increase. Just as gendered, racialized, and sexual modalities of discursively constructed identities all intersect in

unique ways, media coverage surrounding the Indigeneity of electoral candidates ought to have its own distinctive patterns of discourse.

Finally, as has been pointed out, participating in settler-colonial institutions, such as elections, can serve to reinforce the status of these institutions as legitimate and ultimately strengthen the colonial control that they have over Indigenous people. We have also seen that these same institutions can be used to create space to challenge the logics and ideals that they themselves are built on. Yet, as a candidate in an election, one is restricted by how the news media covers them and by the preferences of their party. Using elections as a means of creating substantive change, as has been seen with women, LGBTQ, and racialized candidates, can be very limited. As a settler myself, it is not my wish nor my intent to try to tell any Indigenous persons whether they should or should not run in elections. Rather, the goal of this research is to seek out and uncover the ways in which Indigenous candidates have been discussed in the media to further provide context that may in the future assist in challenging settler-colonial narratives and logics or at least defining the limits of doing so.

Chapter 3. Methodology

This thesis examines written news coverage of Indigenous electoral candidates during the 2021 Canadian federal election. The election campaign ran from August 15 to September 20, and the news pieces examined were published during a two-month period starting the day the election was called (August 15) and extending to October 15, 2021, just less than a month after the election finished. The articles were collected using the Meltwater search engine and consisted of English-language articles from a variety of Canadian sources. This thesis is designed around two main research methodologies commonly used to study text content Analysis (CA) and discourse Analysis (DA).

There are many ways in which one can approach both CA and DA. However, CA generally uses positivist techniques to count certain words, phrases, or metaphors in a given text or set of texts and seeks to apply the principles of the scientific method to text analysis research (Boumans & Trilling, 2016; Lowe, 2004; Neuendorf, 2004). Through the use of quantitative methods, CA sets out to provide empirical and repeatable analysis of texts (Fierke, 2004; Hardy Harley & Phillips, 2004; Neuendorf, 2004). This empirical analysis could be as simple as counting the occurrences of a particular word in a text or as complex as pulling out metaphors within a text to uncover deeper forms of context (Fierke, 2004; Hardy Harley & Phillips, 2004; Neuendorf, 2004). DA, on the other hand, is more focused on interpretivist methods of understanding discourse within its broader social contexts. Discourse, in this context, consists of not just texts or language but also the broader actions, thoughts, and ideas about the social world (Hopf, 2004; Laffey & Weldes, 2004; Van Dijk, 2015). This understanding highlights why DA researchers view their work as a part of discourse. They are shaped and influenced by the social world and thus cannot separate their research from it.

Given the stark differences between these two approaches, it is not surprising that there is some debate on whether CA and DA can or should be used together. Some scholars argue that the ontological and epistemological divide is too great for these methods to be mixed (Bennett, 2015; Hopf, 2004). Here CA is seen as inseparable from its positivist underpinnings (Hopf, 2004). It is argued that CA necessarily views the social world as knowable in the same way hard sciences like physics or chemistry are knowable. Thus, CA must be incompatible with DA, which views the social world as fluid, ever-changing and only interacted with through our own individual interpretations and thus not fixed in any knowable reality (Hopf, 2004).

Others, however, argue that CA and DA can complement each other (Bennett, 2015; Neuendorf, 2004). These scholars say that ontology and epistemology are not the same as methods, and combining CA and DA does not change how the results are interpreted (Lowe, 2004; Hardy, Harley and Phillips, 2004). As an example, using CA to count words or isolate metaphors in a text does not change a researcher's understanding of those words or metaphors (Hardy Harley & Phillips, 2004; Neuendorf, 2004). The empirical data from the CA can, however, help to demonstrate that the words and metaphors the researcher is examining are relevant.

Sampert provides an excellent example of how CA and DA can effectively be combined (2010). After noticing that, despite legislation designed to increase rape victims' ability to seek justice being passed, reporting rates remained low, Sampert decided to analyze how Canadian media talks about sexual assaults to determine if there is any potential relationship between the two. Sampert states that she combines these methods as a response to the argument that qualitative research too often ignores

empirical methods and thus "becomes arbitrary and over-generalized"(2010, pg. 303). By combining CA and DA, Sampert was able not only to highlight and articulate six myths told by Canadian media about sexual assault, but she was also able to determine exactly how often these myths appear in Canadian media. For instance, the myth that sexual assault is about "uncontrollable male lust" and not violence was found in 21.6 percent of newspaper stories on sexual assault in 2002. This type of data goes a long way toward demonstrating the relevance of the discourses being researched. Similarly, using CA like this allows researchers to, assuming social meanings remain the same, track changes in the amount certain discourses are being used over time. For example, a researcher today could repeat Sampert's research and see if the rate at which Canadian media uses the myths has changed or remained roughly the same.

This thesis takes the latter of these two stances on whether CA and DA can effectively be combined. The content analysis chapter in this thesis is not to be understood as merely being here to provide an empirical understanding of what kinds of coverage, who gets coverage, and what issues are covered in relation to Indigenous candidates. Rather, the CA chapter is also here to provide context to the discourse analysis. As an example, in order to better understand the role that respectability plays in candidate coverage (as the DA chapter will explore), it is helpful to know if candidates who more openly challenge social norms receive different amounts or different types of coverage than do their more 'respectable' counterparts. In this way, CA can be used effectively to complement DA.

Content analysis is used in Chapter four to examine the campaign coverage of the 54 identified Indigenous candidates. This content analysis focuses on 305 unique news

articles from English language national news sources like *CTV*, *CBC*, *National Post*, *Global News*, *The Hill Times*, *iPolitics*, *The National Observer*, and *City News* and from Indigenous-operated news sources such as *APTN*, *Nunatsiq News*, *Nunavut News*, *Windspeaker*, *Alberta Native News*, *Eagle Feather News*, and *Anishinabek News*.

The reason for limiting the examination of non-Indigenous news outlets to national news sources, as opposed to local news outlets, is twofold. First, an examination of all news coverage of Indigenous candidates is beyond the scope of this project. There is simply too much news coverage of Indigenous candidates from the 2021 election to effectively explore all of it. Second, and more crucially, focusing on large national news sources means that there will be a consistency of coverage between candidates, even between candidates in different regions of the country. This consistency will, presumably, allow for more significant patterns to be pulled out of the coverage. As for the inclusion of the Indigenous-focused news sources, they will be included in the CA in order to provide a point of comparison against which the national news sources will be evaluated.

The content analysis itself consists of three main sections. The first section is focused on assessing the media visibility of Indigenous candidates. The first part of examining visibility is determining how often candidates are mentioned, though this approach goes beyond simply evaluating the amount of coverage a candidate receives. It also measures the quality of coverage candidates get. Here I ask “are candidates receiving in-depth coverage that talks about them, their experience, their qualifications, and their electoral viability, or is their coverage limited in ways that might suggest that they are not legitimate candidates?” Does their coverage allow for candidates to speak on behalf of themselves? In other words, are candidates being interviewed or quoted as opposed to

being written about? Finally, how much of these candidates' coverage provides any substantive content and how much coverage amounts to little more than a name-drop in an article about something other than the candidate?

The second point of analysis in the CA section focuses on candidate identity and novelty. Here I measure what aspects of candidates' identity does the news media most often associate Indigenous candidates with. In this section I look at how often Indigenous candidates are associated with their Indigenous identity compared to their gender and their sexuality. I also control for Indigenous and non-Indigenous source type. In a similar fashion, in this analysis I also explore how candidates associate themselves with their different Identities. I break this analysis down by source type as well as by candidate gender and candidate party.

Finally, this chapter concludes with a discussion in relation to symbolic annihilation. Essentially, this section focuses on measuring what election issues Indigenous candidates are most often associated with. As an example, are they disproportionately written about in association with Indigenous issues like land claims or reconciliation? On a similar note, this analysis also measures what sorts of issues the candidates themselves bring up in coverage where they are directly quoted. Here I will explore whether candidates talk about the same sorts of issues that they are associated with and whether what issues they talk about varies between national news sources and Indigenous news sources. Lastly, this section controls for the gender and sexuality of the candidates to address the question of whether women and 2SLGBTQ+ candidates are written about in relation to, or talk about different issues than men or straight candidates?

CA is not without its flaws, however. Interpretivist-oriented researchers criticize CA in that it misses the broader social contexts in which a text is situated (Bennett, 2015; Hopf, 2004). For them, a text should be analyzed only in relation to broader social discourses in order to pull out the deeper meanings within the text. Similarly, interpretivist researchers also argue that words and the social contexts in which they are used change meaning over time, and thus CA is not necessarily repeatable over time (Crawford, 2004; Hopf, 2004; Laffey & Weldes, 2004).

Discourse analysis, on the other hand, does not have these same issues. DA is a set of research methods that seeks to understand discourse within its broader social context. Those who use DA methods argue that understanding and evaluating discourse is essential because discourses can, and often do, become hegemonic in that they seem natural even though they are, in fact, constructed (Crawford, 2004; Fierke, 2004; Hardy Harley & Phillips, 2004; Hopf, 2004; Van Dijk, 2015). The first step to challenging these "natural" discourses is to understand that there is no inherent meaning to discourse (Hardy, Harley and Phillips, 2004; Hopf, 2004; Van Dijk, 2015). It is important to note that DA researchers, unlike empirical-focused researchers, view their work as a part of the discourse that they are studying (Laffey & Weldes, 2004).

Chapter five of the thesis employs a discourse analysis focused on several high-profile Indigenous candidates who ran for office in the 2021 Canadian federal election. Rather than occurrences of any particular type of coverage like with the CA chapter, the DA chapter provides a deeper investigation into a select few high-profile candidates in order to determine whether certain patterns of stereotyping are present in the coverage of Indigenous candidates. These candidates chosen for this analysis include Blake

Desjarlais, Yvonne Jones, Marc Dalton, and Lori Idlout. This analysis focuses on all news coverage from national news sources and Indigenous news sources that these candidates received during the 2021 federal election campaign.

In order to further explore how candidate identity is discussed in the news media, this analysis will first build on the findings from the previous chapter. The discourse analysis itself explores two main points of analysis in order to assess both how the media presents candidates and how candidates present themselves in the media. First, in order to better comprehend how media bias might influence public discourse, this chapter will make use of the concepts of "objectivity" and "moral craftwork." The media tend to distance themselves from their coverage by relying on others to make claims while failing to advance their stories toward a more complete understanding. I see the media predominantly rely on a "he said, she said" structure to their stories where they quote candidates and experts for their opinion but fail to provide additional context or their own analysis of the story. This pattern of reporting facilitates journalists making moral claims without appearing to do so.

Next, this chapter builds on the ideas of Novelty, Respectability, and Symbolic Annihilation in order to create a more thorough understanding of how the news media discusses candidate identity. In this section, I examine how the news media employs moral craftwork to create a novelty surrounding Indigenous candidates who participate in Canadian politics. Next, I will see that candidates often (depending on their party) associate themselves with their Indigenous identity. Here I explore how even though some candidates present their Indigenous identity in the media may be limited by, not just

the media's, but also their party's expectation of respectability in how they present their public persona, though it remains difficult to tell how much the behaviour of any one candidate in the media is a personal choice or influenced by other factors such as the media or their party.

Chapter 4. Content Analysis

This chapter examines the online and print news coverage of 54 Indigenous Candidates that I was able to identify. The analysis covers 305 unique articles published between August 15 and October 15, 2021, across 15 different English language publications. These publications have been categorized by whether their focus is primarily Indigenous or non-Indigenous. The Indigenous-focused publications include *Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN)*, *Windspeaker*, *Alberta Native News*, *Eagle Feather News*, *Anishinabek News*, *Nunatsiaq News*, and *Nunavut News*. The non-indigenous-focused outlets include *CBC*, *CTV*, *National Post*, *iPolitics*, *The Hill Times*, *The National Observer*, *City News*, and *Global News*. By frequency, this analysis covers 64 articles from Indigenous-focused sources representing 21 percent of the total, and 241 non-Indigenous-focused articles representing 79 percent of the total.

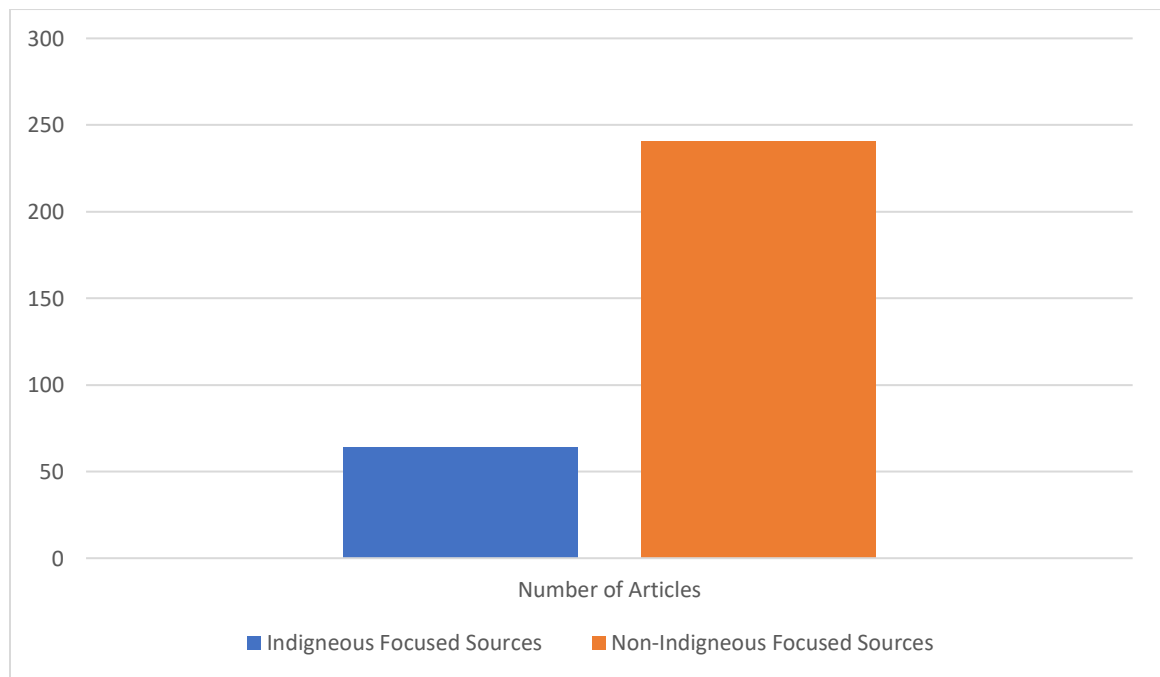


Figure 4.1 – Number of Articles by Source Type

These publications have been further categorized by their regions of focus. For instance, an article from the CBC may be Nationally focused or be focused on a particular province, region, or city. There are 27 of these regions in total, including National, Alberta, Edmonton, Calgary, British Columbia, Vancouver, Vancouver Island, Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Regina, Manitoba, Winnipeg, Northern Ontario, Barrie, Hamilton, Kitchener, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Windsor, London, Ottawa, Anishinabek Nation, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, North, Artic, and Nunavut. Of these, there were 135 articles published by outlets, with a national focus representing 44.3 percent of all articles. Conversely, there were 170 articles, representing 55.7 percent of all articles, published from outlets with a region, province, or city of focus.

Based on similar media analyses of other marginalized and under-represented groups such as women, LGBTQ+ individuals or racialized minorities who have run for election in Canada we would expect to find several patterns in the coverage that Indigenous candidates receive. First, I expect to see that most of the coverage that Indigenous candidates receive will do little to promote their visibility. In other words, I expect to that most coverage will provide little information about the candidates other than their name and party association. I also expect there to be a gendered component to candidates' visibility, where the male candidates will receive more coverage and that coverage will provide more information about the candidates on average when compared to their female counterparts.

Next, when the media does provide additional information about a candidate (beyond their name and party) I expect that we will see a pattern of novelty where Indigenous candidates will be associated with novel aspects of their identity, especially

their Indigenous identity. However, I am not certain whether candidate gender will be more or less of a focus for the media than will be their Indigeneity. Similarly, I expect to see that the candidates will be associated with a limited number of topics and issues related to their identity. Again, while I expect to see that Indigenous candidates will be associated primarily with Indigenous related topics, I remain under certain how candidate gender will influence this.

Candidate Visibility

The news media remains the central information source for the public (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). Consequently, the news media plays an important role in elections. This is especially true when it comes to the visibility of candidates. Voters most often access information about candidates through the media (Hopmann et al., 2010), and most voters do not meet candidates in person at all. Thus, Hopmann and their colleagues argue the media can impact a voters' assessment of parties and their candidates, and ultimately whether they vote for one candidate or another (2010). In fact, as Wagner points out, because voters are more likely to vote for a familiar candidate than for one that they do not know, media visibility can be crucial to the success of a campaign for public office, especially high political office (2017).

Duval (2023) reaffirms the importance of visibility in the media for electoral candidates by pointing out that visibility can not only create a sense of competitiveness and suitability among potential voters but also that voters will rely on the media in order to gauge all the traits that they associate with a candidate's quality. Indeed, Duval (2023) finds that, even when factors such as party, riding competitiveness, candidate viability,

incumbency and gender are taken into account, higher visibility in the media can lead to up 7 percent more votes.

Wagner and her colleagues (2017) also highlight the importance of visibility when they argue that visibility in the media can help to convey a notion of winnability for a candidate and that donors are more willing to spend on a candidate that they see as having a strong chance of winning. They go on to note that through attracting the positive attention of journalists, candidates try to build name recognition in order to project a sense of the viability of their campaign. However, the media tends to put their focus on whom they see as the front runners, but because the media are a part of the social world and subject to its biases, the process of identifying who the front runners are may be subject to gender stereotypes. Correspondingly, journalists are more likely to have positive assessments of men for political leadership than they are women.

Given the importance of a candidate's visibility in the media, this analysis first examined how often Indigenous candidates were mentioned. Throughout the 305 articles examined, there were a total of 562 individual candidate mentions (one article could mention more than one candidate) meaning that there was an average of about 1.84 candidates mentioned per article. Of these, Blake DesJarlais and Lori Idoult received by far the most mentions of any individual candidates, with 54 and 50 mentions, respectively, representing 9.6 and 8.9 percent of the total candidate mentioned. These two candidates likely received more coverage because of the uniqueness of their respective races. In the case of Blake Desjarlais, he represented both the first two-spirited person to be elected to parliament and the only one of the NDP candidates elected in Alberta, along with Heather McPherson. Lori Idoult, on the other hand, likely received more media attention because

she was the NDP's replacement for Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, who received high-profile attention after vocally deciding not to run for re-election.

Broken down by party, it is noticeable that the candidates from the three largest parties received the most coverage. As Figure 4.2 reveals Liberal candidates received 201 mentions representing 35.8 percent of the total and about 12.56 per candidate. The Conservative candidates received 72 mentions being 12.8 percent of the total 14.4 per candidate. The NDP candidates got 48 percent of the mentions totalling 270 and 10.8 per candidate. The Green candidates got 18 mentions representing 3.2 percent of the total mentions and just 4.5 per candidate. Meanwhile, the lone Bloc Quebecois Candidate Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay received just one mention though this low figure is likely due to the fact that this analysis only covers English-speaking publications rather than French-language publications.

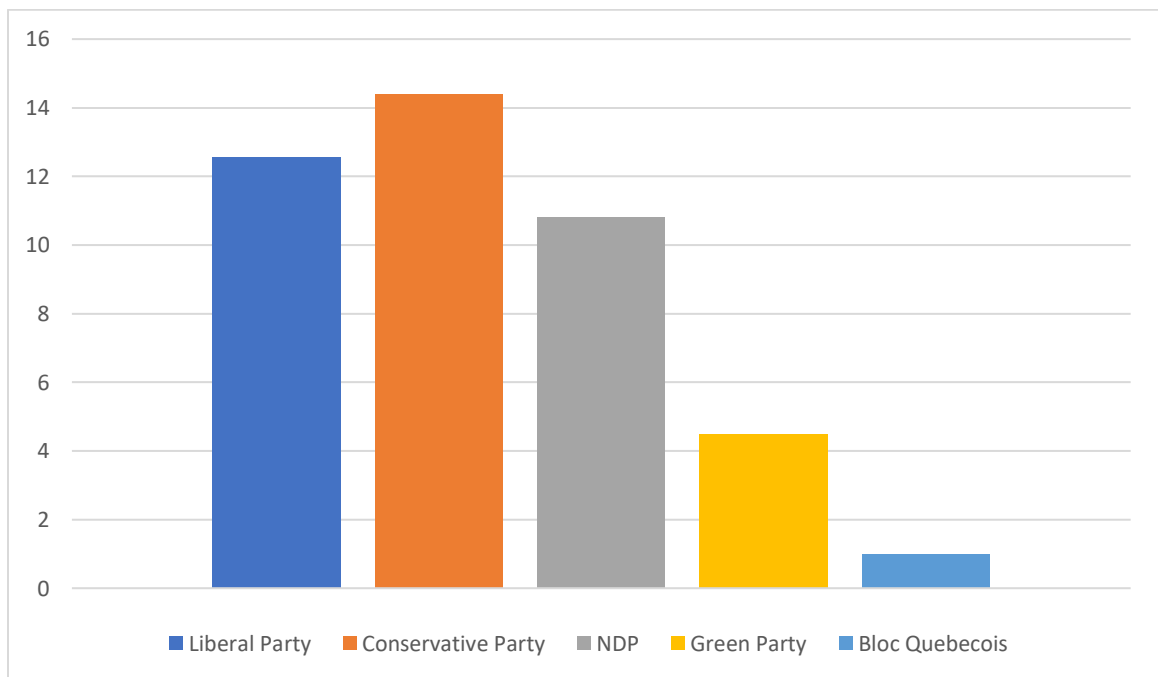


Figure 4.2 - Candidate Mentions Per Article by Party

By province, we can see that while there are some differences in the amount of coverage received there is relative parity in candidate mentions, with Alberta receiving the most and Quebec the least (see Figure 4.3). The five candidates from Alberta received 57 mentions representing 11.4 per candidate and 10.1 percent of the total. In B.C., the 11 candidates received 80 total mentions representing 7.2 per candidate and 14.2 percent of the total. Saskatchewan candidates had 89 mentions, with 8.1 per candidate and 15.8 percent of the total. Manitoba had 87 mentions, with 10.8 per candidate and 15.5 percent of the total. Ontario had 69 mentions, with 7.6 per candidate and 12.3 percent of the total. Quebec candidates only had 25 mentions, with 6.25 per candidate representing 4.4 percent of the total. This low number for Quebec is again likely due to the fact that this analysis does not include French language publications. Nova Scotian candidates received 21 mentions representing just 3.7 percent of the total but nine mentions per candidate. Similarly, the candidates from Newfoundland and Labrador had just 17 mentions or 3 percent of the total, but with just two candidates, they have an average of

8.5 mentions per candidate.

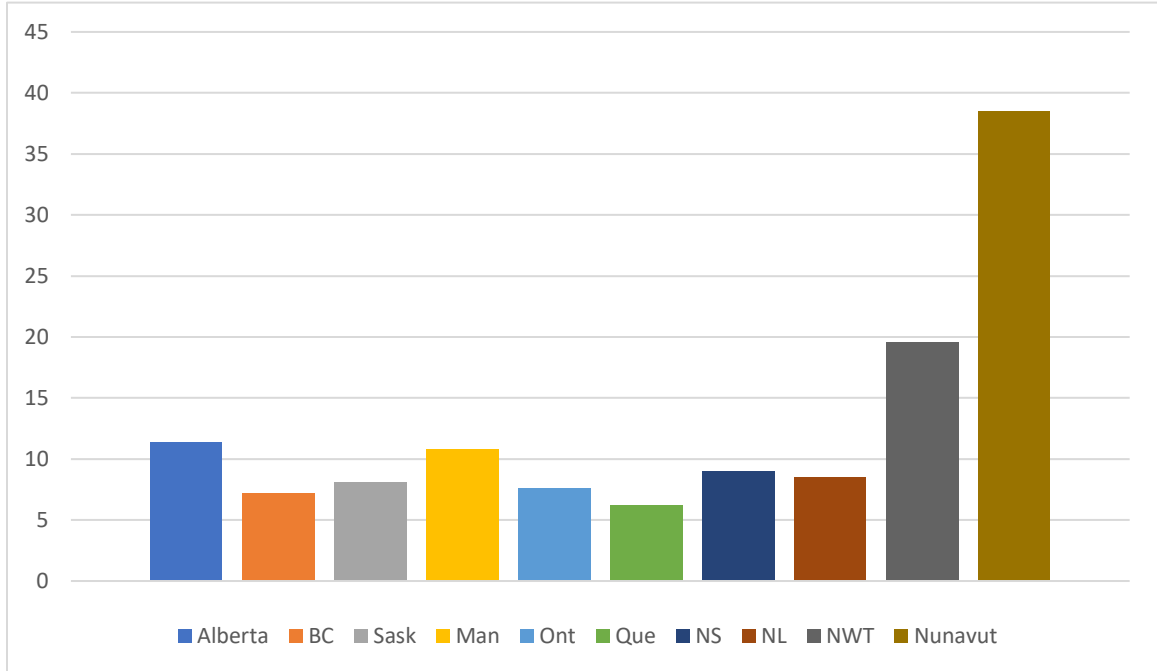


Figure 4.3 - Mentions per Candidate by Province/Territory

Notably, however, the Indigenous candidates from the Territories received much more coverage than candidates elsewhere in the country. In the Northwest Territories, candidates received 39 mentions representing just 6.9 percent of the mentions but had the second most per candidate mentions at 19.5 mentions per candidate. In Nunavut, the two candidates received 77 mentions representing 13.7 percent of the total and 38.5 mentions per candidate. This pattern of territorial candidates receiving more coverage per candidate can be attributed to several factors, including more regionally focused coverage, more Indigenous-focused coverage, fewer total ridings in the region, high-profile candidates, with half of them winning their elections, and the fact that the territories have relatively high percentage Indigenous populations so the local media is incentivised to cover Indigenous candidates more.

Importantly, measuring how often particular groups of candidates are mentioned does not communicate the whole story. The quality of the coverage is also important to consider. Breaking how the candidates were mentioned down by source type shows that the Indigenous-focused sources tend to provide more information about the candidates that they mention than the non-Indigenous-focused sources. The non-Indigenous focused sources, for example, mentioned a candidate by name only without other accompanying information about the candidate 99 times in 241 articles or just over 41 percent of the time. The Indigenous-focused sources, on the other hand, mentioned a candidate by name only just 14 times out of 64 articles or just about 22 percent of the time.

In contrast, as Figure 4.4 indicates when looking at instances where a candidate was mentioned with some accompanying information beyond their party affiliation, where they were paraphrased, or where they were quoted, the Indigenous-focused sources outperformed the non-Indigenous-focused sources. The Indigenous-focused articles gave additional information on a candidate that they mentioned in over 42 percent of their articles, whereas the non-Indigenous-focused article did the same just over 35 percent of the time. Similarly, the Indigenous sources were more likely to paraphrase or quote a candidate than the non-Indigenous sources, with a candidate paraphrasing 14 and 4.6 percent of the time, respectively, and a candidate quoted 51.6 and 30.7 percent of the time

each.

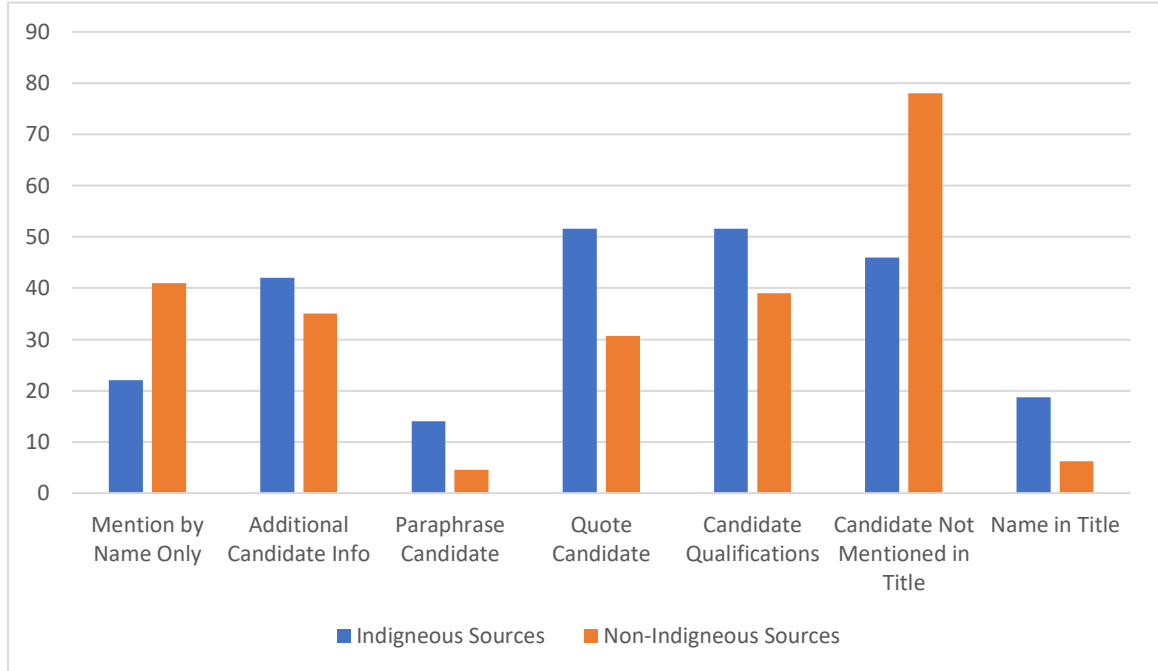


Figure 4.4 - Candidate Information Provided (Percentage of Articles)

Further, Indigenous-focused sources are much more likely to mention a candidate's qualifications than non-Indigenous-focused sources. "Candidate qualifications" includes things like political experience, education, community involvement, and prior employment experience. The non-Indigenous articles mentioned a candidate's qualifications 94 times out of 241 articles, or 39 percent of the time. Conversely, the Indigenous sources did so 33 times out of 64 articles or 51.6 percent of the time.

Finally, when examining the titles of the articles, it becomes clear that the non-Indigenous sources are far less likely to make mention of the candidates in the title. Out of the 241 non-Indigenous-focused articles, 189 of them, or over 78 percent, made no mention of the candidate in the title. This is compared to just 30 out of 64 or 46 percent

of the Indigenous sources that made no reference to a Candidate in the title. This gap grows when the mention of a candidate name in the title is controlled for. Here, the non-Indigenous sources only included the name of a candidate in the title 15 times or 6.2 percent of the time, whereas the Indigenous-focused sources included a candidate's name in the title 12 or 18.75 percent of the time.

The discrepancy in the quality of coverage by whether a publication is Indigenous-focused or not is notable because Indigenous-focused coverage is so regionalized. Out of the 64 Indigenous-focused articles, 32 of them were focused on the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Notably, B.C., Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Quebec received no locally focused coverage from Indigenous sources despite having a large number of Indigenous candidates. This means that the Indigenous candidates from these regions are missing out on a key source of visibility in the media when compared to candidates from the territories.

The quality of news coverage can also vary by gender. According to Wagner and her colleagues (2017), journalists tend to pay more attention to male politicians than they do to female politicians though they argue that candidate competitiveness and novelty impact viability more than candidate gender. This sort of quality coverage where more candidate information is provided to readers is important because allowing candidates to speak for themselves can help them appear knowledgeable about the topics and thereby qualified for political office by speaking for themselves. Even after accounting for variables like candidate age and political position, an analysis of Belgian television coverage revealed that male politicians have a gendered edge in how often they are able to speak for themselves in the media (Hooghe et al., 2015).

Exploring coverage by candidate gender reveals a discrepancy in how and how often candidates are mentioned (see Figure 4.5). For instance, while female Indigenous candidates received more total mentions than their male counterparts (271 to 237), there were more female candidates (30) than male candidates (23). This means that male candidates are more likely to be mentioned than the female candidates, with about 10.3 mentions per male candidate compared to 9 mentions on average for female candidates. When I examine how candidates are mentioned, this trend continues. When all articles where the reader is given more information than just the candidate's name and party affiliation are considered, male candidates average 6.87 mentions per candidate to the female candidates' 5.57. Further, male candidates were quoted on average of 2.48 times, and the female candidates were quoted an average of 2.17 times.

The only measure by which female candidates are not mentioned less than their male counterparts is when they are mentioned by name only with no additional information other than their party affiliation. Here the female candidates averaged 3.4 name-only mentions per candidate, and the male candidates received 3.39 mentions per candidate. It is noteworthy that the only identifiable non-male or female candidate covered in this analysis, two-spirited Blake Desjarlais, received more average mentions by every metric than did the identifiable male or female candidates, with 54 mentions, 27 mentions with more information than just the name and party affiliation, 14 mentions

where they were quoted, and 26 name only mentions.

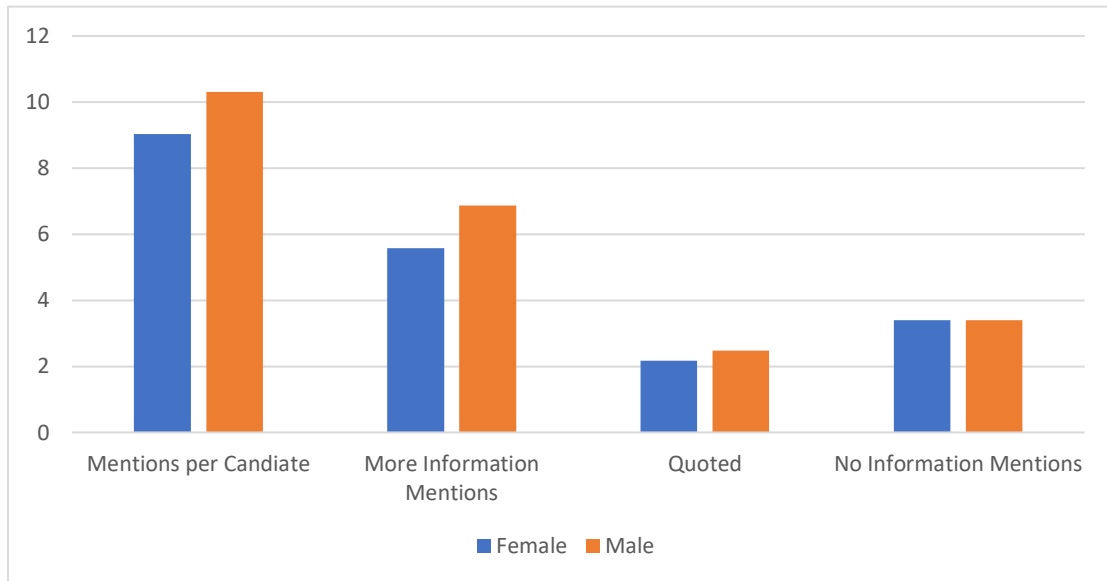


Figure 4.5 - Type of Candidate Mention per Candidate by Gender

Here it is clear that among Indigenous candidates, a gendered discrepancy in both amount and quality of coverage exists. This, as was mentioned earlier, puts female Indigenous candidates at a disadvantage in terms of visibility, which could have an impact on their ability to fundraise, their perception in the public eye and the number of votes that they receive. Further, as we saw, Blake Desjarlais received more total and more quality coverage than both the male and female candidates. While this could suggest that Desjarlais' two-spirit gender identity could be creating an extra layer of novelty surrounding him on top of his Indigenous identity, it could also be due to the fact that he was a competitive candidate for a party (NDP) that has historically struggled in the area (Alberta) that he was running in.

Candidate Identity and Indigenous Novelty

On top of affecting candidate visibility, news coverage can also present barriers to entry into politics. Goodyear-Grant (2013) argues that in order for someone from an underrepresented group to be elected (in this case women) they must self-select into running, be selected by a party, and then be selected by the voters. This is an issue because women are covered systematically differently from male politicians in both their quality of coverage and the quantity of their coverage. First, by framing politics as a place for men, media coverage can affect a woman's willingness to run. Second, gendered news coverage can lead to negative effects on the evaluations of female candidates. Third, once in politics, whether running or elected, women face the challenge of facing a gendered landscape that places them in a double bind by expecting them to conform to a masculine standard of the political world and punishes them when they fail to conform to feminine norms (Goodyear-Grant, 2013).

As is the case with female candidates, Lalancette and Tremblay (2019) argue that LGBTQ politicians are also mediated by their sexuality. While sexuality is not explicitly framed as an issue in election coverage, heterosexuality, like masculinity, is often portrayed as the default characteristic against which LGBTQ candidates are compared (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019; Trimble & Everitt, 2010). Here heterosexual leadership is both normalized and unquestioned. At the same time, female and LGBTQ candidates are often framed as novel (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). Here I suggest that Indigenous candidates are also viewed as novel to politics. In fact, Indigeneity may be seen as even more so than gender.

Finally, the news media frequently portrays whiteness as the standard in their stories, much to how gender and sexuality are framed (Tolley, 2015; van Dijk, 1991). Because whiteness is presented as the standard in news articles, anything that deviates from it is considered newsworthy (Tolley, 2015). By selecting stories based on racialized framing and presenting them in a way that discusses visible minorities as different, this normative framing of whiteness produces a distorted context that reinforces whiteness as the standard (Tolley, 2015). Election candidates from visible minorities are frequently presented in specific ways. For instance, minority candidates are constrained since it is assumed that they are primarily concerned with a select group of ethnically related special interest concerns (Tolley, 2015).

This analysis makes clear that Indigenous candidates are more often associated with their Indigenous identity. Looking at how candidates were presented by the media in their news coverage, it becomes clear that they are more likely to be associated with their Indigenous identity than with their other identities, such as their genders or sexualities (see Figure 4.6). Out of the 305 unique articles, a candidate was Indigenous was mentioned in 127 of them or 41.6 percent of the time. Interestingly, the Indigenous-focused sources were much more likely to associate Indigenous candidates with their Indigeneity than were the non-Indigenous sources. The Indigenous-focused publications mentioned an Indigenous candidate's Indigeneity 40 times in 64 articles (62.5 percent of the time). The non-Indigenous focused publications mentioned an Indigenous candidate's Indigeneity 87 times in 241 articles (about 36 percent of the time).

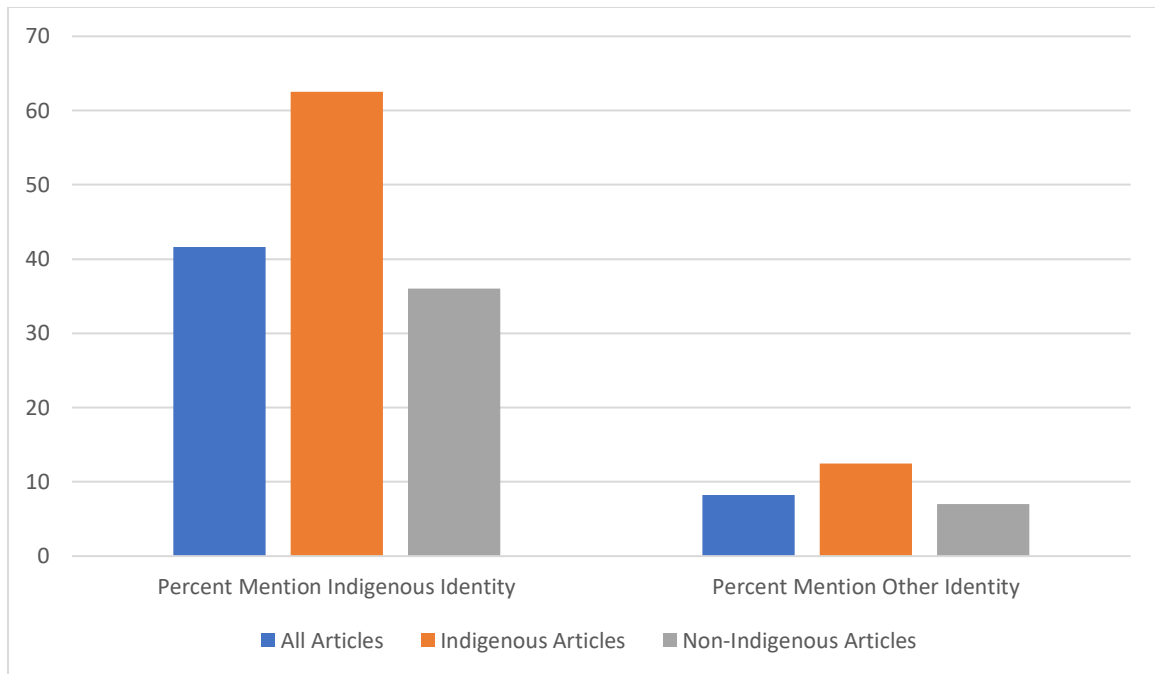


Figure 4.6 - Percent Articles Mention Identity of a Candidate

Contrasting Indigenous with other candidate identities, it can be seen that Indigenous candidates are far less likely to be associated with identities other than their Indigeneity. There were just 25 cases out of 305 articles where a candidate’s identity other than their Indigeneity, including gender, sexuality, and other ethnicities, was mentioned representing just 8.2 percent of total articles. As with the candidate's Indigenous identity, the Indigenous-focused sources were more likely to associate the candidates with their other identities. The Indigenous-focused sources mentioned a candidate's non-Indigenous identity in 12.5 percent of the article, whereas the non-Indigenous sources did the same just over 7 percent of the time.

In the 562 times a candidate was mentioned, there were just 37 instances where a non-Indigenous identity of a candidate was mentioned. Thirty-one of these were focused on the candidate's gender. Of the 31 times a candidate's gender was mentioned, 19 were

from non-Indigenous-focused sources, and 12 were from Indigenous-focused sources. This means that Indigenous-focused sources are more likely to associate the candidates that they mention with their gender. However, these sources mentioned a candidate's gender less than one percent of the time.

Similarly, in the cases where candidate gender was mentioned, female candidates were more likely to have their gender mentioned than were male candidates. For female candidates their gender was brought up 19 times compared to just twice for male candidates. Blake DesJarlais, the only two-spirited candidate, had his gender mentioned 11 times. The only other time a candidate's identity other than their Indigeneity or Gender was brought up was when Melissa Chung-Mowat had her mixed Chinese Metis ancestry mentioned. While this was just one instance, it could suggest that having mixed ancestry might be viewed as novel. Though it is just as likely that the author who brought this up was more concerned with the Metis aspect of Chung-Mowat's identity and mentioned her Chinese descent to be thorough.

On a similar note, Indigenous candidates usually do not associate themselves with their own identity. Out of the 136 times across 562 times that individual Indigenous candidates were quoted, they only mentioned their own identity 39 times, or just 28.7 percent of the time. Female and male candidates were almost just as likely to mention their own identities when quoted. Female candidates mentioned their own identity 18 times in 65 times quoted, or about 27.7 percent of the time, whereas the male candidates did 16 times in 57 times quoted, or about 28.1 percent of the time. Blake DesJarlais mentioned his own identity five times in the 14 times quoted, or 35.7 percent of the time.

By source type, as shown in Figure 4.7 the Indigenous candidates were more likely to mention their own identity when quoted in Indigenous-focused publications. The candidates mentioned their own identity in the Indigenous-focused publications 37.7 percent of the time. When quoted in the non-Indigenous publication, candidates mentioned their own identity 24.2 percent of the time. By candidate party, the NDP candidates were the most likely to mention their own identity, with 33.3 percent of the time. This was followed by the Liberal candidates who mentioned their quoted 29.7 percent of the time. Next was the Conservative party, with quoted or 22.2 percent. Finally, the Green candidates never mentioned their identity in 1 time quoted, and the Bloc Quebecois candidates were never quoted.

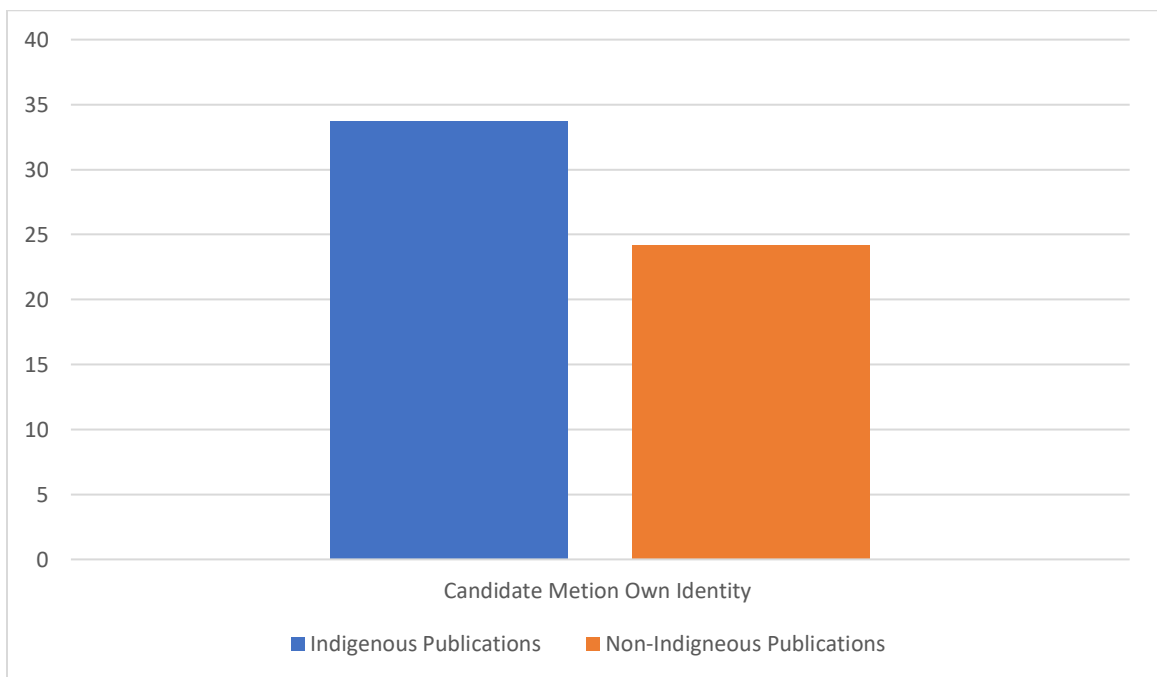


Figure 4.7 - Percent Mention Own Identity When Quoted by Source Type

Interestingly, when Indigenous candidates talk about their own identity, they are most likely to talk about their Indigeneity. In the 136 times the media quoted Indigenous

candidates, the candidates mentioned their Indigenous Identity 34 times or 25 percent of the time. When candidates talk about their own identity, they mention their Indigeneity over 87 percent of the time or 34 out of 39 times. The only other way in which the candidates talked about their identity was in relation to their gender. However, this was exceedingly rare. There were only three instances in the 136 times that candidates were quoted that they mention their own identity or 2.2 percent. In the 39 times candidates talked about their own identity they talked about their gender 7.7 percent of the.

Breaking this down by candidate gender reveals that female Indigenous candidates are more likely than their male counterparts to mention their Indigeneity. In 17 out of 18 cases where female Indigenous candidates mentioned their own identity, they talked about their Indigeneity. While male Indigenous associated themselves with their Indigeneity less often, they were still very likely to mention their Indigeneity, bringing it up 12 out of 16 times mentioning their own identity. Interestingly, each of the five times he talked about his identity, Blake Desjarlais brought up his Indigeneity. As for talking about their gender identity, male candidates never did, and female candidates only did once. Blake Desjarlais referred to his two-spirit identity twice in the five instances that he talked about his identity. Though it is worth noting here that two-spirit identity is unique to Indigenous cultures. Thus, Desjarlais's gender is more likely to come up in a discussion about his Indigenous identity than it would otherwise have if he identified with a more common gender identity.

Examining Indigenous self-identifying by source type shows us that Indigenous candidates were more likely to associate with their Indigeneity when quoted in Indigenous-focused publications. Candidates were quoted 45 times in Indigenous

publications and mentioned their Indigenous identity a total of 14 times, or just about 31.1 percent of the time. In the non-Indigenous focused publications, candidates were quoted 91 times but only mentioned their Indigenous identity 20 times or about 21.9 percent of the time. However, it is unclear whether this is candidates themselves choosing to present differently in different media outlets or the outlets themselves editorializing candidates' statements differently.

By candidate party, out of the 26 NDP candidates who mentioned their identities, they talked about their Indigeneity 23 times or 88.5 percent of the time. The Conservative Party candidates only mentioned their identity twice, but both times that they did, they mentioned their Indigenous identity. Finally, the Liberal Party Indigenous candidates associated themselves with their Indigeneity 81.8 percent of the time, 9 out of the 11 times that they mentioned their own identity. This discrepancy in self-presentation between parties is in line with what Wagner, Lalancette and their colleagues found in their research of LGBTQ+ candidates (2023). They found that candidates usually employed one of three self-presentation strategies along party lines. The first strategy, usually employed by candidates of right-wing parties, was one of silence. Next, some candidates from the NDP, Liberals, and Conservatives employed a strategy of moderation where they would make mention of their LGBTQ+ identity but would not go out of their way to bring it up and would do little beyond mentioning their identities. Finally, some candidates, mostly from the NDP and Green Party, employed a strategy of celebration where they made their LGBTQ+ identity, along with other identities, such as blackness or being an immigrant, a significant part of their public persona.

Here it is clear that the novelty of being Indigenous in politics outweighs the novelty of being a woman, sexual minority, or other ethnic minority in politics. Also, when candidates do mention their own identity, it is most likely in relation to their Indigeneity. Furthermore, they are much less likely in general to talk about their identity than the media is to talk about their identity. The news media, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, were far more interested in associating candidates with their Indigeneity than with any other aspect of their identity. As discussed, this could affect the Indigenous candidate's willingness and ability to participate in politics. By associating Indigenous candidates overwhelmingly with their Indigeneity, the media is emphasizing their uniqueness in politics and thereby subtly framing politics as the white realm in which they are participating. This framing can serve to limit candidate self-selection into running and hurt voter evaluations of candidates.

Though even if Indigenous candidates self-select to run and are selected by voters, they still must operate within a system that both views them as outsiders and is the source of their oppression. This leads to the idea of "symbolic annihilation." When elected members of underrepresented groups, particularly those in powerful positions, have their credentials and qualifications devalued because of their identity in favour of someone who more closely complies with the patriarchal, heteronormative or, in the case, racialized political norms, it is known as symbolic annihilation (Goodyear-Grant, 2013). Further, because elected candidates often find themselves unable or unwilling to confront the current status quo in order to maintain a respectable appearance in the media, elected representatives from underrepresented groups frequently do not result in meaningful policy change.

Symbolic Annihilation or Opportunity for Change

The significance of symbolic annihilation rests in the difference between descriptive and substantive representation. When the mere existence of a member of an underrepresented group in a position of authority is seen as a success for representation in and of itself, descriptive representation has occurred (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019). The problem emerges when a candidate for public office who claims to represent a particular community is perceived as endorsing the oppressive structures that target that very group. In this situation, the issue is Indigenous people running for office legitimizing a government that can be viewed as oppressive to Indigenous people. This is especially true when persons in positions of authority have little to no ability to influence the system in a substantive way. Thus, the representation of Indigenous people who run for office in the media may serve to normalize Indigenous people in public life. However, without the ability to make substantive changes, a system that oppresses them, their representation can be viewed as wholly symbolic. Likewise, even the idea of framing a narrative as an Indigenous story or an issue as an Indigenous issue perpetuates the perception that white people are the norm and Indigenous people are the alternative (McCue, 2022). Investigative journalism, according to DeCillia, tends to reinforce and re-legitimize prevailing societal values by "publicizing and helping to punish those who deviate from those values" (2021, p. 591). DeCillia even goes so far as to say that investigative journalism is fundamentally conservative (in that it is resistant to change).

Trimble (2017) offers a different view, arguing that the media can be used to highlight the underrepresentation of underrepresented groups. In her work focusing on women in politics she argues that the standards of "hegemonic masculinity" can be made

public by having women in positions of authority. Trimble uses this reasoning to refute binary concepts of gender and sexual orientation. Even in academic literature, gender and sexuality are frequently depicted as binary concepts. The news media also often portrays and normalizes these gender binary stereotypes. This is a problem, but, as Trimble argues, by bringing them to light, it also gives room for challenging these binaries. According to Trimble the issue is that academic researchers have not paid enough attention to this problem to raise objections to the gender binary and have instead contributed to its perpetuation.

Symbolic annihilation of Indigenous people by the media is particularly important because, as Brady and Kelly (2018) argue, Indigenous people have a unique relationship with the media in Canada in that they have been popular subjects of Canadian media throughout Canadian history. These portrayals of Indigenous people in Canadian media were steeped in colonial stereotypes, and the news media has continued to reproduce those stereotypes (Brady & Kelly, 2018; Anderson & Robertson, 2014). Brady and Kelly go on to argue that Western institutions (including the media) are "circumscribed in their ability to promote or encourage decolonizing epistemologies" (2018. p 8). Though they continue, those same institutions can provide unexpected instances where there are opportunities to challenge the same cultural stereotypes that they often promote (Brady & Kelly, 2018. p 9).

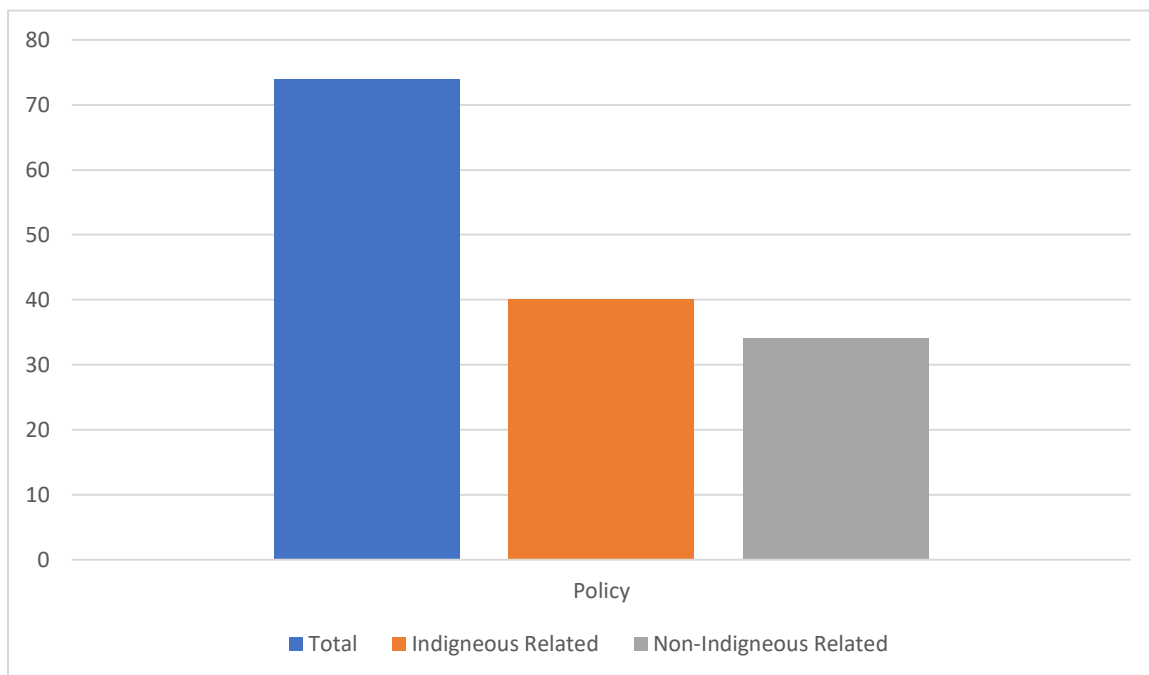


Figure 4.8 - Article Policy Focus by Type

As demonstrated in Figure 4.8, Indigenous candidates were more likely to be covered by the media in stories that address policies related to Indigenous issues. Of the 305 articles that mentioned Indigenous candidates, 74 of them were primarily focused on a particular policy issue. Of those, 40 or 57.1 percent were about an Indigenous-related policy, including missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG), Reconciliation, Land/treaty rights and sovereignty, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). A total of 34 (see Figure 4.9) were focused on other policy issues such as party politics and platforms (10), climate change and environment (6), voting/importance of (5) LGBGTQIA+ issues (2), Covid 19 and Vaccines (2), Election Called (2), Racism (1), Housing/Homelessness (1), Drugs (1), Healthcare (1), Guaranteed Income (1), Seniors (1), and Resource Management (1).

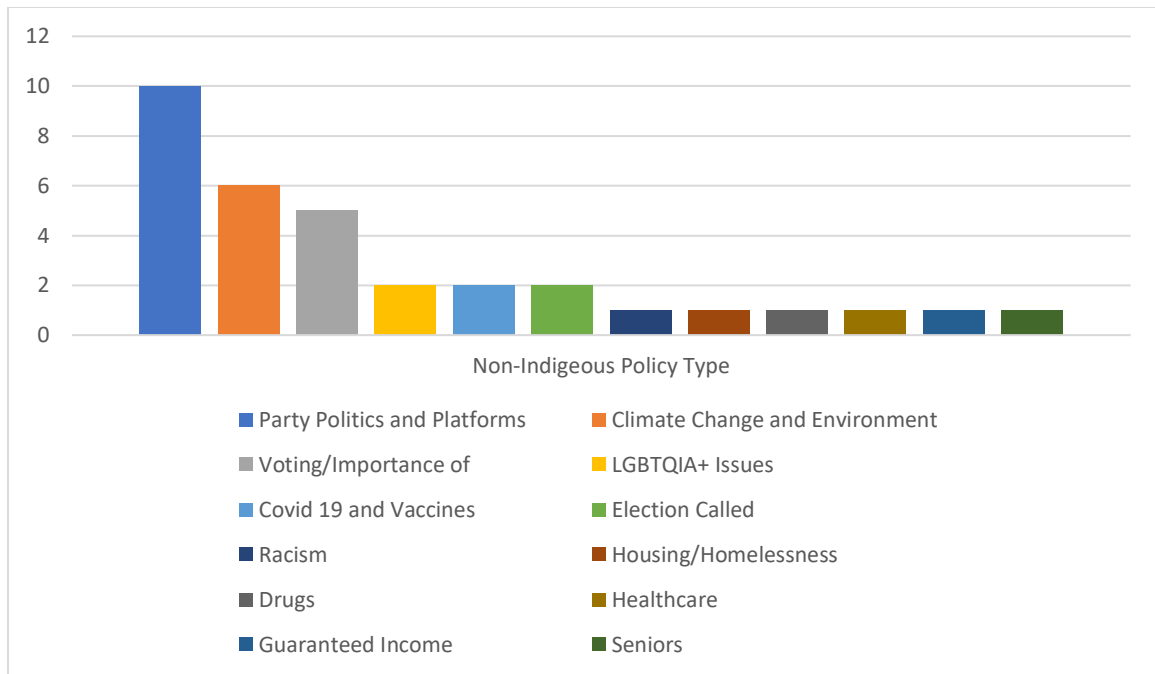


Figure 4.9 - Articles with Non-Indigenous Policy Focus by Subject

Just as media outlets can associate Indigenous candidates with particular policy issues, the candidates themselves also associate themselves with issues based on what policies they decide to talk about. When candidates are given an opportunity to talk, they, rather unsurprisingly, take the time to talk about one or more policy issues, though, again this pattern could be in part due to media editorializing, the candidates could also be talking more often about topics other than policy issues. In the 136 times they were quoted, Indigenous candidates talked about policy issues 118 times or 86.8 percent of the time. By source type, candidates were more likely to talk about a policy issue in Indigenous sources, with 41 candidates talking about a policy issue 45 times quoted or 91.1 percent of the time. This compares to 84.6 percent of the time in non-Indigenous sources, with 77 times a candidate talked about a policy in the 91 times they were quoted.

It is still unclear however, if the candidates are discussing policy more with Indigenous outlets or if the Indigenous outlets are more interested in covering these policy issues.

Broken down by candidate gender, there was very little difference in how often male and female candidates took the opportunity to talk about a policy issue. The female candidates talked about a policy issue 59 times in 65 times quoted, or 90.7 percent. Similarly, the male candidates talked about a policy issue 52 times in 57 times quoted or 91.2 percent of the time. Blake Desjarlais underperformed by this metric, only mentioning policy issues nine times in the 14 times quoted or 64.3 percent of the time.

Finally, by candidate party, Conservative candidates were more likely to talk about a policy issue when quoted. The Conservative Indigenous candidates mentioned a policy issue each of the just nine times that they were quoted. The Liberal candidates did the same 44 out of 48 times they were quoted or 91.6 percent of the time. Indigenous candidates for the NDP talked about a policy issue 63 out of 78 times, quoted as 80.7 percent. The Green candidates were only quoted once, but in that quote, they did mention a policy issue.

When Indigenous candidates talk about policy issues, they are most likely to be related to an Indigenous issue. "Indigenous issues" here are the issues related to MMIWG, Reconciliation, UNDRIP, Self Government, and residential schools. In the 118 times, Indigenous candidates talked about a policy issue; they talked about an Indigenous-related issue 62 times or 52.5 percent of the time. It is worth noting that the 2021 federal election was taking place around the same time as the mass graves were discovered at former residential schools and the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was being proposed. Thus, there was a heightened focus on Indigenous-

related issues during this election period, and Indigenous candidates may have been more inclined to discuss Indigenous-related policy issues during this campaign than others. Similarly, media outlets may have been more predisposed to publishing candidate quotes on Indigenous related policy issues.

By candidate gender, male candidates mentioned an Indigenous issue 46.4 percent of the time they discussed a policy issue or 26 out of 56 times. The female candidates did almost exactly as often at 27 times out of 58 policy mentions or 46.6 percent. Blake Desjarlais almost always talks about an Indigenous issue when discussing policy, doing so 8 out of 9 times or over 88 percent of the time. The story by candidate party is similar, with candidates from each party talking about an Indigenous-related issue roughly half of the time that they discussed a policy issue. The NDP candidates do so 35 out of 63 or 55.6 percent of the time, the Liberals 23 out of 44 or 52.2 percent of the time, and the Conservative candidates talked about an Indigenous policy issue four out of the nine times that they discussed a policy issue or 44.4 percent of the time. The one time a Green Indigenous candidate discussed a policy issue, they did not talk about an Indigenous-related issue.

With regards to policy, Indigenous candidates are clearly more closely associated with issues related to Indigenous people. This can be viewed in multiple ways. First, this association with a limited set of policies related to their identity could suggest that Indigenous candidates are being used by the media, as representatives for one aspect of their identity when, like all people, issues that affect them, or that they may be concerned with, go beyond this identity. This is especially limiting to Indigenous candidates when one considers that even if they are elected, most MPs have little ability to affect

substantive change meaning that the representation of these issues in public discourse is likely to merely be descriptive. Alternatively, having Indigenous issues in the spotlight can also create space for Indigenous candidates to create visibility to them and to the way in which they might be solved. If the media were not to focus on Indigenous-related policies when covering Indigenous candidates, there would certainly be less opportunity to have these issues presented to large audiences.

However, questions still remain about why and how Indigenous candidates are discussing Indigenous-related policy issues. It is unclear whether the candidates themselves are deciding what issues they talk about or if they are being asked about the issues, as they are both also more likely to talk about an Indigenous-related issue when they talk about a policy issue. Similarly, it is uncertain why candidates are more likely to discuss Indigenous-related issues in Indigenous-focused sources. Though it seems that it would most likely be because of their audience with the Indigenous-focused sources like *Nunatsiaq News* and *Nunavut News* tend to concentrate their focus on northern regions with higher Indigenous populations. Finally, how candidates are talking about these issues is uncertain. Do they propose system-level changes to better address Indigenous-related issues, or are they more predisposed to working within current structures? These gaps in the data on Indigenous-related policy issues will be explored further in the next chapter.

Summary

To conclude, our analysis of this media found several key patterns in the coverage of Indigenous candidates during the 2021 federal election. First, the Indigenous-focused sources did more than the non-Indigenous sources to promote the visibility of the

Indigenous candidates that they covered. In other words, they went beyond just name mentions and provided additional candidate information and reported what the Indigenous candidates actually said, either by paraphrasing them or using direct candidate quotations. There were also party, regional, and gendered aspects to candidate visibility. Candidates from the three largest parties (Liberal, Conservative, and NDP) received the most coverage. While candidates from the provinces (other than Quebec) received more or less the same amount of coverage, Indigenous candidates from the Territories received much more coverage.

The quality of news coverage also varied by gender. Male candidates are more likely to be mentioned than their female counterparts. Similarly, readers are given more information than just the candidate's name and party affiliation more often for male candidates, and female candidates are less likely to be quoted or paraphrased than male candidates. Female candidates are only mentioned more than male candidates when they are mentioned by name only, with no additional information other than their party affiliation.

Next, Indigenous candidates are more often associated with their Indigenous identity than with any other aspect of their identity, with candidate gender being a distant second. This remains true in both Indigenous and in non-Indigenous focused sources. Though Indigenous candidates usually do not associate themselves with their own identity, when they do, they associate themselves with their Indigenous identity more than only others. It is unclear, however, if this is due to themselves bringing up their Indigeneity or if they are being asked about their Indigenous identity first. It is notable,

though, that Indigenous candidates were more likely to mention their own identity when quoted in Indigenous-focused publications.

Finally, while most articles do not focus on a policy issue, when they do, Indigenous candidates were far more likely to be associated with policies related to Indigenous issues. This association with a small number of identity-related policies raises the possibility that Indigenous candidates are being used as representatives for just their Indigeneity, despite the fact that, like all people, they may be affected by or concerned about issues that go beyond just one aspect of their identity. This is particularly restrictive for Indigenous candidates because, even if elected, the majority of MPs have limited capacity to bring about significant change, which means that the portrayal of these concerns in the public discourse is likely to be purely descriptive. As an alternative, putting Indigenous concerns front and centre can provide Indigenous candidates with a platform to raise awareness of the problems and potential solutions. There would undoubtedly be fewer opportunities for these concerns to be addressed to broad audiences if the media did not focus on Indigenous-related policies when reporting Indigenous candidates.

Chapter 5. Discourse Analysis

This chapter employs discourse analysis (DA) to explore how the media discusses Indigenous candidates and issues and how they enable Indigenous candidates to present themselves and discuss these issues. DA is a methodological approach that seeks to examine discourse within its broader social context. Those who use DA methods argue that understanding and evaluating discourse is essential because discourses often reach a state of hegemony where they seem natural even though they are constructed (Crawford, 2004; Fierke, 2004; Hardy et al., 2004; Hopf, 2004; Van Dijk, 2015). In order to challenge these discourses one must first understand that there is no fundamental meaning to discourse (Hardy et al., 2004; Hopf, 2004; Van Dijk, 2015). This chapter will examine the coverage of four high-profile Indigenous candidates in the 2021 Canadian federal election to better identify how understandings about candidates' indigeneity are constructed by the language used by the media. These four candidates include: Blake Desjarlais, Yvonne Jones, Marc Dalton and Lori Idlout¹.

The first candidate, Blake Desjarlais, was selected for two reasons. First, he received more coverage than any other Indigenous candidate during the 2021 election, thus offering up plenty of material for quality, in-depth analysis. Secondly, Blake Desjarlais is the first openly two-spirited candidate elected to the House of Commons, enabling us to explore the intersection between his Indigeneity and his gender identity. The next candidate, Yvonne Jones, was selected as she is a high-profile Liberal MP who

¹ I use the term Indigenous to describe these four candidates. The term Indigenous is a catch-all term that includes First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. I make this note here because each of these candidates are either Inuit, Metis and/or members of a First Nations.

received a good amount of coverage and faced questions surrounding the legitimacy of her Indigenous identity claims. Next, Marc Dalton was selected because he received the most coverage of the two Conservative Indigenous candidates who were elected to parliament. Finally, NDP candidate Lori Idoult was chosen because she received plenty of coverage from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous news sources and because she replaced former Nunavut MP Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, who resigned with claims that she felt like she did not belong in parliament as an Indigenous woman. The choice of these individuals enables an assessment of candidates' Indigenous identity while exploring how it might intersect with their gender identity, their partisanship, and other identities connected to the nature and composition of their ridings.

In order to further explore how candidate Indigenous identity is discussed in the news media, this analysis will first build on the findings from the previous chapter drawing on the concepts of *objectivity* and *moral craftwork* to examine how the media discusses Indigenous people and Indigenous-related issues. Next, this chapter builds on the ideas of *novelty*, *respectability*, and *symbolic annihilation* to create a more thorough understanding of how the news media discusses candidate identity. This section of the discourse analysis will also explore how each of the four selected candidates attempt to portray themselves and are then portrayed in the media.

Media Objectivity and Moral Craftwork

As discussed in previous chapters, despite the fact that bias against Indigenous people is well documented the Canadian news, media continues to rely on and promote harmful stereotypes when covering Indigenous peoples. This persistence results from how the news media in Canada tends to understand objectivity. As a reminder, Duncan McCue

(2022), in examining the news media's concept of objectivity, offered up the concept of "the view from nowhere" which describes the media's tendency to fail to confront their own values and biases in their reporting. Here, not only does McCue see reporters as capable of stepping outside of their own biases and incorporating other viewpoints, but also argues that they must do so. DeCillia (2021) notes that this sense of objectivity allows journalists to make moral claims without appearing to do so a concept that he describes as "moral craftwork."

There is evidence that the media also employs moral craftwork in relation to racism. For instance van Dijk (1991) describes how the news media, even liberal-leaning papers, tends to ignore or downplay the existence of structural racism. While the existence of racism is not denied altogether, the way that the media covers Indigenous individuals and events tend to imply that racism is the work of individuals rather than the result of larger underlying normative and structural forces that tend to produced racially biased outcomes.

In a comparable fashion, the Canadian media's employment of objectivity also helps to perpetuate harmful stereotypes against Indigenous people. Duncan McCue's (2022) "5 D's" of defiance, drumming, dancing, drunkenness, and death are frequently used in the media's coverage of Indigenous people in Canada. These settler-colonial stereotypes are profoundly engrained in its culture. Anderson and Robertson (2014) point out that this type of coverage has been in the Canadian media since the 1800s, and has not changed much since. One essential element of this objectivity, the view from nowhere, separates journalists from their prejudices and discourages critical involvement. According to McCue's "the view from somewhere," journalists must be open about their

identity, community, ancestry, and ideals. This would enable journalists to acknowledge their biases and make necessary adjustments, and readers could contextualize what they were reading in light of the author's disclosures.

In the context of Indigenous candidates and Indigenous-related issues, I expect to find that the media employs objectivity and moral craftwork mostly in relation to issues surrounding Indigenous land rights, Indigenous representation, and Indigenous identity claims. Essentially, I expect to find that the media will resist making hard claims and do little to push these issues towards a more complete understanding of the underlying structural issues surrounding settler-colonialism and Indigenous representation. As an example, I expect that when discussions surrounding Indigenous representation come up, the media conversations will most often take Indigenous representation in parliament to be good in and of itself. I expect to see few if any, examples of discussions surrounding what the value of being Indigenous in parliament actually is or surrounding alternative methods of Indigenous representation outside of the Canadian political establishment. In essence, I anticipate that the media will, in general, hold, and thus present in their writing, the underlying values that representation within Canadian political establishment is what is needed to promote Indigenous reconciliation when, in fact, Canadian political institutions are in many ways structurally oriented in opposition to many forms of Indigenous reconciliation.

Finally, while I do not expect to find that the media uses explicit racial stereotypes while discussing Indigenous candidates, I do expect to see that some of the patterns of discourse that McCue and Anderson and Robertson outlined show up in the articles. Specifically, I expect that much of the coverage that Indigenous candidates receive will

be based on aspects of their Indigenous identity. The Drumming and Dancing “D’s” that McCue highlighted each point to the idea that Indigenous people often get news coverage based on the novelty of Indigenous culture in Canada. In a similar fashion, McCue’s Defiance “D” and Anderson and Robertson’s stubborn resistance to progress pattern both point to the idea that Indigenous people often appear in the media when they are seen as standing in the way of economic development. I expect to see a similar pattern of coverage for Indigenous candidates when the coverage shifts towards resource development projects.

Novelty, Candidate Self-Presentation and Symbolic Annihilation

Journalists and news organizations prefer to believe that they are unbiased observers of the people and events they cover. This is incorrect, though. Journalists and the news media participate in and have an impact on the social world they write about. As a result, their reporting is influenced by and reinforces societal biases. For instance, straight white males have dominated politics and news reporting. As a result, white centric, heteronormative, and masculine norms tend to dominate political candidate news coverage by male and female reporters alike. (Everitt, 2003; Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019; Tolley, 2015; van Dijk, 1991).

In election coverage, masculinity and heterosexuality are often portrayed as default characteristics against which female and LGBTQ candidates are compared, leading to the normalization and unquestioned leadership of heterosexual and male leadership. Female and LGBTQ candidates are often framed as novel, demonstrating how media is subject to and reproduces societal stereotypes (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019; Trimble & Everitt, 2010). According to Trimble and

Everitt (2010), female politicians frequently receive dramatized coverage in the news, just like female celebrities in the fashion and entertainment sectors. This superficial coverage can convey levity and cause more people to see their candidacy in a negative light (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Trimble & Everitt, 2010).

Female candidates often seek to challenge gendered stereotypes by behaving in a more masculine way to avoid being seen as incompetent. Here, however, a "double bind" can be created where acting in a way that is more stereotypically feminine can frame them as not belonging or as being less qualified. At the same time, for female candidates, acting in a way that is more stereotypically male can cause readers to form a sort of dissonance and lead to more unfavourable appraisals (Trimble & Everitt, 2010).

Similarly, media coverage of candidates' gender and sexuality does not often frame either as an issue, although this is only the case if the candidate is deemed to be "respectable." So long as candidates conform to existing expectations surrounding sexuality or gendered behaviour female or LGBTQ candidate identity is not viewed as a problem. To put it another way, being a woman or a member of the LGBTQ community is typically acceptable in politics as long as they can appear "normal" and do not pose a danger to accepted social norms about gender and sexuality (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019).

The same holds true for visible minority candidates who are also held up to the standard of respectability. Non-incumbent visible minority candidates must prove themselves as viable candidates if they want to be taken as seriously as their white counterparts by the news media (Tolley, 2015). Despite the fact that these media prejudices against candidates from visible minorities are not always deliberate on the side

of journalists, that does not imply that they are also incidental. Instead, as was previously said, these coverage inconsistencies are a result of two factors. First, the racial biases that are already present in society. Second, the news media's assertion of objectivity as neutrality. Because the news media thinks race is relevant, they discuss it in specific ways. Because they see societal standards as neutral and/or natural, they are unable to overcome these prejudices (Tolley, 2015; van Dijk, 1991).

Respectability in politics is influenced by the notions of descriptive and substantive representation and "symbolic annihilation." While female and LGBTQ candidates are often seen as novelty by the media, their involvement can break down normative barriers and create space for more candidates. However, symbolic representation can be seen as legitimizing the political regime, leading to little substantive change and making female candidates tools to legitimize current systems. The election of more female and LGBTQ candidates can also lead to "symbolic annihilation," where elected members of underrepresented groups are undervalued due to their identity, favoring those who conform to masculine or heteronormative political norms. This can result in substantive policy change as elected members are unable to challenge the status quo to maintain a respectable appearance in the media. Therefore, while representation alone may not bring about substantial change, it is essential to recognize the importance of respectability in politics (Goodyear-Grant, 2013; Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019).

While the news media do have much control over how electoral candidates are portrayed in the media, the candidates themselves provide much of the foundation upon which media portrayals of them are based (Tolley, 2015). Thus, how candidates, including Indigenous candidates, present their identity to the media can shape the

coverage that they receive. However, candidates do not always have full control over how they present themselves to the media and are, in fact, limited by several factors. These factors include their party, voter attitudes and demographics in their riding, the type of media that they are using (traditional media or social media), the audience of the media source and so on (Wager, Bird et al., 2023; Wagner, Lalancette et al., 2023; Tolley, 2015).

As an example, because of negative associations between femininity and female candidates, female candidates often seek to uproot gendered stereotypes by presenting in a more stereotypically masculine manner so as not to be seen as incompetent (Trimble & Everitt, 2010). This, however, is where the idea of the "double bind" can come into play. Behaving in a manner more traditionally thought of as feminine can frame female candidates as not belonging or as incompetent and behaving in more masculine ways can create a sort of conflict in the minds of readers leading to more negative assessments (Goodyear-Grant, 2013 & Trimble & Everitt, 2010).

Similarly, candidates also must act as brand ambassadors for their party and thus can be limited in the ways in which they are able to discuss issues surrounding their Identity (Wager, Bird et al., 2023; Wagner, Lalancette et al., 2023). Because the NDP has built their brand around the issues of women, sexual minorities, Indigenous peoples, and racialized communities, they often have more room to voice concerns related to their identity (Wager, Bird et al., 2023). In contrast, the Conservative party, which tends to downplay issues surrounding identity, affords candidates less ability to talk about such issues. The Liberal party tends to sit somewhere in the middle, usually reading the political landscape before drawing focus to identity issues.

It is clear that candidates do not all employ the same strategies. In fact, while studying how LGBTQ+ candidates present their identity on Instagram, Wagner, and her colleagues (2023) found that candidates usually employed one of three self-presentation strategies. The first strategy, usually employed by candidates of right-wing parties, was one of silence. Here candidates, despite being publicly out, made no mention of their LGBTQ+ identity on Instagram during the 2021 election. Next, candidates from the NDP, Liberals, and Conservatives employed a strategy of moderation where they would make mention of their LGBTQ+ but would do little beyond that. Finally, some candidates, mostly from the NDP and Green Party, used a strategy of celebration where they made their LGBTQ+ identity, along with other identities, such as blackness or being an immigrant, a central part of their campaign.

In another study Wagner, Bird, et al. (2023) found a similar pattern in how Black candidates present their identity using Twitter. They found that Black candidates did not make their racialized identity a central part of their campaigns. Rather, Black candidates generally did not discuss their identity or issues related to their identity, like policing or criminal justice. When Black candidates did bring up their identity, it was usually in relation to specific events happening outside of their own campaign. In a similar fashion to the LGBTQ+ candidates, the degree to which candidates would self-present their identities fell largely along ideological lines, with candidates from the Conservatives and Bloc Québécois employing a de-racialization strategy. In contrast, NDP candidates more prominently used a racialization strategy, with candidates from the Liberal party falling somewhere in between.

In the previous chapter, the content analysis provided evidence that Indigenous candidates are seen as novel in politics by demonstrating that they are more likely to be associated with their Indigenous identity than with their other identities, such as their genders or sexualities. I have not, however, determined whether it is the candidates, or the media who were making this association. I expect to find that the amount to which candidates themselves bring up Indigenous related topics will vary along party line as the ways in which candidates present themselves and the topics that they choose to discuss are often determined by their party's platform. Thus, I expect to see that the NDP candidates Blake Desjarlais and Lori Idlout to often bring up Indigenous related issues and topics (it also helps that both the NDP candidates ran in ridings with large Indigenous populations) with Liberal candidate Yvonne Jones and Conservative Marc Dalton doing so less often.

However, because others have found that candidates from underrepresented groups often get associated with topic related to their identities, I also expect that the media will seek out Indigenous candidates when they want to discuss an Indigenous-related topic. Consequently, candidates from parties less interested in discussing Indigenous related topics will still be made to do so by the media. Similarly, just as I found in our content analysis that Indigenous-focused sources are more likely to quote Indigenous candidates, I expect Indigenous-focused sources will give more space for Indigenous candidates to speak and give more opportunities for them to discuss issues in more depth.

All in all, I presume that I will find that non-Indigenous traditional media outlets will demonstrate a pattern of Symbolic Annihilation by treating the inclusion of

Indigenous voices in their publications as good in and of itself. Here, I expect that when the media outlets cover Indigenous candidates or Indigenous topics, they will offer up little opportunity for the candidates to speak in a critical manner about those topics. Furthermore, given the prior research, I expect that candidates will behave in a “respectable” manner with little or no aggressive or assertive language as they will be aware that they may face unfavourable coverage if they were to behave in a manner perceived as less respectable.

At the same time, it is possible that how candidate identity is presented is as much down to the particular ideologies of the news outlets as it is to the ideologies of the candidates or to the party of the candidates. As an example, in the previous chapter, I found that Indigenous sources were more likely to paraphrase or quote a candidate than non-Indigenous sources, thereby giving Indigenous candidates more opportunities to associate themselves with their Indigeneity. Thus, in this chapter I expect to see a similar pattern where candidates are given more room to speak on Indigenous related issues in Indigenous focused sources.

Despite that, I still expect to find, just our previous content analysis demonstrated, that the NDP Indigenous candidates were the most likely to mention their own identity; the NDP candidates Blake Desjarlais and Lori Idoult will likely be more willing to go beyond merely mentioning their Indigeneity but rather will celebrate their identity and directly associate themselves with Indigenous related issues. Conversely, I expect to see, as a candidate for the Conservative party, Marc Dalton downplay his Indigeneity more. As for the Liberal candidate Yvonne Jones, it is difficult to predict what I will find. The fact that the 2021 Canadian federal election had a large focus on Indigenous issues, with

the discovery of mass graves at former residential school sites and the first national day for truth and reconciliation happening, would suggest that the Indigenous Liberal candidates would be more likely to associate with their Indigeneity. However, Yvonne Jones did face questions surrounding the legitimacy her Indigenous Identity claims suggesting that she may try to downplay that aspect of her identity.

Similarly, I expect to find that all the candidates will be more open to associating with their Indigenous identity in the Indigenous-focused sources. In the previous chapter, I discovered that the Indigenous-focused sources were much more likely to associate Indigenous candidates with their Indigeneity than were the non-Indigenous sources. Given that, combined with the audience of the Indigenous-focused outlet would most likely be Indigenous readers, it would make sense for the candidates to play on their Indigeneity more. I have already found some evidence of this trend, with Indigenous candidates being more likely to mention their own identity when quoted in Indigenous-focused publications. This analysis will look beyond mere mentions of Indigenous identity, however, and examine in more depth how candidates associate with their identities.

Discourse Analysis - Moral Craftwork

The first part of this discourse analysis examines how print and broadcast news media in Canada employs moral craftwork in their coverage of Indigenous candidates by distancing themselves from their coverage. They distance themselves by relying on others to make claims while failing to advance their stories toward a more complete understanding. We see the media predominantly rely on a "he said, she said" structure to their stories where they quote candidates and experts for their opinion but fail to provide

additional context or their own analysis of the story. This pattern of reporting facilitates journalists making moral claims without appearing to do so. This is not necessarily done with intent on the part of the writer. Rather since journalists are not critically engaging with their work, they end up relying on their underlying assumptions, which are largely informed by the dominant culture in which they operate. Ultimately, this analysis uncovers two notable patterns in how moral craftwork is used to make moral claims: Indigenous Representation and Identity claims.

To begin, there is a trend in the coverage that subtly implies that the representation of Indigenous people and of Indigenous-related issues will, in and of itself, lead toward Indigenous reconciliation. However, this type of article typically does not go into detail on the challenges or limitations that Indigenous representation of its own may have faced in promoting those ideals. As an example, a CTV article written just after the election sought to give voice to some Indigenous leaders who felt that issues affecting them were not highlighted enough during the election. The leaders discuss how they felt that issues like the mass graves discovered at former residential schools seemed to disappear from political discussions during the election and how it is important for those issues to be in the public discourse. In fact, Serpent River First Nation Chief Brent Bissaillon was quoted as saying:

"Canadians are fatigued. We're tired of hearing about Indigenous issues. We're tired of listening. It's uncomfortable. I get that. It's an uncomfortable thing to live with the truth of what your country has done. But we have to talk about it. We have to work through these issues." (Yun, 2021).

This approach in an article is fine by itself in that it provides an audience to people who have a legitimate concern about what sorts of issues were not as talked about as they should have been. However, the article never attempts to understand the reasons

why these issues fade from public discourse during elections. It is easy to imagine an article that talked about having Indigenous people make up a small percentage of voters in most ridings, so parties have little incentive to discuss Indigenous-related issues. Instead, once this article is finished quoting Indigenous leaders, it pivots to a section about how a record number of Indigenous candidates ran during the election and goes on to name those who had won at the time of the article.

While the author makes no explicit claims about the value of the number of Indigenous candidates, the fact that it comes up in the same article about the low visibility of Indigenous-related issues implies that more Indigenous candidates are the solution. This is a great example of how the media employs moral craftwork. The author made no overt claim in the article, thereby maintaining the traditional notion of journalistic objectivity. However, the content that was chosen to be in the article (and that which was left out) helped to create a moral claim about the value of more Indigenous representation in Canadian elections without helping further the readers' understanding of the underlying causes of the issues discussed in the article, nor of the challenges that Indigenous candidates have in getting elected and if elected the challenges they face in getting issues addressed through legislation. This is not to say that Indigenous representation is bad or that it does nothing, just that the story never sought to expand their reader's understanding of the issue and consequently helped to create a narrative where Indigenous representation is the solution, instead of one of the solutions or a part of a solution.

The uncritical notion that Indigenous representation in elections and government is the solution to Indigenous related issues is a common pattern that shows up repeatedly

in the coverage of Indigenous candidates. In a CBC Radio article published in the early part of the campaign Lori Idlout, MP for Nunavut, talks about changing Nunavut's relationship with the federal government (CBC News, 2021b). In the article, Idlout is asked several questions about her and her campaign, but here, I will focus on just two of them.

In response to the first question, "Why are you running" Idlout responds with an affirmation of the value of Indigenous representation. "With me at the House of Commons, I can help to make sure that my decision-making, my voice, benefits Nunavummiut." Next, Idlout is asked about the main issue that she cares about the most. She responds, "The main area of focus that I'm hoping to bring to Nunavummiut is to talk about redefining Nunavut's relationship with the federal government." She goes on to argue that Nunavut needs to leverage the federal government's desire for Nunavut's resources to negotiate from a position of strength with the feds.

At no point does this article seek to contextualize Idlout's strategy here. Does Nunavut actually have the ability to negotiate with its resources? Does the MP for Nunavut (especially one from a party that was unlikely to form a government) have much power to perform those negotiations? These and other questions are never brought up in the article leaving the reader to interpret Idlout's statements. That, combined with the fact that Idlout explicitly states that she wants to be a voice for Nunavummiut, again promotes the idea that representation in government is the solution for Nunavummiut's issues.

While Indigenous news sources tend to do better at giving their reader more information about Indigenous candidates and at giving Indigenous candidates more voice, they also tend to employ moral craftwork to promote Indigenous representation. As an

example, at the early stage of the campaign, Nunavut News published an article about the pressures of representing Nunavut in Ottawa (Nunavut News, 2021). The article quotes Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, who had decided not to seek a second term. Qaqqaq said, "People like me don't belong in the federal institution... the reality is that this institution and the country has been created off the backs, trauma and displacement of Indigenous people." The article includes that quote, which questions the ability of an Indigenous person to effectively represent Indigenous-related issues because of the history and structure of Canadian institutions but does not go on to address it.

Yes, the point of the article is that representing Nunavut is difficult, so the implication is that on some level, the author may agree with the statement, but as an opinion piece, this was an opportunity to go in-depth on what that means in terms of what incentives Canada is structured around and what it means in terms what an Indigenous MP can expect or be expected to accomplish and the sorts of things they cannot. As a result, the article, while describing the difficulties of representing Nunavut, comes across as implying that representation is the only, or at least the main point of action for dealing with Indigenous-related issues. Overall, this article seems to want to discuss issues but does not want to or is unable to discuss the underlying causes of these issues.

In a similar fashion, the media employs this moral craftwork to distance themselves from other moral claims as well. One of the most prevalent moral claims in news coverage was that of Indigenous identity claims. In their coverage of Indigenous candidates, the news media tend to promote the idea that Indigenous identity is only a matter of personal choice, of blood quantum, or of recognition under Canadian

institutions.² To begin, several months prior to the election, Liberal Labrador MP Yvonne Jones faced questions from NDP Nunavut MP Mumilaqq Qaqqaq about her claim of Inuk identity. In an article by CBC Newfoundland and Labrador, Jones was quoted as saying, "I know who I am. I know who my grandmother and great-grandmother were. I can trace my Inuit history in Labrador back to the early 1800s" (CBC News, 2021a). Here Jones clearly makes a case for her Inuk identity based on her family lineage and personal identification and to ties to a nation recognized by the Canadian state but not by other Inuit nations. In fact, this article highlights the fact that Jones claims membership to the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC). The NCC was formed as recently as 1981 and claimed to be a Metis group until 2010. Although the NCC has been recognized by the federal government, the NCC has not been "...recognized as a part of Inuit Nunangat by any of the four Inuit regions or by the official organizations that represent Inuit Nunangat as a whole."

While this article does provide context to Yvonne Jones's Indigenous identity claims, the coverage during the election often uncritically referred to Jones as Inuk. For instance, in an article from *The Hill Times*, Jones is referred to as "the only Indigenous woman in the Liberal caucus" (Cardozo, 2021). Likewise, Indigenous sources also identify Jones as Inuk without providing the broader context surrounding her Identity claims. *Nunatsiaq News*, while talking about who won their elections in the north, said, "The other Liberal candidate re-elected in the North goes east, as Yvonne Jones, an Inuk

² Here it is important to state that I do not intend to claim that any of the candidates here are falsely claiming Indigenous identity. Nor do I wish to claim that I have any sort of definitive criteria of what makes a person Indigenous. Indeed, we recognize that these claims can represent highly contested issues among and between different members of the Indigenous community. Rather, the goal in this thesis is to highlight a pattern that demonstrates that the media promotes certain criteria over others without explicitly claiming to do so.

woman, was re-elected in Labrador” (Lachead, 2021). Given the prior context of Yvonne Jones Inuk's identity claims, it seems that these two articles, whether they intend to or not, are promoting personal identification, blood quantum, and state recognition as the basis for Indigenous identity. This is not to say that I am claiming that these are invalid means of claiming Indigenous identity or that Jones is not Indigenous, rather I am merely highlighting the fact that the media is, whether with intent or not, promoting personal identification, blood quantum, and state recognition as the means by which Indigenous identity is determined.

However, not all sources preferred personal identification and blood quantum. During the election campaign, *Wind Speaker* published an article questioning how many candidates were claiming Indigenous identity. This article called for candidates to tell voters which Indigenous nations claim them back. In fact, assistant professor of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba Niigann Sinclair was quoted as saying, "They're claiming to be Indigenous when the fact is a closer analysis would show that they don't have a legitimate claim... The fact is that if you're Indigenous to this country, you have obligations, you have responsibilities It's not about who you claim, but who claims you" (Narine, 2021).

Here, *Wind Speaker* uses a different approach to Indigenous identity claims based on community and nationhood. This is not necessarily to say this *Wind Speaker's* approach is correct, but rather that there are other factors to consider when claiming Indigeneity. This, however, was the only example that I found where an article did not imply that personal claims and blood quantum were the means by which Indigenous Identity is gained. This represents the use of moral craftwork in that the media objectifies

candidates' identity claims by failing to provide context to how candidates make their Indigeneity claims. Further, the repeated failure to do so creates a narrative where personal identification and blood quantum are the qualifiers for claiming Indigenous identity. The final chapter will go into more detail on Indigenous identity claims.

Discourse Analysis – Novelty, and Symbolic Annihilation

Closely related to Moral Craftwork is the idea of symbolic annihilation. As described previously, symbolic annihilation occurs when a member of an identity group in a position of notability is used as an example of positive progress, even if their position provides them with little opportunity or power to affect the change that they supposedly represent. Moral craftwork lies at the core of symbolic annihilation. As the previous section showed, moral craftwork allows journalists and the news media to make moral claims without explicitly doing so. In this section, I will examine how the news media employs moral craftwork to create a novelty surrounding Indigenous candidates in Canadian politics. Next, I will demonstrate that candidates often (depending on their party) associate themselves with their Indigenous identity. Here I explore how even though some candidates may play into their Indigeneity in the media their ability to do so may be limited by not just the media's but also their party's expectation of respectability in their public persona.

The news media during the 2021 Canadian federal election concentrated more coverage on Indigenous candidates' Indigeneity than other aspects of their identity, including their gender. Since the news media tends to focus on representation over advancing the readers' understanding of the issues, their coverage often plays up the fact that Indigenous candidates are Indigenous to the detriment of their other qualities. This

creates a sense of novelty among Indigenous candidates that ultimately, just as with female, LGBTQ+, or Black candidates, pushes an understanding on their audience that politics is a white realm where Indigenous people are now being allowed to participate.

Looking at some specific examples, I found that Blake Desjarlais was very much depicted in relation to his Indigenous identity. For instance, in an *iPolitics* article about ridings that the NDP was hoping to gain in the west, Blake Dasjarlais is described as “a Metis activist and community leader” with no other information about him (Silver, 2021). Interestingly, however, Desjarlais was also often described identified by his two-spirit gender identity. In an article from *The Hill Times*, Desjarlais is described as being Canada’s first openly two-spirit MP elected to parliament. However, as is usually the case, Desjarlais is also immediately depicted in relation to his Indigenous identity as “Alberta's only Indigenous MP...” (Al-Mehdar, 2021). Further, as a gender identity specific to Indigenous people, the fact that Dasjarlais’s two-spirit identity was brought up at all likely has more to do with the novelty of Indigenous people in general than with the novelty of his gender identity as gender was rarely mentioned for other candidates.

Moving on, while Marc Dalton seems to have gotten less coverage that discussed his Indigenous identity, his Indigenous identity was still referred to on occasion. However, this was only the case when the article itself was about a related topic. For example, in a *CBC News* article about the Conservative caucus being 95 percent white, Marc Dalton was described as identifying as Metis (Tasker, 2021). Similarly, in an article from *The Hill Times* about whether a Liberal government will take action on their “Indigenous promises,” Dalton was described as Metis when he was quoted as arguing that “some decisions the Liberals have made, like cancelling the Northern Gateway

pipeline in BC, were actually detrimental to the economic well-being of neighbouring Indigenous communities” (Chen, 2021).

Next, Yvonne Jones was routinely discussed in relation to and by her Indigenous identity. In a Nunatsiaq news article, Jones was labelled as an Inuk woman in reference to the fact that she had won her riding of Labrador (Lachead, 2021). It is worth noting here that Indigenous-focused articles seem to draw on Indigenous candidates’ identities as much as non-Indigenous-focused sources. However, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, the Indigenous sources do tend to provide more information about the candidates outside of their Indigeneity and usually allow the candidates to speak through either paraphrasing or quoting more often. Relatedly, Indigenous-focused sources do still seem to promote the *novelty* of Indigenous candidates in Canadian politics. In an *APTN* article about the makeup of parliament, Yvonne Jones was described as Inuk and “kicked things off with a win in Labrador” in relation to Indigenous candidates winning their elections (Martens, 2021).

Lori Idlout did receive some coverage that seems to buck this trend. While she was most often described in relation to her Indigenous identity, there were some instances where she was described in relation to the fact that she was a practicing lawyer. For instance, in a *CBC News* article, Idlout was described as “a lawyer by profession” who “was called to the bar in 2019...” (CBC News, 2021b). Importantly here, the author did not follow up on these statements with a mention of her Indigeneity, though Idlout herself did make mention of her Indigenous identity in the article. However, there were only a handful of examples like this and just as was the case for the other candidates, Idlout was most often described in relation to her Indignity, even when other traits were mentioned.

Overall, as the previous chapter demonstrated, Indigenous candidates were overwhelmingly associated with their Indigeneity more than any other aspect of their identity.

This may seem like a contradiction with the idea that the media is employing moral craftwork to play up the benefits of Indigenous inclusion in politics. However, these two ideas, Novelty and Moral Craftwork, actually feed off each other. In essence, it is because Indigenous people have, for instance, been historically excluded from politics and are thus novel in that their representation is highlighted so often as a solution to Indigenous-related issues. However, even when elected, Indigenous candidates and MPs are often very limited in the substantive change that they can affect. Thus, despite the fact that Indigenous-focused sources do often allow candidates to speak and describe themselves beyond their Indigenous identity, they seem to be feeding into the idea of Indigenous novelty.

Though some candidates do lean toward Indigenous identities, as was expected, this largely seems to fall along party lines. For example, the NDP candidates Blake Desjarlais and Lori Idlout very much played into their Indigenous identity. Desjarlais made his Indigeneity a central part of his campaign, regularly making mention of his Indigeneity in news stories. Desjarlais even went as far as sharing stories of his past, with his mother being a victim of the 60s scoop and his own experiences with anti-Indigenous racism in the Edmonton school system (Bellefontaine, 2021). Idlout took a similar strategy to Desjarlais, routinely associating herself with her Indigeneity. As an example, Idlout's campaign win celebration was described as celebrating "Inuit style" with a

story's headline that read "Two throat singers open the celebration at Lori Idlout's campaign headquarters in Iqaluit" (Driscoll, 2021)

Marc Dalton, on the other hand, rarely, if ever, spoke directly about his Indigeneity. In fact, in the articles examined, I never found a case where Dalton explicitly mentioned his Indigeneity. The other Indigenous Conservative who won his riding, Adam Chambers, in a *National Observer* article about reconciliation, deferred his response stating, "At this time, I would prefer to provide more space to others with more lived experience than myself. I am early on in learning about my own heritage and feel it would be more appropriate to yield the floor to others" (Bukowski, 2021). As expected, clearly, the Conservative Indigenous candidates were not interested in closely associating themselves with their Indigeneity.

Similarly, Yvonne Jones did not seem to incorporate an Indigenous identity into her public persona as much as one might expect from a Liberal candidate. Jones, in a CBC article about where the candidates stand on climate change, never brought up her Indigenous identity. This on its own would not be so strange, but her opponent Amy Norman, who also claims Indigenous identity, did talk about climate in relation to her Indigeneity. "Inuit and people in the north [are] the canary in the coal mine when it comes to climate change. We up here see the impacts way earlier than the rest of the world" (Wilhelm, 2021). Though, given that Jones did face questions surrounding the legitimacy of her Inuk identity claims, it was possible that distancing herself from her Indigeneity was a strategic choice specific to her in order to avoid more discussion surrounding the legitimacy of her claims of Indigenous identity.

The idea of respectability plays into these candidates' public personas as well. In general, all the candidates presented themselves in the news media in a manner that would be considered respectable. This means that, while they would bring up or play into their Indigeneity, they did not present in a way that would defy expectations and never went into detail unprompted. Likewise, the candidates rarely approached Indigenous-related issues with an assertive or aggressive tone of voice. Though, this does not necessarily mean that they were being limited in how they presented or were compelled to behave more respectably. They are, after all, candidates that presumably opted into running for the party that they represented and thus, at least to some degree, agree with their party's approach to Indigenous issues. One might also argue that the media itself could be selectively editing what candidates are saying in a manner that makes them appear more respectable. I, however, would argue that it is more likely that, if an Indigenous candidate did behave in a way that was deemed not respectable, the media would likely jump on the opportunity to drum up controversy in order to attract readers to their outlet.

There is, however, some evidence, especially for the NDP candidates, that how they presented to the public was limited by the desire to appear respectable to the public. It is unclear, however, if this was their choice or one made for them, though it is likely one that both the party and the candidates contributed to. While these two candidates mainly focused their speech on Indigenous-related issues on their own policies or on the perceived failings of the Liberals, Blake Desjarlais did make more assertive remarks in an *Alberta Native News* article when he was paraphrased as saying, "his experiences were the result of deeply-embedded racism throughout Canadian institutions" (Appel, 2021).

Although this is just one example of a candidate challenging the lines of respectability, the fact that it came in an Indigenous-focused publication is not likely a coincidence in that Desjarlais was probably aware that his audience was more liable to agree with the statement than if he were talking to a non-Indigenous news outlet. Further, again while this was one case, this statement by Desjarlais suggests an understanding and belief of deeper lying racism in Canada that he otherwise chose not to mention in the media.

On the other hand, despite the lack of conclusive evidence that candidates are altering their behaviour based on a standard of respectability, there is evidence that breaking the bounds of respectability will lead to more negative coverage. Mumilaqq Qaqqaq, as previously mentioned, called out the racism she experienced while in parliament and levied challenges against Yvonne Jones' Inuk identity claims several months prior to the election campaign. During the election, when Qaqqaq brought those accusations back to the surface, she was described as lashing out and "rekindling a past quarrel" (Neary, 2021). This was one of the few articles that I found that was written with a negative and with more aggressive verbiage being used against an Indigenous person. This suggests that her comment broke the bounds of respectability, and thusly, she received more negative coverage. Interestingly, this is despite the fact that this article was published in an Indigenous-focused publication *Nunavut News*.

All in all, the way in which Indigenous candidates are framed as novel in Canadian politics normalizes politics as a place where Indigenous candidates are entering a white realm, even more so than with their gender. Just as in the previous section, where inclusion being framed as a good thing in and of itself had the effect of framing

Indigenous candidates as being included in an area that was not their own. Novelty frames elections like they do not normally involve Indigenous people and that Indigenous people being involved requires that they will represent Indigenous issues. Essentially, both Indigenous sources and non-Indigenous sources are framing Indigenous representation as a sign of progress and relating them with a limited set of issues while simultaneously undervaluing or downplaying their other traits and qualifications.

If symbolic annihilation, as has been stated, occurs when elected members of underrepresented groups, especially those in influential positions, have their credentials and qualifications undervalued because of their identity in favour of someone who better conforms to the masculine and/or heteronormative political norms, what has been shown in this discourse analysis is symbolic annihilation. This chapter demonstrates that the manner in which Indigenous candidates are presented in the news media creates the image that Indigenous people are novel in politics and consequently limits the kinds of issues that they are associated with. At the same time, candidates, even those who win their elections, have little power to make a substantive change and, as will elaborate on in the next chapter, their representation is often used as a means to suggest that meaningful progress is happening, thereby pacifying calls for more substantive forms of change.

Chapter 6: Discussion

As previously argued, the news media in Canada reflects and reproduces dominant cultural norms back onto their readers. This begs the question, "How, then, does the news media in Canada discuss Indigenous people?" Throughout the previous chapters, I have first found that the news media in Canada employs moral craftwork in a manner that allows them to distance themselves from their moral claims and frame Indigenous candidates as a novel in Canadian politics, thereby often reducing candidates to symbols of Indigenous representation. Second, I found that the news media differ in how visible they made Indigenous candidates. Third, through respectability, helped to limit how candidates can present themselves into the public through the news media.

Despite those findings, we are still left with another question. Why does any of this matter? Why does it matter that Indigenous representation in politics is framed as a good in and of itself, that Indigenous candidates are often portrayed as novel to Canadian politics, that candidates may be limited in how they can present themselves in the media, or that the media seem to promote certain criteria over other when it comes to Indigenous identity claims? In order to fully contextualize our findings from the content and discourse analysis chapters, I next take a closer look at Canada's and Indigenous peoples' relationship with settler-colonialism.

Indigenous Peoples and the Settler-colonial State

This chapter builds primarily on the work of Glen Sean Coulthard. In conceptualizing settler-colonialism and Indigenous people's relationship to a settler state such as Canada, Coulthard's concept of settler-colonialism is founded on the Marxist

notion of Primitive Accumulation, which illustrates the process of capitalistic accumulation through the violent dispossession of workers from means of production, including opening up land to privatization. This concept is central to understanding Canada's contemporary approach to engaging with Indigenous peoples. Coulthard highlights four key departures from Marxist literature on Primitive Accumulation: First, eliminating Primitive Accumulation's "rigidly temporal character" by conceptualizing land dispossession as an continuing process rather than a historical set of events. This shift in perspective allows for one to understand settler-colonialism as both normative and self-reproducing in structure.

Second Coulthard removes Primitive Accumulation's "normative developmentalist character" by recognizing that Indigenous cultures understood and practiced modes of being related to collective consciousness before European arrival and the imposition of capitalist modes of production on Indigenous peoples. Third, by recognizing that colonial power should not be seen as gaining its power from its coercive, repressive, or explicitly violent practices, but rather as its ability to make its hierarchies seem natural. In the Canadian context, settler-colonialism exercises this normative power through Indigenous recognition, allowing the Canadian state to maintain control over Indigenous lands without the use of violent assimilationist tactics.

Alfred (2009) critiques Indigenous recognition, arguing that it creates psychological, financial, and political dependency on Indigenous people. Indigenous communities face a "psychophysical crisis" due to their dependency on the Canadian state, which has led to a state of anomie which reproduces colonialism and capitalism. Thus, Alfred argues, Indigenous resurgence must focus on community healing to

eliminate state dependency and perpetuate oppression. Indigenous candidates working within Canadian political institutions, without understanding and actively opposing settler-colonial recognition, can help reproduce this dynamic. Some do argue, though, that while Canadian news media has structural and normative components that promote settler-colonial perspectives, Indigenous actors have agency and can use these spaces to challenge settler-colonial narratives. Indigenous actors within "proper places" can take advantage of fleeting moments of resistance, such as the *Idle No More* movement, to challenge settler-colonial narratives (Brady & Kelly, 2018).

Fourth, Coulthard (2014) draws on the work of Leanne Simpson (2012) who challenges the heteropatriarchal conditions that are present in Indigenous resurgence movements, such as colonial gender roles, exclusion of women's LGBTQ voices, and dominance of male-centred narratives. Indigenous women and LGBTQ individuals have always been involved in Indigenous resurgence movements, but the patriarchal logic of colonialism has consistently oppressed them. Starblanket (2018) reflects this view and argues that the politics of Indigenous resurgence often view gendered aspects as peripheral or an add-on to anti-colonial methods. Instead, Starblanket argues that any gendered approach to resurgence must challenge power relations between institutions and communities.

To put this argument concisely, while Canadian settler-colonial methods have shifted away from violent policies of explicit assimilation to policies based on recognition, they are still oriented toward to goal of Indigenous land dispossession for the purpose of facilitating capitalist enterprises. These new policies of recognition are designed for the Canadian state to appear to be fulfilling its legal obligations towards

Indigenous people while at the same time being structurally designed to benefit their own interests. On top of that, for Indigenous people, participating in these acts of recognition only serves to legitimize these acts of recognition to both the Canadian public and Indigenous peoples themselves. Thus, these policies of recognition are accepted as the normative means of Indigenous-Settler relations and are thereby reproduced.

Indigenous Candidates, the Media, and the Politics of Recognition

In this chapter, I argue that the way the media, cover Indigenous electoral candidates serves to reproduce and reinforce these politics of recognition towards Indigenous peoples and their relationship to Canada. This by no means is an argument that Indigenous people should not be involved in politics, but rather they should be aware of what can be accomplished through representation in Canadian media or in Canadian political institutions. Similarly, it is again worth noting that the news media's reproduction of the politics of recognition is by no means necessarily done with agency on the part of the media or on any individual journalist.

Members of the news media are a part of the public realm and thus are socialized with the same normative values as society more broadly. Similarly, they are also trained as journalists in a media landscape that has certain ideas about how journalism is to be done and an idea of objectivity that seeks to separate themselves from their coverage. Consequently, because the politics of recognition is so prevalent in Canadian society and journalists are left unable to critically engage with their work, the news tends to uncritically produce and reproduce recognition discourse.

Moreover, while this thesis found little evidence that candidate gender (outside of their visibility in the media) played much of a role in the coverage that they received (especially with regard to candidate novelty), the ideas of Simpson et al (2012) and Starblanket (2018) remain relevant in that any form of Indigenous resurgence that is going to challenge the colonial imposition of hetero-patriarchal norms is structurally limited in its ability to do so. Thus, these movements must first look inward towards more communal means of resurgence rather than relying on an approach that put representation and recognition first.

Moral Craftwork and the Assimilationist Approach to Reconciliation

First, revisiting the idea of moral craftwork reveals the core of how the news media's coverage of Indigenous candidates ultimately promotes an assimilationist approach to reconciliation through Indigenous representation. As I have argued, the news media plays a crucial role in connecting people to information, shaping their interpretations, and reflecting dominant normative values. This is why it is essential to understand the relationship between Canada, Indigenous peoples, and settler-colonialism when interpreting how Canadian news media discusses Indigenous people, particularly Indigenous electoral candidates. This understanding is key for ensuring accurate representation of Indigenous electoral candidates in the media landscape.

Next, because settler-colonial tactics of land dispossession through policies based around recognition remain pervasive in Canadian society and because the media's notion of objectivity promotes the idea of "the view from nowhere", thereby allowing journalists to distance themselves from their moral claims, the news media both promotes and normalizes representation as a path to reconciliation. Further, by distancing themselves

from making moral claims by relying on others to make these claims, the news media often fails to advance their stories toward a more complete understanding of the issues.

In the previous chapter, I found that during the 2021 federal election, the media employed moral craftwork in order to distance themselves from two key claims. The first of which was related to Indigenous identity claims. In their coverage of Indigenous candidates, such as the coverage of Yvonne Jones, the news media tend to promote the idea that Indigenous identity is only a matter of personal choice or of blood quantum as opposed to a different approach to Indigenous identity claims based on community and nationhood. While not explicitly tied to assimilation through recognition, Indigenous assimilation through defining who is and is not Indigenous has a long history in Canada. As Chelsea Vowel (2016) argues, blood quantum rules, as those that are defined in the Indian Act, serve as a form of “slow genocide” that represents “not mass murder, but extinction by definition”.

As I found in this coverage of Indigenous identity, the media never explicitly claimed (or even used the phrase) that blood quantum or personal identification were the means by which Indigenous identity was to be determined. Rather, during the election, the media, for the most part, took candidates’ Indigenous identity claims at face value even if their identity has been called into question in the past or if they failed to share which nation they belong to.

Second, I also saw a pattern in the coverage that subtly implies that the representation of Indigenous people and of Indigenous-related issues will, in and of itself, lead toward Indigenous reconciliation. While I found that, as expected, the journalists made no explicit claims about the value of the number of Indigenous candidates or of

Indigenous candidates winning, the fact is that articles routinely made mention of the progress being made with how many Indigenous candidates were running but failed to discuss the limitation of Indigenous representation when the opportunities presented themselves. The authors made no overt claim in the articles, thereby maintaining the traditional notion of journalistic objectivity, but still allowed moral claims to be made by uncritically publishing stories that promoted Indigenous representation as the way to approach reconciliation.

Put succinctly, I found that the news media employed moral craftwork in a way that both promoted personal identification and blood quantum as a means of claiming Indigenous identity and encouraged Indigenous representation as the means of Indigenous reconciliation. Importantly, both of these patterns in the coverage are assimilationist in nature. Indigenous identity through personal identification or blood quantum continues a tactic of assimilation through definitional erasure that has long been exercised by Canada.

Similarly, Indigenous representation as the means of Indigenous reconciliation is assimilatory in that politics of recognition towards Indigenous peoples has been used as a tactic by Canada to appear to be fulfilling its obligations toward Indigenous peoples, while at the same time maintaining its access to Indigenous lands and resources. Ultimately, what we can see here is that the news media, during the 2021 Canadian federal election, whether with intent or not, employed the principles of moral craftwork in a manner that relied on the logic of contemporary methods of settler-colonialism by promoting assimilationist approaches to Indigenous reconciliation.

Novelty and Symbolic Annihilation

Similar to how the media employs moral craftwork in a manner that ends up advancing assimilationist ideas, the means by which the media frames Indigenous candidates as novel in politics also advances settler-colonial politics of assimilation through symbolic annihilation. Moral craftwork lies at the core of symbolic annihilation. In both the content and discourse analysis chapters of this thesis, I found that Indigenous candidates are more often associated with their Indigenous identity than with any other aspect of their identity, with candidate gender being a distant second. This remained true in both Indigenous and in non-Indigenous focused sources. Further, I also found Indigenous candidates usually do not associate themselves with their own identity, although when they do, they associate themselves with their Indigenous identity more than any others. I also found specific examples among all parties of candidates being referred to primarily by their Indigenous identity, despite the fact that Indigenous candidates from the Conservative and Liberal parties were less likely to associate themselves with their Indigeneity. This was especially true when the article itself was about an Indigenous-related policy or issue.

Moreover, while most articles were not primarily focused on a particular policy issue, when they were, Indigenous candidates were far more likely to be associated with policies related to Indigenous issues. Worth noting again is the fact that while the Indigenous sources do tend to provide more information about the candidates outside of their Indigeneity and usually allow the candidates to speak more often than did the non-Indigenous sources, Indigenous-focused sources did still seem to regularly promote the novelty of Indigenous candidates in Canadian politics.

More importantly, it is clear that the novelty of being Indigenous in politics outweighs the novelty of being a woman, sexual minority, or other ethnic minority in politics. The news media, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, were far more interested in associating candidates with their Indigeneity than with any other aspect of their identity. In the end, the manner in which Indigenous candidates are framed as a novel in Canadian politics normalizes politics as a place where Indigenous candidates are entering a white realm and leads to Indigenous candidates being reduced to symbols of Indigenous inclusion.

This symbolic annihilation, however, represents more than just a barrier to entry into politics for Indigenous people. Symbolic annihilation, through reducing Indigenous candidates' voices and presenting them as novel participants in Canadian elections, ultimately promotes Indigenous representation over other forms of reconciliation. As previously stated, a problem emerges when a candidate for public office who claims to represent a particular community is perceived as endorsing the oppressive structures that target that very group. In this situation, the issue is Indigenous people running for office both are reduced to symbols of Indigenous inclusion who have interest in a limited set of issues usually related to their identity, all the while having little opportunity or incentive to speak on the underlying structural issues affecting Indigenous communities, much less make and implement policy to tackle such issues.

Meanwhile, these Indigenous candidates are still being framed in the media as a sign of progress being made on Indigenous reconciliation. As I have made clear, this ultimately helps the Canadian state to appear to be making substantial progress towards reconciliation while allowing them to maintain access to Indigenous lands and to

continue to overlook its legal obligations towards Indigenous people. Thus, Indigenous people participating in the Canadian election can help to contribute to the Canadian state's ability to practice the settler-colonial politics of assimilation. As I will go over in more detail later in this chapter, this should by no means be taken as an argument on our part that Indigenous people should not run in elections. Rather, this should be interpreted as providing context to the potential limitations and unintended consequences of participating in settler-colonial institutions so that one may avoid potentially contributing to the legitimization of assimilationist policies.

Candidate Visibility and Respectability

Next, while we have seen that media coverage of Indigenous electoral candidates does, through moral craftwork and symbolic annihilation, tend to reduce candidates to symbols of Indigenous representation, it does not mean that there is no room for Indigenous candidates to make positive change. Trimble (2017) argues that while there are many issues with how the news media portrays candidates of underrepresented groups, the way in which the media frames underrepresented groups as novel in politics can also serve to create space to make visible those issues. Trimble also applied this logic to challenge the use of gender and sexuality binaries in academic analyses of media bias. While it is a problem (for Trimble) that gender and sexuality are often framed as binaries in academic literature, Trimble argues that this can be used as an opportunity for feminist scholars to challenge gender and sexual binaries in academia and elsewhere.

Likewise, Brady and Kelly (2018) make a similar argument that while Western institutions (including the media) are "circumscribed in their ability to promote or encourage decolonizing epistemologies" (p 8), those same institutions can provide

unexpected instances where there are opportunities to challenge the same cultural stereotypes that they often promote. They argue “tacticians act within proper places in fleeting moments of resistance, relying on small moments in times when they do not have their own places to act” (Brady & Kelly, 2018, p 10). In our case, "proper places" can refer to media coverage of Canadian elections. There can be opportunities for Indigenous candidates to work within settler-colonial systems to promote some change.

Earlier, I found that NDP candidate Blake Desjarlais was often described by his two-spirit gender identity. In fact, I even referenced an article from *The Hill Times* where he was largely referred to in relation to his identity as Two-spirit and used said article as an example as evidence that he was symbolically annihilated as a token 2SLGBTQIA+ candidate (Al-Mehdar, 2021). However, if I analyze the same article, this time from a different perspective, I can see that Desjarlais used the opportunity to talk about what it means to be two-spirit, about the bullying and racism he has regularly experienced throughout his life, and to talk about what advancing reconciliation might look like including referencing specific calls to action from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Horwood, 2021).

While I would argue that an article like this one still serves to reduce Desjarlais to a representative of his Indigenous and two-spirit identities, he himself used the space to educate and inform potential readers. It is easy to imagine a young two-spirit individual who is struggling with their identity reading this article and feeling a little more hopeful because they can see someone else that has gone through something similar to what they are going through that has now made it Canadian parliament. Further, I can also envision someone reading this article and learning about the 2015 TRC for the first time and doing

more research or discussing it with friends and family. One would be hard-pressed to argue that these are not positive outcomes from a candidate taking advantage of an opportunity presented by a system that remains settler-colonial in nature. Equally, however, it is also fairly easy to suppose that many people reading this article would simply take it as a sign of progress on Indigenous-related issues and move on.

Moreover, it remains impossible to ignore some of the ways in which the news media are oriented toward promoting assimilationist settler-colonial tactics. As previously argued, candidate visibility in the media plays an important role in voter impressions of a candidate and in the number of votes a candidate might receive (Duval, 2023). However, the significance of visibility, I argue, goes beyond winning elections. In order to take advantage of the aforementioned moments of opportunity that the media presents candidates, one has to be afforded the opportunity. Yet, our analysis has revealed that there are disparities in who gets the quality coverage that promotes candidate visibility, even among Indigenous candidates.

For instance, the Indigenous-focused sources did more to promote the visibility of the candidates that they covered. The issue here is that most of the Indigenous-focused sources were regionally focused, with most of the attention being placed on the north. Thus, candidates from a region with fewer Indigenous-focused publications can have less opportunity to use their voices to promote positive change. Similarly, candidates from the three largest parties simply got far more coverage than those running for smaller, less successful parties, meaning that, in order to be visible in the media, a candidate may have to be strategic about which party they choose to run for.

The quality of news coverage also varied by gender. Male candidates are more likely to be mentioned than their female counterparts. Likewise, readers are given more information than just the candidate's name and party affiliation more often for male candidates, and female candidates are less likely to be quoted or paraphrased than male candidates. Here we can see the intersectional impact of Indigeneity and gender: female Indigenous candidates will usually have less visibility in the media and consequently have less chance to progress the issue that they wish to promote than their male counterparts.

Here I return to Leanne Simpson and her colleagues (2012) and Gina Starblanket (2018) in order to explore why (beyond the obvious) this gender disparity is especially an issue for Indigenous candidates. Simpson et al (2012) challenge the heteropatriarchal conditions that she sees as being perpetuated in Indigenous resurgence movements. This includes but is not limited to the imposition of colonial gender roles. Moreover, Starblanket (2018) argues that any gendered approach to resurgence must not only be a core part of the approach, but also it must also challenge the many power relations that exist between institutions and communities and within communities themselves. The very fact that female Indigenous candidates are given less opportunity to be made visible in the news media adds an added layer of difficulty that these women have in challenging the patriarchal norms that are present in Indigenous resurgence movements. Thus, challenging patriarchy is more than just a matter of taking advantage of moments of opportunity. Female Indigenous candidates systemically have less opportunity to speak in the media and thus have less opportunity to push for change.

I also found that Indigenous candidates are limited by respectability in what they can say in the media. While all the candidates that were included in our discourse analysis did behave in a respectable manner, I found little direct evidence to determine whether they were compelled to do so by the media or their parties. That being said, I did find some evidence to suggest that the NDP candidate, Blake DesJarlais, was limited by the desire to appear respectable to the public. While Desjarlais mainly focused their speech on Indigenous-related issues, on their own policies, or on the perceived failings of the Liberals, he did make more assertive remarks in an *Alberta Native News* article.

Although this represented just one example of one candidate challenging the lines of respectability, the fact that it came in an Indigenous-focused publication is not likely a coincidence in that Desjarlais was probably aware that his audience was more likely to agree with the statement than if he were talking to a non-Indigenous news outlet. Though it is possible that he used the same language in interviews with other non-Indigenous media sources and the publications themselves decided against publishing them.

I then took a closer look at the coverage of a former M.P. Mumilaqq Qaqqaq. Qaqqaq called out the racism she experienced while in parliament and called into question Yvonne Jones' Inuk identity claims several months prior to the election campaign. During the 2021 election campaign, when Qaqqaq brought those accusations back to the surface, she was described as lashing out and “rekindling a past quarrel” (Neary, 2021). As one of the few articles that that was written with a negative and with more aggressive verbiage being used against an Indigenous person, it suggests that her comments pushed past the limits of respectability, and consequently, she received more negative coverage. This negative coverage was likely amplified by the fact that Qaqqaq is

a woman on top of being Indigenous, as there is evidence that women also receive negative coverage if they do not appear respectable in the media (Lalancette & Tremblay, 2019).

This showed us that even when candidates do get the opportunity to speak in the media and potentially challenge the settler-colonial narrative, they may be limited by the expectations of respectability present in the news media and/or their own parties. Going back to Brady and Kelly (2018), they also recognize that settler-colonial institutions remain structured in a way that makes more radical change difficult. Yet, they still argue “the overarching systems of settler colonialism may remain, but there are opportunities to create fissures in their standard operations.” (p10).

Chapter 7. Conclusion

The manner in which the news media in Canada covers Indigenous electoral candidates serves to help reproduce and reinforce assimilationist politics of recognition towards Indigenous peoples and their relationship to Canada. Using the concept of moral craftwork this analysis has demonstrated how the news media's coverage of Indigenous candidates ultimately promotes an assimilationist approach to reconciliation through Indigenous representation. Furthermore, the manner in which the media frames Indigenous candidates as a novelty in politics also advances settler-colonial politics of assimilation through symbolic annihilation. Finally, I argued that while there can be some opportunities for Indigenous candidates to be a voice for positive change, they will always be limited in their reliance on the news media for visibility (often along gender lines) and in their need to adhere to a notion of respectability.

All of this is to say that the way the news media in Canada conceptualizes objectivity to separate themselves from their work perpetuates harmful racialized coverage against Indigenous candidates, ultimately aiding Canada's contemporary assimilationist approach to settler-colonialism. In response to his idea of conceptualizing news media objectivity as "the view from nowhere," Duncan McCue offers an alternative approach to journalism that he calls "the view from somewhere" (2022). In this view, McCue argues that journalists should be upfront about who they are and where they come from. This is not just about where the journalists live and work, but also how they are connected to their community, their ancestry, and what values have been passed down to them. This framework is based on the idea that journalists, and the news media more broadly, should be open about who they are and what their values are, and strive to

engage with their stories on a critical level. This approach not only allows journalists to more thoroughly confront their biases and adapt, but it would also allow the reader to situate themselves in relation to the journalist. Readers could then contextualize what they are reading in relation to what they now know about the author, and journalists could use their voice more to contextualize their stories beyond the voice of their subjects.

To conclude, I have made clear that this thesis is not intended to direct Indigenous candidates away from participating in electoral politics. However, the thesis provides an understanding of how Indigenous candidates may want to approach running in Canadian elections. First, if a candidate's or politician's goal is to promote or bring about large structural forms of change in relation to Indigenous resurgence, they will likely have trouble voicing or implementing these sorts of policies. Even so, there is no universal understanding of what reconciliation looks like and no need for Indigenous candidates to focus their time in politics on Indigenous-related issues. Indeed, this thesis has argued that reducing Indigenous candidates to their Indigenous identity can be harmful. Furthermore, there is also room for Indigenous perspectives to be brought to all policy areas, not just to those that are directly related to Indigenous rights and/or issues. Candidates, however, should still be aware of what their goals are and what can be accomplished.

Likewise, regardless of what party an Indigenous candidate belongs to, their Indigenous identity will likely become a key focus of their media coverage, whether they want it to be or not. In a similar fashion, a candidate's party is likely to limit, what sorts of issues a candidate can discuss openly and how they can discuss them as candidates will need to work within the bounds of their party's platform. This effect can be further

compounded by the media outlet as the editorial preferences of the publication are ultimately the final decider as to what gets printed and what gets cut. Ultimately, a candidate's voice is usually not only theirs and breaking with party preference or pushing the bounds of respectability in the media can have consequences in the media and ultimately in the eyes of the public. All of this is to say that, as a candidate, one has to understand what their goals are in running for office and weigh them against a multitude of outside factors which limit what can and cannot be said, and what can and cannot be accomplished.

There is evidence that Indigenous legislators already have an understanding of this dynamic and navigate the relationship between settler-colonial forms of government and the Indigeneity in diverse and unique ways. For example, Carrière and Koop (2023) conducted a set of interviews of Indigenous elected representatives and found overall that these representatives were less concerned with "the inherent tensions of their roles and the conflict between them and Indigenous nationhood" and more concerned with using their roles in a manner to benefit Indigenous people. At one point in their interview, a representative that they named "Interviewee 6" even noted that they recognize that there is a risk of being reduced to a mere representation of Indigenous inclusion. "If you're being a token and you're aware of it, and you're happy with it, just receiving your money, then you will undermine the original issues and original identity" (Carrière & Koop, 2023).

Limitations and Avenues for Future Research

This analysis does, however, have several limitations. To start, both the content and discourse analyses in this thesis are limited in scope. For instance, the content

analysis only examines national and Indigenous focused news sources amounting to a total of 305 unique news articles. However, this study left out any examination of local news sources. It is possible that, local news sources, as they have a more focused scope, could have provided more frequent an in-depth coverage of candidates than did the national focused sources. Moreover, only English language publications I used for this examination meaning any article written in French or in Indigenous languages were left out. Moreover, this analysis does not distinguish between Indigenous focused sources with a focus on specific nations or groups of Indigenous peoples. It is possible that a news outlet with a focus on a particular nation covering a candidate from another nation could have added layer of complexity that may not be evident to either the journalist or to most readers.

On a similar note, both analysis chapters only analysed one election. Consequently, we have no understanding of whether the media's coverage of Indigenous candidates is changing over time or whether the pattern in coverage of the 2021 election represent an anomaly. This is a distinct possibility as Indigenous issues became a key focus of the 2021 election with mass graves found at former residential school sites just prior to the election. Likewise, this analysis lacks any understanding on how the media may editorialize candidates' voices. In the discourse analysis chapter, I speculated that Blake Desjarlais may have been more willing to be outspoken in Indigenous focused publications. However, it is just as possible the Indigenous focused sources were simply more willing to publish Desjarlais' more outspoken quotes.

Finally, while this thesis is focused primarily on electoral candidates, I cannot be sure that these patterns of coverage are limited to just candidates. What about other

prominent Indigenous public figures? Are they bound by the notion of respectability in the same way candidates are? Are they associated with a limited number of topics related to their Indigenous identity as are Indigenous candidates? An analysis that goes beyond candidates would help to address these questions while at the same time enabling us to uncover how much of a role party discipline might play in how candidates present themselves in the media.

Going forward, analyses surrounding media coverage of Indigenous candidates should focus on having more scope. Analysing coverage from more elections, more media outlets with a distinction between national and local sources, and Independent and corporates publications would serve to give more context to how candidates are covered over time and in different types of media outlets. Further, this thesis studied only written language. Discourse consists of more than what is written. Future studies should analyse both spoken media coverage such as is found on radio and television and visual media such as photos news outlets print alongside their stories. Photo based analysis, as an example, could provide more depth to both how Indigenous candidate self-presentation is understood and to how we understand how the media presents Indigenous candidates in different contexts. For instance, I discussed previously how NDP candidates seem to associate themselves with their Indigeneity more than candidates from other parties. However, how a candidate dresses is a big part of how they present themselves to the public. If I had explored how candidates dress, would this trend where the NDP candidates present their Indigeneity more hold true?

Lastly, future analyses of the media coverage of Indigenous electoral candidates would be greatly improved through conducting interviews with candidates and members

of the media alike. To illustrate this point, during this thesis I often found it difficult to state conclusively whether a candidates' behaviour in the media was their choices alone or their party's or the media themselves editorializing their voice. Interviewing candidates would be the best method of teasing out how they felt that they were covered by the media in general and by different outlets in particular. Interviewing members of the media could help to gain insight into how they translate what candidates say to what appears in print.

Bibliography

- Alia, V., & Bull, S. (2005). *Media and ethnic minorities*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Al-Mehdar, Z. (2021, September 27). *Canada's first openly two-spirit candidate is elected to Parliament*. The Hill Times.
<https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2021/09/27/canadas-first-openly-two-spirit-candidate-is-elected-to-parliament/280561/>
- Alfred, T. (2009). Colonialism and State Dependency. *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, 5(2), 42–60.
- Anderson, M. C., & Robertson, C. L. (2014). *Seeing Red A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers*. University Of Manitoba Press.
- Appel, J. (2021, September 15). *NDP candidate Blake Desjarlais wants to uplift Indigenous voices*. Alberta Native News.
<https://www.albertanativenews.com/ndp-candidate-blake-desjarlais-wants-to-uplift-indigenous-voices/>
- Bellefontaine, M. (2021, September 24). Meet Blake Desjarlais, the Métis NDP candidate who just ended a Conservative stronghold in Edmonton Griesbach. *CBC News*.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/meet-blake-desjarlais-the-m%C3%A9tis-ndp-candidate-who-just-ended-a-conservative-stronghold-in-edmonton-griesbach-1.6187809>
- Bennett, A. (2015). Found in Translation: Combining Discourse Analysis with Computer Assisted Content Analysis. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 43(3), 984–997. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829815581535>
- Boumans, J. W., & Trilling, D. (2015). Taking Stock of the Toolkit. *Digital Journalism*, 4(1), 8–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2015.1096598>
- Boyer, Yvonne. (2006). First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Women's Health. National Aboriginal Health Organization. Accessed November 17, 2022.
- Brady, M., & Kelly, J. (2018). *WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM : indigenous media tactics in canadian culture*. UBC Press.
- Bulowski, N. (2021, October 4). “We can't truly have reconciliation until we have that truth.” Canada's National Observer.
<https://www.nationalobserver.com/2021/10/04/news/we-cant-truly-have-reconciliation-until-we-have-truth>
- Burns, P., & Shor, E. (2021). Racial stereotyping of indigenous people in the Canadian media: A comparative analysis of two water pollution incidents. *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne de Sociologie*, 58(2).
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cars.12335>
- Cardozo, A. (2021, October 1). Trudeau has plenty of fresh faces, proven talent to address clear gaps in his cabinet. *The Hill Times*.
<https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2021/10/01/trudeau-has-plenty-of-fresh-faces-proven-talent-to-address-clear-gaps-in-his-cabinet/269625/>
- Carrière, R., & Koop, R. (2023). Indigenous Political Representation in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 56(2), 257–278.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/s0008423923000173>
- CBC News. (2021a, April 23). “I know who I am:” Labrador MP defends Inuk identity after Nunavut MP's questions Social Sharing Facebook Twitter Email Reddit

- LinkedIn. *CBC Newfoundland and Labrador*.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/jones-inuk-identity-nunatakavut-questioned-1.5999068#:~:text=Labrador%20member%20of%20parliament%20Yvonne%20Jones%20is%20defending,and%20southern%20Labrador%20is%20%22not%20an%20Inuit%20region.%22>
- CBC News (Ed.). (2021b, August). Meet the Nunavut Candidates: NDPs Lori Idlout want to redefine Nunavut's relationship with the Feds. *CBC North*.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-candidates-federal-election-2021-ndp-1.6157831>
- Chen, A. (2021, September 29). *Hope remains for Liberal action on Indigenous promises, but spotty record leaves many advocates skeptical*. The Hill Times.
<https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2021/09/29/hope-remains-for-liberal-action-on-indigenous-promises-but-spotty-record-leaves-many-advocates-skeptical/229651/>
- Coulthard, G. S. (2014). *Red skin, white masks: rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. Minneapolis; London University of Minnesota Press 2017.
- Crawford, Neta C. "Content Analysis-- A Contrast and Complement to Discourse Analysis" *In Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis - Qualitative methods* 2.1 (2004): 15-39.
https://wcfia.harvard.edu/files/wcfia/files/870_symposium.pdf
- DeCillia, B. (2021). Cloaked Meaning and Moral Craftwork: Progress and Perpetual Problems in the News Coverage of Indigenous Peoples and Canada's Justice System. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 46(3), 587–612.
- Douglas, V. (2022). *An introduction to indigenous health and healthcare in Canada: bridging health and healing*. Springer Publishing Company, Llc.
- Driscoll, K. (2021, September 20). NDP's Lori Idlout celebrates win in Nunavut Inuit style. *Aboriginal Peoples Television Network*. <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/ndps-lori-idlout-celebrates-win-in-nunavut-inuit-style/>
- Duval, D. (2023). *Does visibility in the news means more votes? Yes*. paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association. York University, Toronto, Canada.
- Everitt, J. (2003). Media in the Maritimes: Do female candidates face a bias. *Atlantis*, 27(2).
- Everitt, J., & Camp, M. (2009). Changing the Game Changes the Frame: The Media's Use of Lesbian Stereotypes in Leadership versus Election Campaigns. *Canadian Political Science Review*, 3(9).
- Fierke, Karin. "World or Worlds? The Analysis of Content and Discourse" *In Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis - Qualitative methods* 2.1 (2004): 15-39. https://wcfia.harvard.edu/files/wcfia/files/870_symposium.pdf
- Fontaine, T. (2015, October 17). *An indigenous guide to the 2015 federal election*. CBC.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/an-indigenous-guide-to-the-2015-federal-election-1.3179421>
- Gidengil, E., & Everitt, J. (1999). Metaphors and Misrepresentation. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 4(1), 48–65.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1081180x99004001005>

- Gidengil, E., & Everitt, J. (2003). Talking Tough: Gender and Reported Speech in Campaign News Coverage. *Political Communication*, 20(3), 209–232. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584600390218869>
- Goodyear-Grant, E. (2013). *Gendered News*. UBC Press.
- Hall, S. (1997). *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices*. Sage.
- Hardy, Cynthia., & Harley, Bill., & Phillips, Nelson. “Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?” *In Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis - Qualitative 2.1* (2004): 15-39. https://wcfia.harvard.edu/files/wcfia/files/870_symposium.pdf
- Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: the Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Pantheon Books.
- Hobson, B. (2021, September 1). Record number of Indigenous candidates running in federal election. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-record-number-of-indigenous-candidates-running-in-federal-election/>
- Hooghe, M., Jacobs, L., & Claes, E. (2015). Enduring Gender Bias in Reporting on Political Elite Positions. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 20(4), 395–414. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161215596730>
- Hopf, Ted. “Discourse and Content Analysis: Some Fundamental Incompatibilities” *In Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis - Qualitative methods 2.1* (2004): 15-39.
- Hopmann, D. N., Vliegthart, R., De Vreese, C., & Albæk, E. (2010). Effects of Election News Coverage: How Visibility and Tone Influence Party Choice. *Political Communication*, 27(4), 389–405. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2010.516798>
- Horwood, M. (2021, October 13). *First two-spirit MP aims to be architect of change, speak up for Indigenous, LGBTQ2+ voices*. The Hill Times. <https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2021/10/13/first-two-spirit-mp-aims-to-be-architect-of-change-speak-up-for-indigenous-lgbtq2-voices/229681/>
- Lachead, D. (2021, September 21). *How the North was won*. Nunatsiaq News. <https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/northern-ridings-to-watch/>
- Laffey, Mark., & Weldes, Jutta. “Methodological Reflections on Discourse Analysis” *In Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis - Qualitative methods 2.1* (2004): 15-39. https://wcfia.harvard.edu/files/wcfia/files/870_symposium.pdf
- Lalancette, M., & Tremblay, M. (2019). Media Framing of Lesbian and Gay Politicians: Is Sexual Mediation at Work? *In Queering Representation: LGBTQ People and Electoral Politics in Canada*. UBC Press.
- Lowe, Will. “Content Analysis and its Place in the (Methodological) Scheme of Things” *In Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis - Qualitative methods 2.1* (2004): 15-39. https://wcfia.harvard.edu/files/wcfia/files/870_symposium.pdf
- Martens, K. (2021, September 21). 36-day federal election does little to change makeup of Parliament. *Aboriginal Peoples Television Network*. <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/federal-election/>
- McCue, D. (2022). *Decolonizing Journalism: A Guide to Reporting in Indigenous Communities*. Oxford University Press.

- Narine, S. (2021, September 7). *Candidates claiming Indigeneity need to tell voters which nations claim them back*. Windspeaker.com.
<https://windspeaker.com/news/windspeaker-news/candidates-claiming-indigeneity-need-tell-voters-which-nations-claim-them>
- Neary, D. (2021, September 27). *Qaqqaq lashes out at Savikataaq, Jones in social media posts*. NUNAVUT NEWS. <https://www.nunavutnews.com/news/qaqqaq-lashes-out-at-savikataaq-jones-in-social-media-posts/>
- Neuendorf, Kimberly A. “Content Analysis-- A Contrast and Complement to Discourse Analysis” *In Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis - Qualitative methods* 2.1 (2004): 15-39.
https://wcfia.harvard.edu/files/wcfia/files/870_symposium.pdf
- Nunavut News. (2021, August 15). Nunavut editorial: Representing Nunavut in Ottawa comes with immense pressure. *Nunavut News*.
<https://www.nunavutnews.com/opinion/nunavut-editorial-representing-nunavut-in-ottawa-comes-with-immense-pressure/>
- Palmater, P. D. (2020). *Warrior life: Indigenous resistance & resurgence*. Fernwood Publishing.
- Pitcan, M., Marwick, A. E., & boyd, danah. (2018). Performing a Vanilla Self: Respectability Politics, Social Class, and the Digital World. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 23(3), 163–179. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmy008>
- Richardson, R. J. (2022). Local TV Newsroom Diversity: Race and Gender of Newscasters and Their Managers. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 66(5), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2022.2121834>
- Said, E. W. (1993). *Culture and Imperialism*. Vintage.
- Sampert, S. (2010). Let Me Tell You a Story: English-Canadian Newspapers and Sexual Assault Myths. *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law*, 22(2), 301–328.
<https://doi.org/10.3138/cjwl.22.2.301>
- Silver, J. (2021, August 19). *The Sprout: NDP election platform, new Hay West program*. www.ipolitics.ca. <https://www.ipolitics.ca/news/the-sprout-ndp-election-platform-new-hay-west-program>
- Simpson, L. (2012). Queering Resurgence: Taking on Heteropatriarchy in Indigenous Nation Building . *Mamawipawan: Indigenous Governance and Community Based Research Space*.
- Simpson, L., Nanibush, W., & Williams, C. (2012). Introduction: The Resurgence of Indigenous Women’s Knowledge and Resistance in Relation to Land and Territoriality: Transnational and Interdisciplinary Perspectives. *InTensions*.
<https://doi.org/10.25071/1913-5874/37369>
- Starblanket, G. (2018). Complex Accountabilities: Deconstructing “the Community” and Engaging Indigenous Feminist Research Methods. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 42(4), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.17953/aicrj.42.4.starblanket>
- Tasker, J. P. (2021, September 22). After Monday’s vote, the federal Conservative caucus will be 95 per cent white. *CBC News*.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/conserative-caucus-95-per-cent-white-1.6185707>
- Tolley, E. (2015). *Framed*. UBC Press.

- Trimble, L. (2017). *Ms. Prime Minister: gender, media, and leadership*. University Of Toronto Press.
- Trimble, L., & Everitt, J. (2010). Belinda Stronach and the Gender Politics of Celebrity. In *Mediating Canadian politics*. In *Mediating Canadian Politics*. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- van Dijk, T. (1991). *Racism And The Press*. Routledge.
- van Dijk, T. (2015). “Critical Discourse Analysis” In D. Tannen, D. Schiffrin & H. Hamilton (Eds.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. (pp. 352-371). Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. New version in Second Edition of the Handbook, Deborah Tannen, Heidi Hamilton & Deborah Schiffrin (Eds.), 2015. (pp. 466-485). Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, UK. <https://discourses.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Teun-A.-van-Dijk-2015-Critical-discourse-Analysis.pdf>
- Vowel, C. (2016). *Indigenous writes: a guide to First Nations, Métis & Inuit issues in Canada*. Highwater Press.
- Wagner, A., & Everitt, J. (2019). Introduction: Gendered Identities and Political Communication. In *Gendered mediation: identity and image making in Canadian politics* (pp. 3–26). UBC Press.
- Wagner, A., Bird, K., Everitt, J., & Lalancette, M. (2023). Holding Back the Race Card: Black Candidates, Twitter, and the 2021 Canadian Election. *The Journal of Race Ethnicity and Politics*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1017/rep.2023.11>
- Wagner, A., Lalancette, M., Everitt, J., & Bird, K. (2023). *To Queer or not to Queer? LGBTQ Candidates’ Use of Instagram During the 2021 Canadian Election*. International Political Science Association conference, Universidad Católica Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Wagner, A., Trimble, L., Sampert, S., & Gerrits, B. (2017). Gender, Competitiveness, and Candidate Visibility in Newspaper Coverage of Canadian Party Leadership Contests. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 22(4), 471–489. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161217723150>
- Wallace, R. (2021). “Warriors don’t sleep til noon”: colonial rhetoric and the framing of Indigenous recipients of welfare in Canadian print news, 1990–2015. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 9(2), 300–318.
- Wilhelm, H. (2021, September 17). This is where 4 N.L. federal candidates stand on climate change. *CBC News*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/nl-federal-candidates-climate-change-1-6176308-1.6176308>
- Yun, T. (2021, September 21). Indigenous leaders say issues affecting their communities largely ignored during the election. *CTV News*. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/federal-election-2021/indigenous-leaders-say-issues-affecting-their-communities-largely-ignored-during-election-1.5594693>

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Seth Tagle

Education: **Bachelor of Arts:** Political Science
University of Victoria
September, 2017 – December, 2021
Master of Arts: Political Science
University of New Brunswick – Saint John
September, 2022 – Expected May, 2024

Publications: N/A

Conference Presentations: “Indigenous Electoral Candidates in the Canadian Media:
The
Assimilationist Politics of Recognition” Atlantic Provinces
Political Science Association: Annual Conference
St. Thomas University – Fredericton, NB, October 16, 2023

Academic Awards: UNB Graduate Student Teaching Award,
UNB Graduate Student Research Award