

Penitential Pilgrims: Indigenous Truth Commissions in the Northwest Coast

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Abstract

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This dissertation identifies lessons learned from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission for a U.S. context by focusing on the history and contemporary legacies of Indigenous boarding schools in the Northwest Coast, a region divided by two U.S.-Canadian borders. I interpret metaphors of water to explore different approaches to justice among Christian, secular, and Indigenous worldviews that are in conflict in the process of forming a U.S. Truth Commission. While reconciliation remains a highly contested approach, I find that Indigenous peoples are able to achieve some concrete benefits from Truth Commissions through raising awareness of historic injustices and asserting sovereignty and self-determination. This dissertation is divided into three stand-alone articles:

- The first article analyzes trends in the funding received by church denominations from the U.S. and Canadian government to operate Indigenous mission schools in the Northwest Coast

in the context of widespread official renouncements of the Doctrine of Discovery. This article provides an accounting of both money and land, identifying over \$40 million in 2024 USD that the government paid church denominations for mission schools in the Northwest Coast between 1876 and 1908, as well as roughly 1,500 acres of land grants by the U.S. government to churches on Native reservations, many of which are likely to include Native cemeteries.

- The second article conducts a statistical analysis of the relationship between boarding schools and logging of coastal Indian Agencies of Washington and Oregon state between 1911-1920, finding a statistically significant causal relationship between boarding school attendance and logging revenues. In doing so, this article identifies systemic government corruption in the simultaneous management of boarding schools and land. This article also traces Native logging practices in the Pacific Northwest and demonstrates how Native leaders were able to leverage these practices to promote self-determination and cultural revitalization.
- The third article is an autoethnography of participating in the 2023 Tribal Canoe Journey that explores the role of Indigenous canoes as symbols for Indigenous governance in the context of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a pending Truth Commission in the United States. This article provides a model for non-Native allyship that support Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty throughout the region.

Together, these articles provide vantage points for exploring the ways that three different discourse communities—Christian, secular, and Indigenous--understand and engage with the ongoing politics of Truth Commissions within the Northwest Coast.

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Preface

Wholly Water

How much do you value a flower?
Some folks thought they'd give it a try.
A bubble gave to them power,
For beauty cannot tell a lie.

Yet perception can change in a moment,
A bubble would pop than get caught,
And the froth from all they were cooking,
Flowed off to where they were not.

For currency flows towards the interest,
And the banks tend to lend out a hand,
As they float many loans down the channels,
To distant and faraway Lands.

Here, divine dreams flood foreign markets,
Tapping children for shameful profits.
And holy waters damn the rivers,
Nightmares forged from living scriptures.

Blood remembers broken covenants,
Wholly water testifies of sacraments,
Tears of penance for laundered Lands,
Repairing bonds destroyed by man.

Introduction

“I must tell of things as they were and really this is not my story but yours.”

~Former Residential School Student

“Education and justice are democracy's only life insurance.”

~Nannie Helen Burroughs

In 2021, the Washington state legislature voted for a statue of Native treaty activist Billy Frank Jr. (Nisqually) to replace 18th century Christian missionary Marcus Whitman as one of two statues representing the Evergreen State in the U.S. Capitol Building. Frank Jr.’s statue joins a charged mix of Native representations at the heart of the U.S. Congress, including the Statue of Freedom atop its domed roof that blends stereotypes somewhere in-between an Indian princess and Roman goddess (Fryd, 2001). Most of this artwork is overwhelmingly created by white men, though Frank Jr.’s statue will be made by Hai Ying Wu, a Chinese artist who emigrated after the Tiananmen Square protests. Regardless, these Native representations stand in stark contrast to the growing number of “unexpected Indians” (Deloria, 2004) who are walking these halls of power, such as Debra Haaland (Pueblo of Laguna) and Sharice Davids (Ho-Chunk) – the first two Native woman ever elected to the U.S. Congress, and in the case of Deb Haaland, the first Native woman to serve as the Secretary of the Interior. Haaland and Davids are leading a chorus of voices calling for artwork in the capitol to more “accurately and respectfully” portray Native history (Tully-McManus, 2019). Yet, Congress revisiting this history is more than just an esoteric matter of public art.

In 2022, Pope Francis visited Canada in a much-publicized apology tour for the Catholic church's role in operating government-funded residential schools for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit for over a century. This apology is one of 94 "Calls to Action" in the final report from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), operating between 2008-2015 as part of a settlement agreement with nearly 90,000 living survivors of these schools in the largest class-action lawsuit of Canada's history.¹ However, the Pope did not easily embark on this self-described "penitential pilgrimage." In the summer of 2021, widespread reporting of unmarked graves for children near residential school sites forced the Catholic Church to respond publicly. On the first stop of his pilgrimage, the Pope delivered a homily at Lac Saint Anne, named after the grandmother of Jesus, where he discussed the healing power of "living water" before imploring the Church to avoid "defending the institution rather than seeking the truth, of preferring worldly power to serving the Gospel" (Vatican, 2022). This tragic reality is now bleeding into the U.S. body politic, where Secretary Haaland initiated a study of Native gravesites at the parallel system of U.S. boarding schools, and Congressional legislation is pending for a Truth and Healing Commission, notably absent the rhetoric of reconciliation.

What are the implications of Canada's TRC for a U.S. context where church and state are considered separate? What are different ways to understand the historical truth about government-funded, church-operated boarding schools in the United States? And in what ways are church denominations able to serve as effective allies for Native peoples in their struggles for justice? The answers to these questions have sweeping implications for Indigenous peoples across the United States and Canada, and beyond. To date, Canada has paid out multiple billions of dollars to survivors of residential schools, and ongoing legal challenges such as the British

¹ In 2023, 83 of 94 calls to action remain uncompleted, according to the Yellowhead Institute: <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/trc/>

Columbia Treaty Process are undercutting the very foundations of Canada's territorial sovereignty across vast swaths of unceded land not covered by treaties. In the United States, Secretary Haaland has already completed an initial investigation by the Department of the Interior (DOI) into boarding school gravesites with clear recommendations for further research. The outcome of pending Congressional legislation for a Truth Commission will be a defining point in the ongoing relationship between Native peoples and the United States government.

A Truth Commission on Native boarding schools in the U.S. would be in a long line of recent Truth Commissions that work to understand and address some of the most violent conflicts in the world. Since the 1970s, national governments have established over 35 Truth Commissions as a form of transitional justice, typically right after a period of intense violence. Priscilla Hayner (2011) provides a broad definition of Truth Commissions as: "(1) focused on the past; (2) set up to investigate a pattern of abuses over a period of time, rather than a specific event; (3) a temporary body, with the intention to conclude with a public report; and (4) officially authorized or empowered by the state" (p. 11). While Truth Commissions are often focused on reconciling a divided society, they do not have to be. Numerous variations exist including Truth and Memory, Truth and Justice, Truth and Dignity, and Truth and Healing.

As part of a global movement for Indigenous rights, some Truth Commissions have focused specifically on violence against Indigenous peoples, which can span much longer histories than, for example, a recent civil war. In 2007, this global movement culminated in the United Nations General Assembly adopting the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand – all former British settler colonies – were the only countries to vote against UNDRIP because of concerns about legal

implications. Since then, all four have reversed their position, and among them only the United States has yet to establish a Truth Commission.

However, Truth Commissions are by no means a panacea for social conflict, particularly those focused on the relationship between states and Indigenous peoples. For example, advocates have dealt a wave of criticism against Canada's TRC as a tool of the state to frame these conflicts as historic rather than contemporary, noting such blatant claims as Canada's Prime Minister Harper in 2009 at the G20 that "We also have no history of colonialism" just a year after formally and publicly apologizing to residential school survivors on behalf of the Canadian government. For this reason, among others, a growing movement in Canada is claiming that "reconciliation is dead." In his book *Silencing the Past*, Michel-Rolph Trouillot offers a compelling framework for how institutional power shapes what historical narratives are accepted as truth through the creation of what counts as official sources and their organization into government archives. Discussing the clash between widely accepted historical narratives and unexpected events, he writes, "When reality does not coincide with deeply held beliefs, human beings tend to phrase interpretations that force reality within the scope of these beliefs. They devise formulas to repress the unthinkable and to bring it back within the realm of accepted discourse" (p.72). This cognitive dissonance sets another key stake for the work of Truth Commissions – people's basic understandings of reality. As anthropologists and other scholars have long noted, conflicts between Indigenous peoples and settler societies don't just dispute social reality, they frequently represent a clash of fundamentally different worldviews.

These differences create a daunting task for a government commission tasked with nothing less than understanding the truth. In their global survey of Truth Commissions, Priscilla Hayner attempts a slightly more modest goal:

Defining truth is contentious. It is impossible for any short-term commission to fully detail the extent and effect of widespread abuses that took place over many years, or, for most, to investigate every single case brought to it. However, it can reveal a global truth of the broad patterns of events, and demonstrate without question the atrocities that took place and what forces were responsible. If it is careful and creative, it can also go far beyond simply outlining the facts of abuse, and contribute to a much broader understanding of how people and the country as a whole were affected, and what factors contributed to the violence. This cannot be the whole truth— that is impossible to provide in one report. But it can hope to represent a broad—and specific—truth that will be accepted across society. (Hayner, 2011, p. 84)

In the context of the Native boarding schools, what are competing versions of a broader understanding of how people were affected? Answering this questions is inherently ridden with conflict. Yet, Native leadership appears prepared to lean into this conflict, with organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians formally endorsing the pending Congressional legislation in 2023.

This endorsement comes after several years of Native organizations and researchers clashing with the government over access to and control over data. In 2019, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) compiled a review of literature on U.S. boarding schools in response to the relative dearth of research compared to Canadian residential schools (NARF, 2019). This same year, NARF and numerous allied organizations also filed a submission with the United Nations Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (UNWGEID) to hold the United States accountable for research on the “fate of Indigenous children taken into federal custody pursuant to the USA’s Indian Boarding School Policy between 1869 and 1960” (UNWGEID, 2019). This submissions came in the wake of the U.S. government’s ignoring a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for access to government records. Furthermore, the first recommendation from the 2022 report of Secretary Haaland’s DOI study is continued funding for a more complete investigation of U.S. boarding schools (Newland, 2022). These calls for

research focus on the U.S. boarding school system, but researchers have worked even less on comparing the U.S. and Canadian systems. To date, Andrew Woolford's *This Benevolent Experiment* (2015) remains the only major comparative study, focusing on New Mexico's boarding schools and Manitoba's residential schools.

This dissertation fills this dearth of research by presenting a study of boarding and residential schools and their contemporary legacies throughout the Pacific Northwest Coast. The Northwest Coast stretches roughly 2,000 miles along the Pacific Ocean, from southeast Alaska to northern California, and spans two U.S.-Canada borders. Perhaps the most defining characteristic of the region is plentiful water. Coastal mountains create a natural barrier between the rest of the continent and trap rain clouds from the ocean, creating a long, damp corridor throughout the region. Combined with mild temperatures, this ecosystem supports the largest living organism on Earth: old-growth trees. In large part due to these giants, the forest of the Pacific Northwest holds more biomass than any other ecosystem in the world, including tropical forests. Yet, commercial and government loggers have cut down over 95 percent of these old-growth forests since the 19th century (Kelly and Braasch, 1990). Fjords and archipelagos also create extensive coastlines, and while the waters have historically teemed with some of the largest fisheries in the world, overfishing and habitat destruction are making salmon increasingly threatened or endangered throughout the region (Ford, 2022; Good et al., 2007).

Indigenous peoples have also made their homelands in the Northwest Coast since time immemorial. This study seeks to take seriously the claims of Indigenous nationhood and sovereignty in the Northwest Coast while also recognizing the very real differences between Indigenous peoples within this region. Yet across the region, centuries of epidemics spread through settler societies have killed an estimated 90 percent of some Indigenous peoples

(Shoemaker, 2001; Boyd, 1994). Ongoing state violence, not least through child welfare programs such as boarding schools and adoptions, has tested the resilience of Indigenous peoples and their cultures. Nevertheless, the Northwest Coast remains one of the most linguistically diverse regions in the continent. Rather than simply comparing the United States and Canada, this dissertation utilizes a trans-Indigenous methodology to contribute to “globally Indigenous fields of inquiry” (Allen, 2012). This approach follows in the footsteps of other trans-Indigenous studies across nation-state borders, such as Oaxaca (Mercado, 2023) and the Columbia Plateau (Lozar, 2019), to unsettle the dominant regions defined by the U.S. and Canadian governments as well as provide an alternative perspective on the work of Indigenous Truth Commissions that is not solely tethered to nation-state borders.

This dissertation is organized as follows. The remainder of this introduction draws on differing metaphors of water to bring into conversation three theoretical frameworks for justice that are the focus of this dissertation: Christian, secular, and Indigenous. This discussion seeks to bring the theoretical resources of each perspective to bear on the topic of boarding and residential schools throughout the Northwest Coast. The rest of the dissertation is composed of three stand-alone articles that engage with the topic of boarding schools from each of these three perspectives.

The first article explores the implications of widespread Christian condemnation of the Doctrine of Discovery and presents a model for denominations to engage with their role in the contemporary legacies of Native boarding schools and pending Congressional legislation for a Truth Commission. This chapter is based on the analysis of a dataset of U.S. and Canadian government funding to church denominations for the operation of Native boarding schools. This dataset extends from California to Alaska and identifies the amount of funds received by

denomination for the period 1876-1908. This period aligns with the peak of government funding for churches across both countries and demonstrates both how these schools spread throughout the region irrespective of borders as well as how government funding to churches continued well after the U.S. largely stopped funding churches at the turn of the century. Furthermore, this chapter identifies roughly 1,500 acres of church land grants on Native reservations from the U.S. government during this same period, many of which likely contain burial grounds, and includes a discussion about what repatriation of these lands might look like.

The second chapter explores the relationship between Native boarding schools and resource extraction through an econometric analysis of government data between 1911-1920. This analysis focuses on the coastal region of Washington and Oregon where the U.S. government established Native reservations in some of the largest old-growth forests in the country. This focus on just the U.S. side of the border due to the constant regulatory environment necessary for a causal statistical analysis. The analysis finds that Native boarding schools directly caused an increase in Indian agency revenues from resource extraction in the form of logging revenues. This conclusion points to government corruption in the simultaneous management of boarding schools and land. Simultaneously, this article also examines how Native leadership in this region leveraged the incipient logging industry to support cultural revitalization and self-determination. Based on these results, this article provides specific recommendations for a Truth Commission in the United States, including information management systems that can steward the necessary data to support recommendations that would increase the land holdings of Native governments.

The third chapter provides an autoethnography of participating in Tribal Canoe Journey as one example of Indigenous cultural revival along the Northwest Coast. Started by Native

leadership in 1989 on the 100th anniversary of Washington State's founding, this annual event has grown dramatically since its beginning and is an intentionally transnational, trans-Indigenous movement that spans, and perhaps defies, the U.S.-Canada border. This chapter explores the role of Indigenous canoes as symbols for Indigenous governance in the context of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a pending U.S. Truth Commission. I find canoes to represent two different models of reconciliation: one model of separate but parallel paths for Indigenous and settler societies and another model where Indigenous peoples are to some extent incorporated within wider society. In this context, this article models non-Native allyship to support Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty throughout the region.

Finally, this dissertation concludes with a discussion on lessons learned from Canada's TRC for a U.S. context, including the pitfalls of reconciliation, the controversial legacy of religious syncretism, and ongoing conflicts over knowledge production. I provide a brief analysis of the challenges and opportunities of incorporating together the approaches of these three chapters. This analysis highlights the role of data governance, and the way in which institutions attempt to control official narratives through the access to and use of facts. In this highly politicized intersection, not all data are equal. Here, I attempt to complicate the distinctions between these artificially separate knowledge systems by highlighting significant ways that people have worked across boundaries at the margins.

Theoretical Framework

“Faith is always personal, but never private.”

~Jim Wallis

In 1984, a private drug and alcohol rehabilitation center fired Alfred Smith (Klamath) from his job as a counselor. Smith, a boarding school survivor, and another coworker (Galen Black) were both members of the Native American church and had ingested peyote as part of a religious ceremony. When they applied for unemployment compensation from Oregon State, the state denied their claim. The Supreme Court eventually sided with Oregon State in *Employment Division v. Smith (1990)*, prompting the U.S. Congress to pass the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993 in a rare example of bipartisan unity. This case provides a potent example of how Native religious expression cuts to the core of U.S. government policy.

Despite the founders of the U.S. government extolling principles of religious freedom, federal government has not consistently extended this freedom to Native peoples. Rather, the U.S. government has actively and systematically oppressed Native religious practices, particularly through boarding school policies. Congress recognized this discrimination in 1978 when it passed the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) to explicitly affirm Native people’s religious freedom that Congress had previously denied. Following the passage of AIRFA, the Church Council of Greater Seattle organized ecumenical leadership representing twenty denominations and more than 300 congregations for a formal apology on November 21, 1987 at the site of a desecrated Native burial ground in Seattle (Vernon, 1999). The Church Council of Greater Seattle created official documentation of the apology, including a

commitment to support Native religious freedom, as well as a donation of \$1,000 to the Native American Right Fund that went directly to supporting religious freedom cases, including *Employment Division v. Smith* (NARF, 1988). Churches have widely distributed the text of this apology around the world, and the United Nations also displays it at their buildings (St. Peter Catholic Mission, 2005). Yet, the Church Council has since reissued the apology once in 1997 and again in 2014, which included specific calls against fossil fuel megaprojects in Puget Sound due to the specific request of leaders from the Lummi Nation (Earth Ministry). These fraught relationships demonstrate how Native religious freedom continues to be a source of deep contestation.

Religious freedom has always shaped the central debates of the U.S. government. The first clause of the first Amendment of the U.S. Constitution doesn't, after all, have to do with free speech. "The First Amendment provides that Congress make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting its free exercise...." Yet, the idea of an explicit 'wall of separation' between church and state appears nowhere in the founding documents of the U.S. government.² In the 1830s, Alexis de Tocqueville, a Catholic priest from France, spent nearly a year traveling around the United States to study its experiment in democracy where he identified a penetrating insight about the relationship between church and state, "[O]ne cannot say that religion in the United States influences the laws or the specifics of political opinion, but it does shape mores, and it is by regulating the family that religion endeavors to regulate the state" (Tocqueville, 2004, p. 336). It is no surprise then to learn that nearly every major Christian

² Rather, this phrase comes from an 1802 letter of Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptist Church, though the Supreme Court has since cited it in rulings, most notably in cases over the intersection of religion and public schooling, see: *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947) and *McCullum v. Board of Education* (1948).

denomination in the United States was involved in operating Native boarding schools where children were systematically separated from their families.

Beginning in the second half of the 20th century, political philosophers have increasingly refined their understanding of how religion intersects with policymaking. John Rawls provides one of the most influential views of how religious arguments enter into the political discourse of a liberal democracy. He advocates that any political arguments from a “comprehensive doctrine,” such as religion, must be accompanied by an additional argument that also appeals to a shared sense of justice. Yet, secularists such as Richard Rorty (2003, p. 148) have forcefully resisted this approach by claiming that religious arguments in the public sphere are inherently a “conversation stopper.” In response, Rawls modified his claim that comprehensive doctrines must include translation, which Rawls called the criteria of reciprocity, “Hence the idea of political legitimacy based on the criterion of reciprocity says: Our exercise of political power is proper only when we sincerely believe that the reasons we would offer for our political actions—were we to state them as government officials—are sufficient, and we also reasonably think that other citizens might also reasonably accept those reasons” (Rawls, 1997). This idea of reciprocity remains central to political theory on the legitimacy of a constitutional democracy.

In comparison, Jeffrey Stout has gone even further to encourage the inclusion of religious arguments in public discourse. He argues that without hearing people’s true reasoning for their positions, “We will remain ignorant of the real reasons that many of our fellow citizens have for reaching some of the ethical and political conclusions they do” (Stout, 2003, p. 64). While Rawls might agree with this particular statement, Stout also points out that by the standard Rawls has set, the oratory of the abolitionists such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Lincoln’s second Inaugural Address, would all be inadmissible arguments in the public sphere. Rather, Stout says

that it is perfectly reasonable for people to have differing understandings of justice, and these differences require an open conversation where people can listen to those with whom they disagree. He agrees with Rorty that “faith claims” are a conversation stopper when a person fails to provide any reasonable argument for their position. However, “a claim can be religious without being a faith-claim” (Stout, 2003, p. 87). Furthermore, Stout suggests that conversation is exactly what religious arguments foster.

Conversation is a good name for what is needed at those points where people employing different final vocabularies reach a momentary impasse. But if we do use the term ‘conversation’ in this way, we shall have to conclude that conversation is the very thing that is not stopped when religious premises are introduced in a political argument. It is only the normal discourse of straightforward argument on the basis of commonly held premises that is stopped. (Stout, 2003, p. 90)

Instead, Stout lays out a careful set of principles for how religious arguments should be introduced into a public conversation, including tact, respect, and openness to “immanent criticism” in the form of Socratic questioning. He suggests that it is a form of respect to base such questions in the “reasons relevant from their point of view” (Stout, 2003, p. 73).

Additionally, Stout clearly recognizes that there are “circumstances in which it would be imprudent or disrespectful for someone to reason solely from religious premises when defending a political proposal” (Stout, 2003, p. 64). That is to say, respect is one that acknowledges differences between perspectives, and includes these different perspectives in a conversation.

Amartya Sen argues for a new political theory of justice within a global context as an explicit update to Rawls framework. He argues for a pragmatic approach to justice based on two points: improving capabilities and comparing outcomes. He contrasts this approach with Rawls whose focus is on idealized institutional arrangements to create a just world, which he dismisses as an impossible precondition. Sen argues,

for replacing what I have been calling transcendental institutionalism – that underlies most of the mainstream approaches to justice in contemporary political philosophy, including John Rawls’s theory of justice as fairness – by focusing questions of justice, first on assessment of social realizations, that is, on what actually happens (rather than merely on the appraisal of institutions and arrangements); and second, on comparative issues of enhancement of justice (rather than on trying to identify perfectly just arrangements). (Sen, 2009, p. 410)

Instead, Sen argues for intentionally drawing from global examples to inform public debate on issues of justice in which consensus is not necessary for action. Instead, he expects people to have incongruent ideas, a “plurality of reasons,” even in situations when people can agree that an injustice occurred (Sen, 2009, p. 394). In the context of tense disagreements over Truth Commissions, this approach is useful for moving conversations forward.

In this dissertation, I present three distinct systems of knowledge that are in conflict for understanding truths about Native boarding schools and their contemporary legacies: Christian theology, secular states, and Indigenous place-based knowledge. I argue that a hypothetical Truth Commission in the United States is an ideological conflict zone for these three knowledge systems, each with their own ways of understanding justice. In the following three sub-sections, I sketch out a brief framework for each one that I draw on throughout the three chapters of this dissertation and that are meant to guide the reader through learning about this topic. Notably, these distinctions are necessarily oversimplifications. As I seek to demonstrate throughout the dissertation, important distinctions exist within each one, and these three approaches also overlap in significant ways. Nevertheless, I argue these three approaches represent important stakeholders in the policymaking process and are thus helpful to understand key dynamics.

In what follows, I present metaphors of water as a theoretical bridge between these three ways of knowing. As central to life, water provides a useful place to start a dialogue, and its

metaphorical use in conversations on justice is not unprecedented. One need look no further than in 1963 when Martin Luther King Jr. gave his prophetic speech in the heart of the U.S. capital, “We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.”³ However, as I demonstrate, water is interpreted very differently by Christian, secular, and Indigenous vantage points and recognizing these differences is key to effectively bridging the gap between their respective worldviews. In this sense, I follow the footsteps of John Lutz who advocates for a postmodern wawa (or pomo-wawa) in academic dialogue on the history of aboriginal-white relations, which draws on the history of Chinook jargon (a.k.a. wawa) as a language of cross-cultural communication in the Pacific Northwest. “As with the other wawa, crossing boundaries of disciplinary cultures has led to a negotiated language filled with ambiguity. Scholars pick up terms used by others and redefine them” (Lutz, 2008, p. 15). It is my contention that this approach, while admittedly oversimplified, is still useful in starting conversation on what continues to be an extremely painful, triggering, and divisive issue.

An Exegesis of ‘Living Water’

The practice of Christian theology is firmly rooted in the Bible and attempts to diminish its centrality have been met with unyielding resistance. For example, some Methodists have popularized the use of the “Wesleyan Quadrilateral” that puts the Bible on equal footing with other ways of understanding the world, namely tradition, reason, and experience. In response, theologian Randy Maddox (also a Methodist minister) offers the term “honoring conference” to recenter scripture, yet necessarily read “in conference” with other approaches, namely: different parts of the Bible, the Holy Spirit, others who hold different Biblical interpretations, Christian

³ Martin Luther King Jr. drew this phrase directly from the Bible, Amos 5:24.

tradition, Christian faith, and the natural world. In doing so, Maddox presents dynamics that he hopes are “characteristic of Christian theological reflection at its best across the spectrum of varying traditions within the Christian family” (p. 96). This unwavering reliance on Biblical interpretation is essential for how many leaders within Christian denominations engage with understanding their relationships to Native boarding schools. Yet, important distinctions do exist across the Christian family about which books to include in the Bible, their order, and their translations.

The publication of a First Nations Version of the New Testament by Rain Ministries in 2021 stands as an important development in the role of the Bible among syncretic forms of Native Christianity. Terry Wildman (Ojibwe and Yaqui), who led an all-Native council for the translation, describes the process as translation the original Hebrew and Greek into Indigenous languages before then into English. Rain Ministries distributed roughly 1,300 draft version of initial chapter to Native churches across the continent for community feedback. This translation includes many interesting elements such as the use of dynamic equivalence, described as a “thought-for-thought” translation rather than “word-for-word” to better resonate with “the traditional heart languages of the over six million English-speaking First Nations people of North America (Wildman, 2021). This translation offers a unique starting point for engaging with the Pope Francis’s evocative reference of “living water” in his apology to First Nations for residential schools.

While water imagery is used through the Bible, the term “living waters” is used much more sparingly. In the New Testament, the original Greek term for living water is “hydōr zōn”, and the term is only used in the Gospel of John. The first time it is used is the story of the Samaritan woman at the well, which is the longest documented conversation in John that Jesus

has with any one person. This story is frequently referenced in the context of interreligious dialogue, and it is worth repeating here in full through the First Nation's translation. The story begins with Jesus traveling through Samaria to avoid the Pharisees who were alarmed at his growing number of followers. As is apparent, the First Nation's translation includes retranslated names and places to emphasize the meaning of the original Greek within a First Nation's context.

Creator Sets Free (Jesus) was gathering more followers for the purification ceremony that Gift of Goodwill (John), although it was not he but his followers who were performing the ceremony. When Creator Sets Free (Jesus) found out that the Separated Ones (Pharisees) knew of this, he left the Land of Promise (Judea) to return to Circle of Nations (Galilee). On the way he had to journey through the territory of High Place (Samaria).

There he came to a place called Burial Site (Sychar), which was near a piece of land Heel Grabber (Jacob) had passed down to his son Creator Gives More (Joseph).

The introduction to this story is important because Jesus is intentionally traveling in a foreign land, through an area that was a well-known burial site of Joseph. Dr. Demetrius Williams notes that Jesus did not need to travel through Samaria to reach his destination, and most Galileans of that time (such as Jesus) would have taken other routes since Samaritan and Jewish people were highly segregated societies (Williams, 2022). Instead, he ventured into a foreign land to pass by the burial site of their ancestors.

Weary from his journey, about the sixth hour of the day, Creator Sets Free (Jesus) sat down to rest at the ancient watering hole of Heel Grabber (Jacob), while the ones who walked the road with him went to the nearby village to find some food.

A woman from High Place (Samaria) came to the well to draw water Creator Sets Free (Jesus) saw the woman and said to her, "Would you give me some water to drink?"

She *found her voice* and asked, "Why would you, a man from the tribes of Wrestles with Creator (Israel), ask me for a drink, seeing I am a woman from High Place (Samaria)?"

She said this because the tribes of Wrestling with Creator (Israel) have no dealings with the people from High Place (Samaria).

This encounter sets the stage for a conversation between them about water alone in the middle of the day at a well. As Dr. Williams points out, Jews would typically not speak to Samaritans let alone share a water vessel with them. Jesus was breaking multiple customs by requesting water from this foreign woman. The First Nations translation emphasizes this point in the italicized response, “She *found her voice...*” in which she challenges Jesus’s seemingly inappropriate request. Dr. Mitzi J. Smith (2018) interprets this request through a “shared cultural understanding of hospitality...one human being calling on another human being to meet a human need, irrespective of gender, ethnicity/race, or class” (p. 329). At this point, the conversation takes its first turn as Jesus responds to the woman’s challenge by talking about living water.

“If you only knew about Creator’s good gift,” he answered, “and who it is who asks you for a drink, you would ask him for living water and he would give it to you.”

She said to him, “Honored One, this watering hole is deep, and you have no way to draw out the water. Where will you get this living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Heel Grabber (Jacob), who gave us this well and was first to drink from it with his children and animals?”

At this point, the woman still believes that Jesus is talking about physical water, and she makes what Dr. William’s describes as an ironic reference to Jacob, who was the most recent shared ancestor between the woman and Jesus. In doing so, she demonstrates her historical awareness of Samaria, which was colonized by foreign nations after the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel just over half a millennia before their conversation. Jesus continues to share what he means by living water.

“The ones who drink from this well will thirst again,” Creator Sets Free (Jesus) answered. “But the ones who drink the water I give will never thirst, for this water will become a river flowing from inside them, giving them the life of the world to come that never fades away, full of beauty and harmony.”

“Honored One, please give me this water,” she said to him, “so I will never thirst again or need to walk this long path to get a drink.”

He said to her, “Go to your husband and bring him here.”

“I have no husband,” she answered.

“Yes, that is true,” Creator Sets Free (Jesus) said. “You have had five husbands, and the man you are with now is not your husband.”

“Oh! I see. You are a prophet!” she said back to him. “Our ancestors honored and served the Great Spirit on this mountain. But your people say the only place to make our prayers and perform our ceremonies in the Village of Peace (Jerusalem).”

This point of the conversation marks where the woman realizes that Jesus is talking about spiritual thirst, rather than physical water. However, when the woman does not at first understand, Jesus requests the woman bring her husband. Scholars have interpreted this request several different ways. Dr. Williams notes that much of the story to this point follows the pattern of betrothal scenes in Hebrew Bible, in which a man travels to a foreign land, meets a woman at a well who gives him water, and they ultimately marry. However, Dr. Andrew Arterbury argues that this request is more in line with the protocols of hospitality, and that the “instructions follow the logical progression of events that generally take place when a stranger seeks hospitality. Namely, the Samaritan woman is expected to direct the stranger to a hospitable home or to initiate the process whereby the head of her household will extend an offer of hospitality” (Arterbury 2010, 77). Regardless, the woman’s honest response is a bold truth to admit to a foreign man alone at a well.

The next part of the conversation is one of enduring controversy. Numerous interpreters have pointed to the woman's numerous husbands and living situation as evidence that she was sexually promiscuous, a prostitute, or simply living in sin (e.g. Keener 2003, p. 504; Neyrey 2007, p. 95; Zhang 2007). However, these interpretations ignore the fact that the text provides no reason why she had been married multiple times. Furthermore, these interpretations ignore the norms of a highly patriarchal society that did not allow women to initiate divorce and restricted her options for housing. As Dr. Williams points out, these interpretations "result from interpreters' own prejudices" (p. 353). Furthermore, Jesus does not judge her. Instead, the woman demonstrates a careful knowledge of religious practices between Samaritan's and Israelites.

Yet, additional interpretations of this verse rely instead on its allegories for colonization. Dr. William's points out that in Aramaic, the language Jesus and the woman would have used to communicate, the word *ba'alim* has a double entendre as both husband and Lord. Consequently, their dialogue could also be symbolic of either the five deities worshipped in Samaria or the five nations that had historically colonized the region. The current man she is with would then be analogous to the Roman empire's presence in the region. While there is no way to know for sure, "they do help to mitigate the biased moralizing that has dominated the characterizations of the Samaritan woman, and reveal instead the larger and more acute effects of colonial rule and powers on indigenous subject peoples" (Williams, 2022, p. 355). This interpretation also helps explain the woman's realization that Jesus is a prophet and her discussion of different places of worship between their people. Jesus then responds in kind by sharing that the time for separate places of worship is past. Notably, the First Nations version emphasizes the clear dignity of this woman:

“*Honored* woman, trust my words,” Creator Sets Free (Jesus) said to her. “your people honor and serve him, but in ways they do not fully understand. We honor and serve him with understanding, for the good road that sets us free has been entrusted to the tribes of Wrestles with Creator (Israel). But the time is coming when all who honor and serve the Great Mystery will not need to do so in this mountain, nor in Village of Peace (Jerusalem). The Father is looking for the ones who will honor him in spirit and truth – and the day for this has now come. The One Above Us All is spirit, and all who honor and serve the Great Spirit must do so in spirit and truth.”

“I know the Chose One will come,” she said, “and when he comes, he will make all things clear to us.”

Creator Sets Free (Jesus) said to her, “I am the Chosen One, the one who is speaking to you now.”

Just then his followers returned. They wondered why he was talking to a woman, but no one said to her, “What do you want?” or to him, “Why are you talking to her?”

The woman left her water pouch, went to the village, and told the people, “Come and see this man who knows everything about me. Could he be the Chosen One?”

In this end to their exchange, Jesus gives respect and honor to both the religious practices of the woman’s people as well as those of his own people. He also shares for the first time to anyone that he is the Chosen One, meant to bridge the divide between their people. At this point she leaves her water pouch, either as a gift or in a hurry, as she leaves to evangelize to her people. Consequently, many Christian traditions, such as the Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Churches, honor her as the first Apostle, at least equal to the twelve disciples. Consequently, this layered story demonstrates how Jesus uses the concept of “living water” to reach across numerous social and customary boundaries to engage with the Samaritan woman in a complex theological discussion that marked them both changed in the process.

The only other mention of “living water” in the New Testament is when Jesus goes to Jerusalem during the Festival of Tabernacles (the First Nations version calls this the Festival of Shelters). The Torah commanded this annual Jewish pilgrimage to the temple in Jerusalem as a

harvest festival, and the last day of the festival centered around the ceremony in which a priest carried water from a nearby pool of water (the Pool of Siloam) to pour over the temple's altar as an offering to God. Onlookers would recite the words of Isaiah, "With glad hearts we will draw from the wells, water that will set us free." The Gospel of John describes Jesus at the ceremony:

It was now the last and greatest day of the Festival of Shelters. *After the ceremony* Creator Sets Free (Jesus) stood before the people and cried out with a loud voice, "The ones who thirst must come to me and drink! Put your hope and trust in me. I am the one the Sacred Teachings spoke of when they said, 'Rivers of living water will flow out from inside him.'"

He was saying this about the Spirit, who would soon be given to the ones who believed in him. This Spirit had not yet been poured out, for Creator Sets Free (Jesus) had not yet risen to his place of honor, power, and beauty.

Drawing on the symbolism of this sacred ceremony, Jesus uses the metaphor of 'living water' to describe himself as its source. Thus in citing this term, Pope Francis draws up on the layered meaning of this concept, and the First Nations Version of the New Testament provides an important source for understanding this context. Notably, an otherwise marginalized and victimized Samaritan woman is raised to a position of prestige and honor as she challenges Jesus to engage in one of the most theologically important conversations of the New Testament. Through the gift of living water, she is empowered to spread a message that transcends national borders.

The Statistical Indigene

The state's perspective on water is perhaps most easily understood by looking at the administration responsible for its management: the U.S. Department of Reclamation. Established in 1902, they are currently "the nation's largest wholesale water supplier" (Bureau of

Reclamation, 2015). If there is one metaphor to understand the state's vantage point, it is that *water is currency*. And if water is currency, statistics are the language used to manage it. I develop this metaphor in the Northwest Coast by tracing the statistics on financial flows to hold the state accountable for systematic corruption. In particular, I apply this framework to two interrelated issues: deforestation and violence against Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples and states have a long history of conflict over the use and abuse of official statistics. In *Seeing Like the State*, James Scott offers a compelling framework for understanding the use of statistics as state reactions to complex natural and social worlds that are “bureaucratically indigestible in their raw form” (Scott, 1998, p. 22). In response, an essential process of statecraft is making these worlds more “legible” by simplifying them into easily measurable and manageable statistics. As Scott demonstrates, in seeking to understand the world, the power of the state ends up actually remaking the world in these categories. In extreme situations, the results can be tragic and explain “the logic behind the failure of some of the great utopian social engineering schemes of the twentieth century” (Scott, 1998, p. 4). Yet, in cases such as boarding and residential schools, the state's reliance on statistics does offer one benefit to researchers in the proliferation of official documentation on their internal operations.

The “agriculture of legibility” discussed by Scott is particularly useful in the context of densely forested regions such as the Northwest Coast. In a common theme across numerous cases of failed social engineering, the state errors by applying the logic of scientific forestry to manage the commercial availability of timber by focusing on annual revenues as the single statistic of productivity, reducing forests to timber farms. This singular focus excludes all else that goes unmeasured.

Exaggerating only slightly, one might say that the [early modern European state's] interest in forests was resolved through its fiscal lens into a single number: the revenue yield of the timber that might be extracted annually.

The best way to appreciate how heroic was this constriction of vision is to notice what fell outside its field of vision. Lurking behind the number indicating revenue yield were not so much forests as commercial wood, representing so many thousands of board feet of saleable timber and so many cords of firewood fetching a certain price. Missing, of course, were all those trees, bushes, and plants holding little or no potential for state revenue. Missing as well were all those parts of trees, even revenue-bearing trees, which might have been useful to the population but whose value could not be converted into fiscal receipts. Here I have in mind foliage and its uses as fodder and thatch; fruits, as food for people and domestic animals; twigs and branches, as bedding, fencing, hop poles, and kindling; bark and roots, for making medicines and for tanning; sap, for making resins; and so forth. Each species of tree-indeed, each part or growth stage of each species-had its unique properties and uses. (Scott, 1998, p. 12)

While the state might view these losses as unavoidable, Scott presents numerous examples of how this short-sighted approach is actually determinantal to the state's long-term interests. For example, clearcut logging eventually gave way to monocrop forestry, depleting soil nutrients and leading to a downturn in yields. In the Northwest Coast, deforestation also quickly led to dredging and logjams in the rivers, destroying critical fish habitats. For effective governance, Scott argues that the inclusion of local, bottom-up knowledge as an essential counterbalance to top-down state administration.

Indigenous scholars have built off Scott's seminal work to develop their own theories about Indigenous statistics, particularly on the dominance of deficit-based approaches. In the introduction to *Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Policy*, Maggie Walter (Trawlwoolway) and Stephanie Carroll (Dene/Ahtna) build on Scott's work to analyze a central feature of settler state governance: the so-called 'Indian Problem.' They argue that Indigenous policy is based on a cyclical process of failed state intervention based on the perceived deficit of Indigenous peoples. "[T]here is an unstated, but largely accepted, premise that Indigenous policy problems are

unsolvable because Indigenous Peoples are too problematic; an assumption supported by the existing Indigenous data of disadvantage” (Walter and Carroll, p. 8). Repeated interventions continually fail without changing the framing of the issue. For example, Walter and Carroll discuss the historic context of Indigenous child welfare policies across Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (CANZUS), “There is little to indicate that the current removal of Indigenous children from their families will not, one day, be also recognized as the policy disaster that it is” (Walter and Carroll, p. 4). As this dissertation seeks to demonstrate, Indigenous boarding and residential schools fit comfortably alongside Scott’s list of failed social engineering projects, such as Soviet collectivization and villagization in Tanzania.

Repurposing statistics is a major challenge faced by policymakers seeking to address these issues. Maggie Walters argues that the vast majority of official statistics on Indigenous peoples are fundamentally based the 5D data model: disparity, deprivation, disadvantage, dysfunction and difference. “Attempting to move outside this trope of the statistical Indigene is to find yourself in a data desert” (Walter, 81). Walter expands on these ideas in her co-authored book with Chris Anderson, *Indigenous Statistics*, in which they argue that statistical methods themselves are not the problem; rather the theoretical model underlying their use is the issue, “we argue that the researcher’s standpoint dictates how he or she makes sense of the many competing theoretical frames and therefore selects it (or them) as most appropriate for the research” (Walter and Anderson, 2013, p. 54). In making this distinction, they argue that statistical methods can be repurposed to build on Indigenous theory.

In repurposing statistical methods, the developing practice of ethnostatistics is particularly useful. Robert Gephart (2019) defines ethnostatistics “as the study of the construction, interpretation, and display of statistics in quantitative social research” (p.9). They

demonstrate its utility at three different levels: producing a statistic, statistics at work (developing models), and statistics as rhetoric. Each of these levels decodes the cultural assumptions implicit in statistical analyses in order to make the discipline of statistics more self-reflexive in its application. The applications of an ethnographic analysis of official statistics allows for the development of models that repurpose government counting from a different perspective.

Increasingly, researchers are applying the principles of Indigenous statistics to residential and boarding schools that use official statistics to hold the state accountable. For example, Volume 4 of Canada's TRC report includes a detailed statistical analysis of death rates at residential schools as part of their analysis to locate unmarked graves and repatriate remains, when appropriate. In a similar manner, Preston McBride (2020) leverages statistics from U.S. off-reservation boarding schools to argue that gross negligence by government officials led directly to mortality rates significantly higher than children elsewhere in the country. This dissertation builds on these examples of leveraging official statistics to hold states accountable by tracking government funding to schools where recruitment was perversely incentivized based on per-capita funding for children.

This approach requires careful reflection about the process of translating sensitive personal narratives into statistical analyses. One of the most thoughtful discussions of this process is provided by Sarah Deer (Muscogee Nation) on using statistics in the ongoing battle by tribal governments to overturn the precedent set by the Supreme Court in *Oliphant v. Suquamish* (1978) where tribal governments cannot prosecute rape and sexual violence by non-Native men against Native women on reservations. Deer unpacks the story and impact behind the often-cited statistic that one in three Native women will be raped in their lifetime.

Numbers are powerful players in American politics; the statistics about violence against Native women are almost always referenced in federal reports about rates of crime in Indian country and have served as valuable sound bites during the past ten years of reform. Without the publication and circulation of somber statistics, the federal law reform of the past few years would likely not have happened. In that sense, the data are invaluable, but numbers in and of themselves offer nothing in the way of long-term solutions to the crisis. (Deer, 2015, p. 2)

Deer pairs these somber statistics with the painful intergenerational impact of this epidemic of violence on the lives of survivors, their families, and their communities. In doing so, she provides the personal stories behind the numbers to show how this violence has affected many Native psyches.

Imagine living in a world in which almost every woman you know has been raped. Now imagine living in a world in which four generations of women and their ancestors have been raped. Now imagine that not a single rapist has ever been prosecuted for these crimes. That dynamic is a reality for many Native women—and thus for some survivors, it can be difficult to separate the more immediate experience of their assault from the larger experience that their people have endured through a history of forced removal, displacement, and destruction. All these events are attacks on the human soul; the destruction of indigenous culture and the rape of a woman connote a kind of spiritual death that is difficult to describe to those who have not experienced it. It is not only Native women who have been raped but Native nations as a whole. (Deer, p. 12)

She also highlights the active solutions developed and led by local communities of women. In doing so, she provides one of the most powerful examples of how statistics can be responsibly leveraged to address the ongoing violence against Native peoples. Given the high rates of physical and sexual violence reported in boarding and residential schools, this example is particularly relevant when quantifying school statistics.

Mni wičoni (“water is life” in the Lakota language) grew into an international and transnational movement over the last decade to stop construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline through Native lands. This movement has spread around the world. For example, in 2017, New Zealand made history by recognizing the Whanganui River as having the same legal rights as a person. In the Northwest Coast, the movement to protect water has focused on trying to stop two major pipelines through British Columbia: the Coastal GasLink and Transmountain Extension Pipeline. In the United States, this movement successfully stopped the construction of a proposed coal export terminal in their homelands that would have been the largest coal terminal in the country. Jewell Praying Wolf James (Lummi) helped lead this campaign through his role as the head of the House of Tears Carvers. He led the carving of a 22-foot totem pole and then drove it across the Pacific Northwest raising awareness about the proposed terminal. In 2014, the totem stopped at St. Mark’s church in Seattle (Carder, 2014), the same year when the Church Council of Greater Seattle reissued its formal apology to the Native peoples for the third time, along with a call to help stop the coal terminal at James’s request.

The rise of global Indigenous movements challenges the practices of Truth Commissions in liberal democracies such as Canada and the United States. These movements have grappled with incorporating religious practices into governance bodies, such as at the United Nations. For example, since its founding in 1982, the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples (WGIP) quickly became a key forum for the evolution a global Indigenous identity and the development of an initial draft of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Muehlebach (2001) describes the controversial role of prayer during these meetings in the otherwise secular United Nations.

Indigenous delegates have always insisted on opening the WGIP with ceremonial prayers. This has again and again been a site of contestation. According to the rules of the institution, public religious utterances such as prayers are usually not permitted in, before, or after meetings. The U.N. then, is a prayer-free zone. Despite this, indigenous delegates have in the years of their work at the U.N. managed to remap this zone as one where moments of sacredness can be created.... Nowadays, the sight of the chair standing to indigenous prayer, with—however begrudgingly—all state delegates and even the translators in their glass boxes joining in, is as commonplace at the WGIP as it is unique to the U.N. in general. (Muehlebach, 2001, p.426)

This controversy over prayer demonstrates the challenge of introducing Indigenous religious practices into otherwise secular government institutions. Nevertheless, Indigenous advocates argue this change of practice is crucial. Muehlebach provides this example of prayer as one practice of many in a politics of morality “aimed at articulating what has gone wrong in the world today” (p. 417). Yet, they also find that indigenous advocates debating land claims in terms of morality has achieved minimal success. Instead, they argue that a shift in narrative took place as Indigenous activism grew to incorporate numerous delegates from throughout Asia and Africa. “[T]hese newcomers have vigorously taken up the new eco-political discourse to translate indigenous claims to land into claims to knowledge and (by implication) the land on which the production of this knowledge relies” (p. 436). Consequently, global Indigenous movements now frequently embody arguments not just of what went (and continues to go) wrong, but what Indigenous knowledges add to an increasingly fraught environmental landscape throughout the world.

Nevertheless, Indigenous values are in deep conflict with liberalism. Sheryl Lightfoot (2016) provides a summary of the many Indigenous scholars who write about the incompatibility of Indigenous self-determination and liberal individualism.

In short, Indigenous peoples require not only protection against discrimination on an individual basis, but they also require some protections, as collectives, for their cultures

and ways of life.... The failure or outright refusal of liberal states to recognize and accommodate Indigenous difference thus causes a particular type of discrimination and creates a form of assimilationist violence. (Lightfoot, 2016, pp. 8-9)

From Lightfoot's perspective, UNDRIP offers a "subtle revolution" to both global politics and established international relations by offering an alternative approach to dominant forms of state governance. She demonstrates how the only four countries to vote against UNDRIP in 2007 (the so-called CANZUS countries: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States) is evident of the threat that Indigenous self-determination presents for states heavily invested in the world order's status quo. Lightfoot suggests that these country's "over-compliance" of Indigenous rights within the national framework of liberal multiculturalism is due to their deep resistance to global Indigenous rights discourse.

Nevertheless, an increasingly global Indigenous agenda has gained footing since the establishment of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in 2000 and the adoption of UNDRIP by the UN General Assembly in 2007. A 2009 report commissioned by UNPFII focused specifically on global trends among Indigenous peoples and boarding schools (Smith, 2009). This study demonstrates how boarding schools are not a phenomenon unique to Canada or the United States, but rather are institutions with the "historic purpose...to assimilate indigenous peoples into the dominant society of which they lived" (Smith, 2009, p.2). Frequently, they also served the purpose of training an elite class to govern Indigenous communities and negotiate with the colonial state. Yet, in the United States and Canada, "boarding school experiences are particularly brutal," with high rates of abuse and neglect creating intergenerational trauma (Smith, 2009, p. 28). Consequently, this report helps place the U.S. and Canadian experience of boarding schools into a global context.

Within this global context, states are increasingly establishing Truth Commissions on injustices experienced by Indigenous peoples.⁴ Yet those that additionally focus on the idea of reconciliation are particularly controversial, especially in settler nation-states like the CANZUS countries. In their study of public reconciliation performances, Edmonds (2016) states, “for many Indigenous peoples and allied others in settler nation states today, ‘reconciliation’ has become a dirty word.” The politics of reconciliation are frequently poor substitutes for reparations that instead serve to legitimize the status-quo and gloss over historical violence. Yet Edmonds does not fully reject reconciliation politics, suggesting it “forms part of a transnational movement driven by the global politics of redress and the ‘age of apology’” (Edmonds, 2016). Rather, they focus on the way that Indigenous people can creatively leverage these initiatives.

Arthur (2014) offers also offers lessons learned from past Truth Commissions that can be applied to make them more effective going forward for Indigenous peoples. A significant part of their takeaways concerns expectations. “A truth commission cannot lead to self-determination by itself. But it may be part of a longer-term process leading in that direction” (Arthur, 2014, p. 207). Arthur suggests that Truth Commission for Indigenous peoples can “enhance civil society; they can legitimate or delegitimize political actors; and they can reframe important political issues for a broader public” (Arthur, 2014, p. 209). However, they are frequently “burdened with outsized expectations for change” (Arthur, 2014, p.210). Instead, they may aspire and contribute to larger social changes while only having an indirect impact. This critical issue of scope is one important lesson they draw from Canada’s TRC, “[I]f there been a good-faith negotiation process, rather than a court settlement, there would have been a better chance that the Canadian TRC would address a broader range of issues important to aboriginal communities” (Arthur,

⁴ Some example include Guatemala, Peru, Bangladesh, Kenya, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada

2014, p. 212). Ongoing debates over legislation in the United States have the benefit of drawing on the mistakes and successes of these previous commissions.

Yet, despite this benefit of hindsight, a Truth Commission in the United States may still face inherent limitations for indigenous peoples. For example, Dian Million situates Canada's formal apologies that led to the TRC as response to a "seemingly endless array of sexual, physical, and mental abuse, that First Nations children endured across several generations at the hands of their guardians" (Million, 2000, p. 92). In her book *Therapeutic Nations* (2013), she argues that violence against woman is an ongoing feature of the colonial relationship and not an aberration limited to just boarding and residential schools. In her critique of Canada's TRC, Dian Million puts it this way: "the international law that enables Indigenous trauma to appeal for justice is the same sphere in which we articulate political rights as polities with rights to self-determination. I don't see these as necessarily compatible projects" (Million, p. 3). Instead, she points to examples of leadership in the collective movements of Indigenous women to further the self-determination of Indigenous nations.

In this collective work of Indigenous peoples, Indigenous methodologies are an essential starting point for conducting research. Indigenous researchers are leveraging UNDRIP to support the emerging field of Indigenous data sovereignty, focused on Indigenous protocols and control over research for and about Indigenous peoples. In *Research is Ceremony*, Shawn Wilson describes what this process can look like:

As we Indigenous scholars have begun to assert our power, we are no longer allowing others to speak in our stead. We are beginning to articulate our own research paradigms and to demand that research conducted in our communities follows our codes of conduct and honours our systems of knowledge and worldviews. Research by and for Indigenous peoples is a ceremony that brings relationships together. (Wilson, 2020, p. 8)

For Wilson's, relationality is the core of what drives Indigenous research, and this approach is based on a fundamentally different way to understand reality. As he puts, it "relationships do not merely shape reality, they *are* reality" (2020, p. 7, italics in original). Foregrounding relationships in this way also creates significant implications for accountability in research. Wilson highlights respect, reciprocity, and responsibility as key aspects of these relationships that create the foundations of an Indigenous methodology.

Numerous Indigenous scholars have also centered research around reciprocal relationships, and these relationships notably extend beyond just those between humans to include relationships with the land. Robin Kimmerer defines reciprocity in this way, "Reciprocity is rooted in the understanding that we are not alone, that the Earth is populated by non-human persons, wise and inventive beings deserving of our respect" (Kimmerer, 2013). She provides an anecdote that describes how difficult this change of thinking can be for researchers:

I sat once in a graduate writing workshop on relationships to the land. The students all demonstrated a deep respect and affection for nature. They said that nature was the place where they experienced the greatest sense of belonging and well-being. They professed without reservation that they loved the earth. And then I asked them, "Do you think that the earth loves you back?" No one was willing to answer that. (Kimmerer, 2013, p. 124)

This understanding of reciprocal relationships requires what she calls a "grammar of animacy" (p. 48), and this approach injects an Indigenous spirituality into the heart of dialogues on justice based on reciprocity.

In the Northwest Coast, one of the most important ongoing reciprocal relationships for Indigenous peoples is with the cedar tree, which provides a common thread through much of their cultures. According to Hilary Stewart, "So thoroughly did the cedar permeate the cultures of the Northwest Coast peoples that it is hard to envision their life without it" (1984, p. 13).

Stewart describes cedars presence from “cradle to grave” to demonstrate its central cultural importance. When mothers gave birth to children, the babies would land onto a bed of soft-shredded cedar bark. Upon their death, the remains “were wrapped in cedar bark mats put in cedar burial boxes and sometimes lashed to the branches of a cedar tree” (p. 18). And between birth and death, the cedar tree offers the necessities for life, including tools for fishing, roots for baskets, bark for clothing, planks for housing, and canoes for transportation. No wonder the tree is often called “Long Life Maker,” “Rich Woman Maker,” or simply “Mother Cedar.” These trees can grow for a millennia and offer one of the most enduring relationships through which to understand the Indigenous cultures of the region.

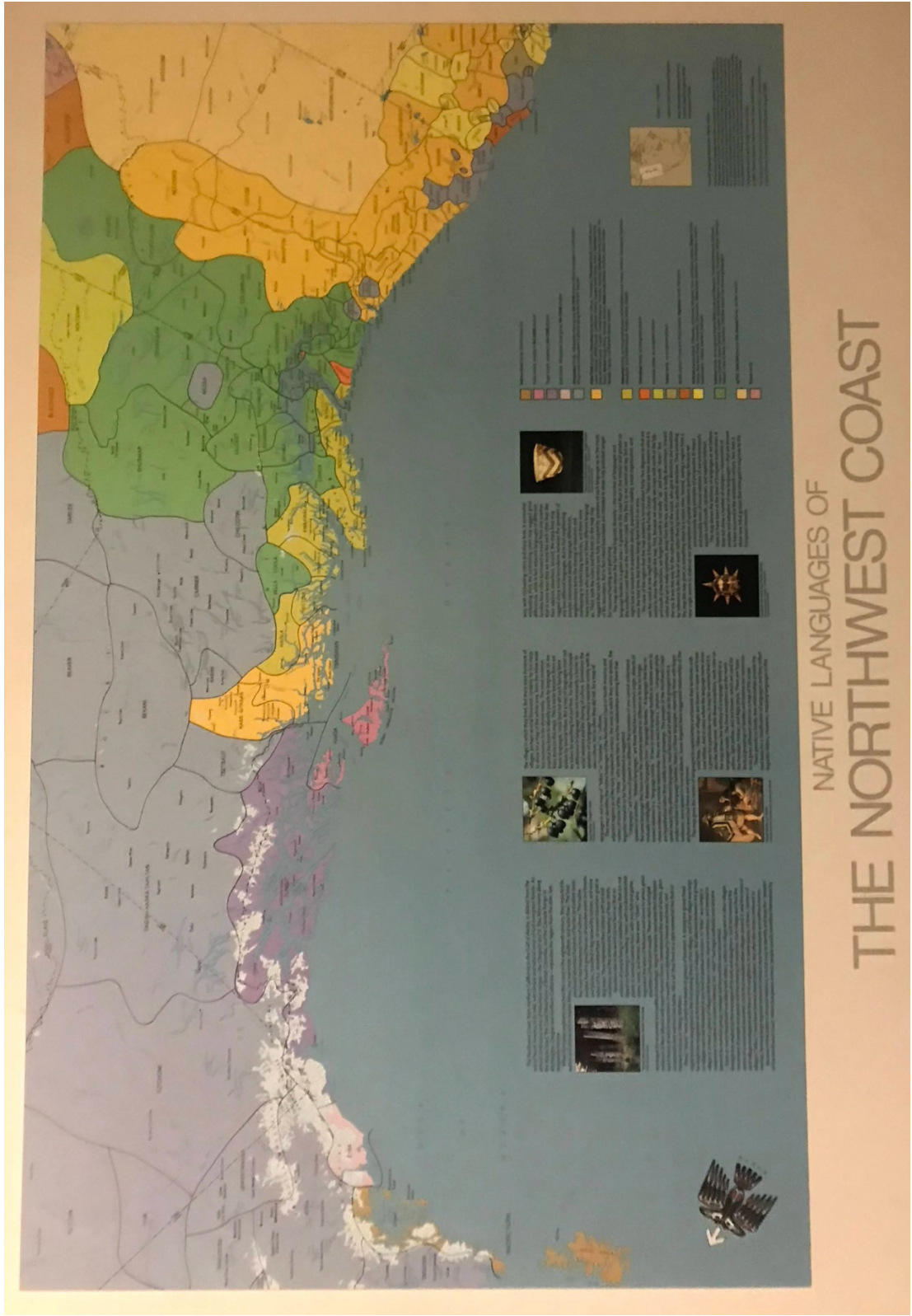


Figure 1: Map of Northwest Coast, Author's Photo

“Quakers and Shakers: Evangelical Entrepreneurship in the Northwest Coast”

“When the missionaries came to Africa, they had the Bible, and we had the land. They said, ‘Let us pray.’ We closed our eyes. When we opened them, we had the Bible, and they had the land.”

~Bishop Desmond Tutu, Chair of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The separation between church and state is a key feature of the U.S. legal system. Yet, Thomas Jefferson--the U.S. president who famously called for a "wall separating church and state"--also called for a policy of forced assimilation that led to the 1819 Civilization Fund Act when Congress appropriated \$10,000 per annum to missionary organizations for Native schools. This paradox is at the heart of Senate Bill 1723, first introduced by Senators Deb Haaland and Elizabeth Warren in 2020, that would establish a “Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the US” to investigate “federally funded and controlled Christian-run schools.”⁵ Native American Rights Fund (NARF), the leading Native legal advocacy organization in the United States, has challenged major church denominations to come forward voluntarily with their involvement, with negligible response (NARF, 2019). This study explores what contemporary responsibilities denominations bear for their complicity with federal policies that systematically aimed to separate parents and their children, many who never came home alive. Consequently, I present an accounting of government funding to Christian denominations for operating Indigenous schools in a comparative study of the Northwest Coast between 1876-1908, when such funding peaked in the United States. I argue that financial

⁵ As of writing this, H.R. 7227 is the companion bill in the House of Representatives, which does not include the same historical context as the Senate bill.

involvement by church denominations varied extensively throughout the region but fundamentally focused on controlling both Christian doctrine and land. I identify roughly 1,500 acres of church land grants on reservations throughout the region, which are likely to include numerous cemeteries, that U.S. denominations can repatriate.

This study begins with a brief overview of church denominations in the 21st century that formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery, while drawing attention to this doctrine as providing both the theological and legal justification for operating Native schools and obtaining land during this period. I also discuss some approaches to Native expressions of a decolonized Christianity, highlighting the example of the Shaker Church that spread throughout the region after the 1880s. I then proceed through a financial accounting of government funding to Protestant and Catholic denominations in the Northwest Coast between 1876-1908. This analysis indicates that most government funding to churches flowed through a ‘contract school’ model that had its start in Washington Territory and subsequently spread throughout the region, including Canada.⁶ These results reinforce findings from previous research that these contract schools were a relatively smaller segment of the U.S. boarding school industry, and phased out faster, whereas the Canadian government invested heavily in this model well into the 20th century. Finally, this paper also presents a partial list of land occupied by church denominations on Native reservations during this period in the southern half of the Northwest Coast, finding that many Christian denominations received titles to significant acreage of land on Native reservations for churches, missions, and schools, all of which are likely sites of Native

⁶ Contract schools were a particular type of arrangement in which the relevant government agency outsourced the provision of schooling to a third-party. Consequently, they can include a wide variety of arrangements, including day schools and boarding schools. Later in the 20th century, contracts with public schools and other private institutions besides churches also accounted for a large portion of Native students. However, during the period of this study, contract schools are used to refer exclusively to those contracts with church denominations.

cemeteries. I conclude with a discussion of ways denominations might begin thinking about transferring this land back to Native governments and congregations.

The Doctrine of Discovery

The Doctrine of Discovery traces back to a series of Papal bulls (i.e. edicts) in the 15th century that allowed Christian explorers to claim *terra nullius* (i.e. so-called empty land) for their sovereign when the people living on that land were not Christian. Along with ownership of the land came the duty to convert its inhabitants to Christianity, or as Pope Alexander V said in 1493, “to instruct the aforesaid inhabitants and residents in the Catholic faith and train them in good morals” (Inter Caetera, 1493). In U.S. law, Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall explicitly cited this Doctrine in *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823) to justify the expanding U.S. government obtaining land from Native people, creating a pillar of American Indian law that persists today. As recently as 2005, liberal icon Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg upheld the doctrine in the majority opinion of the 8-1 verdict of *City of Sherrill v. Oneida Indian Nation of New York* (2005), demonstrating a rare bipartisan consensus on the issue. “Under the ‘doctrine of discovery’ ... fee title to the lands occupied by Indians when the colonists arrived became vested in the sovereign—first the discovering European nation and later the original States and the United States” (Majority Opinion, 2005).” This verdict declared that purchased land by Native governments, from within its original reservation boundaries, did not restore Tribal sovereignty to these lands and were still subject to state and local taxes.

However, in a wave of change centuries in the making, at least 22 Christian denominations operating in the United States and Canada have formally renounced or repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery since 2009, in addition to the World Council of Churches (Table 1).

Six of these denominations operate primarily in the U.S., and seven operate primarily in Canada, while the rest either operate in both countries or globally. Most notably (and recently), the Catholic church renounced the Doctrine in 2023. However, the language of these resolutions varies widely, particularly given that many denominations are governed in a decentralized manner. Some denominations are more explicit in addressing their own complicity, such as the Episcopal Church (USA) that was the first to adopt a resolution repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery, including “each diocese...reflect[ing] upon its own history.” Others are more defensive in their wording, such as the Catholic Church that insists that the Doctrine of Discovery “is not part of the teaching of the Catholic Church” and the papal bulls “have never been considered expressions of the Catholic faith.” Based on a comparison of the language used in these repudiation, Dr. Arden Mahlberg (2023) strongly disagrees with this claim, and instead argues that, “[t]he Bible must somehow be made safer as a playbook for Christian behavior toward non-Christians.” In the context of rising Christian nationalism, careful biblical interpretation is essential to not repeating the mistakes of the past.

Another central feature of these repudiations and renouncements is there inherently global context and implications for denominational engagement with their historical involvement with boarding schools. In 17 of the 22 denominations previously mentioned, their resolutions explicitly mention the United Nations (UN), either specifying that they will report their repudiation to the UN through their observer status and/or specifying their support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Additionally, at least seven denominations make explicit reference to boarding schools (only one of which operates exclusively in Canada), with the number increasing if counting references to Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that operated between 2008-2015. This overlap with the

discourse and politics of global Indigenous rights creates tangible responsibilities for church denominations.

Many of these responsibilities in the United States are still yet to be seen beyond rhetoric, though the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) is a notable exception that may provide a model for other denominations moving forward, particularly those with similar decentralized governance. In 2016, Quakers organized a conference called “Quakers, First Nations, and American Indians from the 1650s to the 21st century” and subsequently published a 16-chapter volume including a chapter by the Executive Director of NARF, John Echohawk (Brill, 2019). The Quaker ministry *Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples* has led outreach to congregations through trainings, workshops, and a one-hour documentary entitled “Quaker Indian Boarding Schools” (TRR). And a group of self-described “decolonizing Quakers” created a model resolution for Friends’ annual meetings, including the following: “We resolve to determine the value in current dollars of the money received from the federal government, and of the funds and materiel our institution contributed, for the operation of Indian boarding schools” (Model Minutes, 2022). This work led to annual meetings of Quakers across the country adopting the same or similar resolutions on their accountability and expressing support for the pending Congressional legislation for a Truth and Healing Commission (FCNL, 2022).

Denomination	Date of Resolution	Mentions United Nations
<u>Episcopal Church (USA)</u>	2009	Y
<u>Anglican Church of Canada</u>	2010	Y
<u>Evangelical Church in Canada</u>	2011	Y
<u>United Church of Canada</u>	2012	Y
<u>Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations</u>	2012	Y
<u>United Methodist Church</u>	2012	Y
<u>World Council of Churches</u>	2012	Y
<u>Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)</u>	2013	Y
<u>United Church of Christ</u>	2013	Y
<u>The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada</u>	2015	Y
<u>Mennonite Church Canada</u>	2016	N
<u>The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)</u>	2016	N
<u>Community of Christ</u>	2016	Y
<u>Christian Reformed Church (NA)</u>	2016	N
<u>Presbyterian Church (USA)</u>	2018	Y
<u>Presbyterian Church in Canada</u>	2019	Y
<u>The Evangelical Covenant Church</u>	2021	Y
<u>Catholic Church</u>	2023	Y
<u>Baptist World Alliance</u>	2023	N
<u>Church of the Brethren</u>	2023	N
<u>Friends General Conference</u>	2010-2013	Y

Figure 2: Renouncements and Repudiations of the Doctrine of Discovery

Decolonizing Christianity in the Northwest Coast

Since long before these repudiations, Native scholars have been thinking and writing about working with Christian churches as well as authentic expressions of Native Christianity. Many Native scholars have largely rejected Christianity, perhaps most forcefully in Vine Deloria Jr.'s *God is Red*. However, other Native people have chosen careful, selective blending. Robert Warrior sums up many of the challenges of this latter approach:

The inclusion of Native Americans in Christian political praxis is difficult— even dangerous. Christians have a different way of going about the struggle for justice than most Native Americans: different models of leadership, different ways of making decisions, different ways of viewing the relationship between politics and religion. These differences have gone all but unnoticed in the history of church involvement in American Indian affairs. Liberals and conservatives alike have too often surveyed the conditions of Native Americans and decided to come to the rescue, always using their methods, their ideas, and their programs. The idea that Indians might know best how to address their own problems is seemingly lost on these well-meaning folks. (Treat, 1996)

He then goes on to describe the use of the biblical story of Exodus in social justice and liberation theology, while suggesting Native people most naturally empathize with the plight of the Canaanites who the Israelites displaced from their Promised Land. Weaver (1996) provides some additional nuance to Warrior's stark line and suggests principles for a "post-colonial biblical hermeneutic for Natives" (p. 19), including affirming traditional Native religious expressions.

In the Northwest Coast, the Shaker Church is the most prominent example of religious syncretism between Indigenous spirituality and Christianity. While Francis Prucha (1988) emphasizes that Catholics and Protestants represented the two distinct "roads to conversion" for Natives in the Pacific Northwest, the Shaker Church offers an evident third way. John Solum, a logger and the grandson of a prominent Medicine Man and cultural leader, and his wife Mary

Thompson Slocum founded the Shaker Church in the early 1880s after John had two near death experiences. During these experiences, an angel instructed him on returning to Earth to give up sinful behaviors such as drinking, smoking, and gambling as well as start a new religion that would bring Native people to God's salvation through Jesus. Both times, Mary was overcome with shaking, and John revived in her presence. In the second experience, Mary specifically rejected the assistance of Medicine Men, believing that Jesus was acting through her to heal.⁷ However, as the Shaker movement grew, church and government officials persecuted Shakers as "continuing the practices of Indian Doctoring under the guise of Christianity" (Wright, 2016), thus violating federal laws banning Native religious practices. Nevertheless, it continued to grow while blending Christian and Native practices, such as candles replacing smudging and bells replacing drums.

The Shaker movement used legal incorporation as a key strategy to aid in its expansion, which allowed for the church to both own property and resist legal discrimination. The first congregation at Mud Bay consulted with a non-Native attorney who informed them the Dawes Severalty Act in 1887 allowed them freedom of worship, and so they sought legal recognition as a church on June 6-7, 1892. Again the church sought outside legal advice in 1910, and the church incorporated under the laws of Washington State to give them a "legal warrant" to exist and a bishop (Amoss, 1990). Yet, internal dissent followed. In 1927, a schism began to develop between orthodox members who felt the Bible was only for white Christians and a vocal minority who sought a new bishop that would support the Bible's use during church services. The internal conflict continued until 1945 when the Snohomish County Superior Court created two churches: the original Shaker Church and the Indian Full Gospel Church. In 1953, the

⁷ For more detailed accounts of the Slocums and Shakerism, see Barnett, 1972 and Ruby, 1996.

Independent Shaker Church began in Yakama as a third denominations that supported the use of the Bible but was otherwise conservative in practices.

Despite the schisms, the Shaker movement steadily spread as a distinctly regional form of Native Christianity. “[T]he groups in which it fared best were those which had extensive prior contact with the coastal tribes and which shared many of the traits usually associated with Northwest Coast culture” (Sackett, 1973). Many adherents were first exposed to Christianity through boarding schools, and this connection is perhaps most striking on the Siletz reservation where “the Siletz Shakers requested and received the materials left from the demolition of the old boarding school which had stood atop ‘Government Hill.’ With this material they constructed a new church building just to the north of the first one” (Sackett, 1973). By 1996, the Shaker movement included roughly 21 congregations and 3,000 members in Washington, Oregon, Northern California, and British Columbia” (Wilma, 2000). Consequently, the Shaker movement has helped define the limits of what forms of Native religious practices are possible in the region during a long period of state suppression.⁸ The Shaker movement also presents a clear challenge to the doctrinal lines established by Christian denominations who face the implications of their recent repudiations and the legacies of their involvement with Native boarding schools.

Boarding and Residential Schools in the United States and Canada

Researchers have conducted minimal studies on the role and impact of church involvement in boarding and residential schools (particularly the former), and most of this

⁸ Outside the Northwest Coast, scholars such as Jace Weaver (1998) provide additional poignant examples of religious syncretism in the colonial wake of U.S. policies. For example, he notes that Christian hymns were sung on the Trail of Tears. In the aftermath of the US-Dakota war, 32 Dakota men were led to the gallows to be hanged on December 26, 1862. As they awaited their fate in what would be the largest mass execution in U.S. history, they sang the Christian hymn “Many and Great, O God” in the Dakota language.

research is heavily siloed by the 49th parallel. However, significant evidence exists of the relationship between church involvement in both countries, as well as in a global context. For example, such evidence is apparent in the story of Reverend Eugene Chirouse who, born in France, served his first post as a Catholic missionary with the Yakama Nation between 1848-1856 (in what is now eastern Washington). Pushed further west by warfare and inhospitable Protestant missionaries, by 1865 he successfully requested \$7,000 per year from an Oregon Senator for the Tulalip boarding school to fulfill unmet obligations for a school stipulated in the 1855 Treaty of Point Elliot. In 1869, this funding began to flow and created what is frequently cited as “the first United States Government contract-school under religious auspice” (Weber, 1966). Nicolas Davin prominently highlighted this contract model in his 1879 report, commissioned by the Canadian Prime Minister to study elements of U.S. boarding schools to emulate in Canada:

Wherever the missionaries have schools, the Government should utilize those schools, if possible; that is to say, a contract should be made with the religious body controlling the school to board and educate and train industrially a certain number of pupils. This should be done without interfering with the small assistance at present given to the day-mission schools. (Canada, 1880)

Yet, the relatively porous U.S.-Canada border at the time is clear. By the time of Davin’s report, Reverend Chirouse had already transferred to B.C. as the principal of St. Mary’s mission school, receiving \$12 per student for 35 boarders (Clark, 1993, p. 87).

Nonetheless, most researchers to date focus on either the U.S. or Canadian system.

Researchers have been aware of the broad quantitative trends of each system for decades through the work of both scholars and government reports.⁹ In Canada, public awareness of contract

⁹ In the United States, see the Miriam Report (1928) and the Kennedy Report (1969) as well as scholarly works such as Adams (1995) and Szasz (1999). In Canada, see the TRC’s 6-Volume Final Report and Miller (1996).

schools has proliferated in significant part due to their use well into the mid- to late- 1900s. However, Prucha (1979) remains the only extensive study of contract schools in the U.S., providing a detailed analysis of Protestant and Catholic political and legal conflict over government funding for Native schools. While this study provides some national trends on government funding of churches, Prucha's main focus is to tell the story of anti-Catholic bias in Native education starting with Grant's short-lived Peace Policy in 1868. While funds from the 1819 Civilization Fund had continued to flow to Native missions, the newly established Board of Indian Commissioners in 1869 caused a massive expansion of church influence over Native peoples as the Board divided up Indian agent positions between Christian denominations to oversee reservations. Prucha follows this history after the Peace Policy's quick demise and onward until the Supreme Court case *Quick Bear v. Leupp* (1908). This case upheld a ban on government funding of church schools, except when a tribal nation directly petitioned for the money from their trust funds to be used for the contract school.¹⁰ With this ruling, the Catholic church and a small minority of Protestant denominations had found a sustainable source of revenues for their Native mission schools into the 20th century, though at much reduced numbers compared to before. Unfortunately, Prucha does not provide any type of statistical analysis or comparison with the Canadian residential school system.

To date, only two econometric analyses of boarding and residential schools are published, one on residential schools and one on boarding schools. The first published econometric study of residential schools, Feir (2016) focuses on the contemporary assimilative impact of residential schools using data of residential schools between 1930 and 1965. They find the schools to be largely successful at cultural and economic assimilation, except in cases of highly abusive

¹⁰ Prucha conveniently includes both a copy of a petition and a contract in the appendices of his book.

schools. While this study includes numerous “contract schools,” particularly with the Catholic Church, its timeline does not include a period when these contracts were also operating in the U.S. and so the opportunities for comparison are limited. Gregg (2018) published a study on the impact of U.S. boarding schools using data from 1911-1932, reaching similar conclusions about their effectiveness in forced assimilation. However, this study is not focused on contract schools as they had been phased out by then, with the previously mentioned exception of trust funds notwithstanding. While these studies are useful by introducing novel methods to a predominantly qualitative area of research, these studies also face several limitations. From the perspective of a comparative study, neither include data from the late 1800s when contract schools were active simultaneously in both countries. Furthermore, their models focus on the assimilative effects of these schools, in effect arguing that, with some exceptions, they helped promote economic development.

Comparative studies, though rare, have helped put these schools in a more global context. Woolford’s *This Benevolent Experiment* (2015) is the only book-length comparative study to date of the U.S. and Canadian systems, comparing schools in Manitoba and New Mexico to argue that these institutions constituted acts of genocide. Unfortunately, its focus on non-contiguous regions creates some limitations for trends analysis due to significant differences that are difficult to account for between these two locations. In the wake of the 2021 Federal Indian Boarding School Investigative Report by the U.S. Department of Interior, research is becoming increasingly common that at least has a comparative component with the United States and Canada (e.g. Parks, 2023; NABSHC Digital Map). However, this report includes only a brief section on the role religious institutions, essentially highlighting that funding did exist to several major denominations for operating schools that lasted until 1897 and that portions of land were

also granted to these institutions on reservations.¹¹ Globally, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues conducted the most thorough comparative study of Indigenous boarding schools in 2009. This report highlights international trends for boarding schools for Indigenous peoples across every continent, effectively demonstrating how they are an inherently global phenomenon for cultural assimilation that varies significantly across geographies. However, this report also identifies the frequently central role of religious institutions as well as experiences in the United States and Canada as “particularly brutal” (p. 28).

Affected parties and onlookers alike have focused on this brutality and its consequent historical trauma. Perhaps most inflammatory are news stories of unmarked graves from throughout Canada due to the death of children at these schools that officials never reported back to their families. McBride (2020) expands this reporting to the United States by looking at high child mortality rates of several of the largest off-reservation boarding schools due to underfunding, poor sanitation, and disease. Advocates attention has focused due to these reports on school cemeteries and the impacts of separating Native children from their parents. These impacts include, but are not limited to, frequent reporting of physical, emotion, and sexual abuse by school administrators as well as detachment from children’s Native cultures. The period of this study overlaps with some of the harshest laws banning Native culture, including the Religious Crimes Code of 1883 that banned Native dancing and ceremonies as well as a series of laws and policies between the 1860s-1880s that banned Native languages from being taught in government and mission schools or else funding would be withdrawn (Prucha, 1973, p. 199). Nevertheless, students’ experiences defy homogeneity and, while less sensationalist, also include

¹¹ This paper documents funding to churches past 1897, suggesting the Dept. of Interiors report may include minor errors and/or omissions. Additional minor errors and omissions were also found in this report over the course of this study.

positive experiences such as the creation of shared inter-Tribal identities and opportunities to escape poverty.¹² The sources of this heterogeneity point to the need for more data about the variety of schools that would influence different types of outcomes described by those who have attended them.

Building a Dataset for the Northwest Coast

To begin addressing this dearth of comparative studies, I built a quantitative dataset tracking school funding and attendance along the Northwest Coast of the United States and Canada between 1876-1908.¹³ This dataset is based on annual reports of the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the Alaska General Agent of Education, and the Canadian Annual Report on Indian Affairs. The beginning of the period aligns with the earliest simultaneous reporting of school financial statistics by the U.S. and Canadian governments for California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia (Alaska began funding in 1884) . This beginning also aligns closely with the end of Grant's presidency in the U.S. and just before 1879, which marked several key events including the Davin Report, the opening of Carlisle Indian School, and the establishment of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions. This period also includes the establishment and early expansion of the Shaker movement. The end of the dataset coincides with the 1908 Supreme Court Case *Quick Bear v. Leupp* that ended the model of church contracting commonly used to this point. Consequently, the dataset allows for a comparative analysis of the early establishment of the boarding and residential school industry in the United States and Canada at a time when church denominations in both countries were actively receiving government funding.

¹² Lomawaima, 1995 and Child, 1998 provide particularly nuanced descriptions of this heterogeneity.

¹³ This dataset will be available soon for download on GitHub.

The focus on the Northwest Coast is both theoretical and practical. The Northwest Coast is generally defined as the area between the coastal mountains and the Pacific Ocean spanning roughly southeast Alaska to northern California. Indigenous cultures throughout this region are well-noted by scholars as sharing many similarities due in significant part to a shared ecosystem of old-growth coastal forests, heavy rainfall, and abundant fisheries. Focusing on the Northwest Coast allows for a trans-Indigenous framing that highlights Indigenous peoples across two US-Canada borders. This approach also includes southeast Alaska, which is frequently omitted in conversations on Native boarding schools in the ‘lower-48.’ Alaska is a significant outlier in the case of boarding schools due to its relatively high proportion of Alaska Natives compared to settlers, relatively late incorporation into the United States, and the Native education system during this period being implemented largely through the public school system rather than the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Nevertheless, Christian mission schools were extremely active and relied upon by the U.S. government due to its remote landscapes. Finally, building a dataset for the entirety of the United States and Canada is an expensive project beyond the scope of this study. Consequently, this regional framework allows for some initial insights in what Charles Tilly describes as variation-finding: “establishing a principle of variation in the character or intensity of a phenomenon having more than one form by examining systematic differences among instances” (Tilly, 1984). In doing so, this study provides insight into the variations of church involvement in boarding and residential schools throughout the region and the consequent legacies of these experiences for Indigenous peoples.

The use of official statistics is problematic for numerous reasons, but they still provide the best possible picture of aggregate industry trends during this period. To begin with, the statistics are overtly biased, measuring everything from how many “Indians” are wearing

“civilized clothing” to “living in Western lodging.”¹⁴ Furthermore, statistics, as a field of study, was still in its early days in the late 19th century, and categories and variables measured were constantly changed every few years. For example, the name of a “Tribe” would frequently vary year to year depending on who wrote the report, and the number of children who learned to read that year might only be measured for a few consecutive years before another variable of interest was swapped in. Old type-set statistical tables also necessitate copying by hand since Optical Character Recognition (OCR) scanning technology by computers is not yet effective. Consequently, I found the process of building this dataset extremely tedious. Nevertheless, government reports are quite transparent with their funding and support of mission schools, and financial variables are one of the few that are consistently available across the region after 1876. Additionally, while this dataset does overlap colonial borders, the raw data are available for download and filtering for those who would like to go the extra step for sub-regions, such as diocesan boundaries as is evident by the use of the Northwest Coast in this current article.

To understand how the government distributed financing throughout the region, each school in the dataset is categorized using several variables. Schools are categorized as either a day or boarding school. Including day schools is important for several reasons. First, day schools preceded, and often grew into, boarding and residential schools, just as boarding schools sometimes reverted to being day schools (or operated as both simultaneously). Second, day schools were well-known “feeder” schools for boarding and residential schools, which typically had more advanced curricula and themselves served as feeder schools for the largest industrial schools of the region (e.g. Chemawa Industrial School)¹⁵. Third, day schools were often run by

¹⁴ For further discussion on the cultural biases in collecting statistics, see *Ethnostatistics* by Robert Gephart (2019).

¹⁵ These in turn could even serve as a steppingstone into higher education for a small portion of students. For a detailed examination of this phenomenon, see Rebecca Wellington’s dissertation, “Girls’ Vocational Education at Chemawa Indian School 1900-1930s: A Story of Acculturation and Self-Advocacy” (2017).

church missions and frequently received government funding to this effect (i.e. a contract school but not a boarding school). Consequently, including day schools in dataset provides a more comprehensive picture of the role of churches in this industry. Of note, this study's analysis combines different types of boarding schools together in large part because of the difficulty of harmonizing data across the United States and Canada. While the United States reports by location (on- vs. off-reservation boarding schools), Canada reports by type of school (residential vs. industrial schools). While some might call these a distinction without a difference, the downloadable dataset retains these distinctions as they do describe qualitatively different contexts.

Finally, each school is also categorized by any affiliation with a denomination and whether the government provided funding through a contract. This allows for funding during this period to be divided into revenues from the government and donations from churches. While donations from churches were a relatively small source of reported income for most schools, some schools maintained equivalent or more funding from private sources even while receiving government funding. This fact leads to one of the limitations of relying on these government archives for the dataset, which is that mission schools frequently refrained from annual reporting to the government unless they were a primary source of revenue. Consequently, this dataset does not include mission schools not receiving government funding, which underestimates church involvement in this period, particularly in Alaska.

Average attendance is harmonized across these five provinces (AK, BC, WA, OR, and CA) to give a sense of how many children were impacted by these different types of schools. Enrollment is also frequently reported but typically much higher than attendance. Student rolls

can easily include twice as many students as actually attend, particularly at day schools. Additionally, schools were operating for very different periods of time, where a day school might be open for just a few months during the winter and a boarding school could be open year-round. Consequently, comparing attendance is only reasonable between school types (day vs. boarding) where these variations are roughly similar. However, it gives a much more realistic picture of how many children were in the classroom compared to enrollment.

Missing data and name changes also pose a challenges to analysis that are inherent in historical statistics. For example, an annual gap in data for schools, agencies, or even an entire state is not uncommon in the early years of these tables. These gaps, due to unsubmitted annual reports, usually do not extend more than a year and are easily addressed by simple imputation. Some inconsistencies across years are also due to changing school names, often due to a change in funding patterns (for example, a day school being converted to a boarding schools, along with a new name), and are typically noted in the written agency reports included in each annual report. To address these challenges, this analysis codes each school to track it across time regardless of name changes or missing data. For example, if a school does not report data for one year, but does for the previous and subsequent year, and no indication is given in the written agency report that the school was closed during that year (for example, due to a fire or lack of funding), then this analysis assumes a linear imputation for all variables in the gap year.

A more challenging issue with these statistics is the claim of systematic error from agents themselves were misreporting numbers. For example, an agent could artificially inflate enrollment to attract funding or better represent their success. Examples do exist that such corruption among officials, and federal auditing officers were eventually introduced to the bureaucracy to address such concerns. However, the presence of this misreporting can be

addressed in a relatively straightforward manner. In an aggregate analysis over several decades, systematic error due to individual misreporting would be minimized due to staff turnover, and would also insignificantly impact certain statistics, such as rates of change and ratios. Rather than dismiss the utility of historical statistics, a better approach is to be cognizant of their limitations and use them as one important component of triangulating evidence to shed light on historical events.

In the U.S. reports, statistics are also available tracking land on reservations granted to churches by the U.S. government. While not reported every year, this land is frequently granted for schools, but also churches, missions, residencies, and cemeteries. While these tables are available across the United States, the results are only compiled in this study for Washington, Oregon, and California.¹⁶ Figures 9 and 10 of this paper summarize the year, location, denomination, and acreage. While Figure 9 covers the late 19th century up until 1908, Figure 10 extends slightly further until 1920 to include when the government gave denominations fee simple land titles rather than just rights of occupancy. Notably, these tables are not comprehensive in summarizing all reservation land owned or occupied by churches in these states. Rather, it is a subset of land granted during this period as reported by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These data are discussed further in a later section of the paper. Additional information on the legal statutes related to this land grants is also available for download with this paper's data supplement.

¹⁶ Alaska is omitted because there are no reservations, strictly speaking, and so the government did not grant land in the same way as in the lower-48. This gap is admittedly an area for additional research for which there is good precedent. For example, in the 1867 Alaska Treaty, which transferred rule from Russia to the US, a clause stipulated that the Russian Orthodox Church retained ownership of all church property. See Oleksa, 1987 for more information.

Trends in Government Funding to Churches

Analysis of the resulting database shed an interesting lens on the evolution of the boarding school industry over time along the Northwest Coast, and potential implications for other regions. One of the clearest distinctions that can be seen is the difference in the proportion of government funding going to church denominations in the United States as compared to Canada. In Figure 1, the magnitude of the total coast of the United States is significantly larger than British Columbia, which is to be expected. However, the dotted lines provide an important point of comparison. Until roughly 1880, the government directed most funding in both countries directly to church denominations. However, U.S. government funding after this point increases dramatically while funding to churches oscillates around roughly the same level before declining to near zero by the turn of the century. However, government funding in British Columbia increases steadily while then going almost exclusively to church denominations. By the turn of the century, more government funding in British Columbia is going to churches than the entirety of the four-state region in the United States. Consequently, this chart provides clear evidence that churches operated a significant portion of the U.S. boarding school industry prior to 1900, though one increasingly marginal as the century came to a close.

Further comparison of U.S. and Canadian funding to church denominations using the contract model of finance provides additional nuance to the trends of this industry. Figure 2 compares the funding across the five different province/states in the region. Schools operated by the contracting funding model in Washington Territory (a state after 1889) account for the largest amount of money, followed only by a rapid uptick in southeast Alaska in the mid-1880s and a much slower uptick in California. British Columbia shows a low level of funding to church mission schools since the beginning of the dataset, but rapid growth of this funding model occurs

only as late as 1890s by when contract funding in southeast Alaska and Washington has nearly peaked and is beginning its decline. This chart also demonstrates how contract funding was not present at all in western Oregon.¹⁷ In all four U.S. states, government funding to contract with churches all but dried up by the turn of the century. In comparison, funding in B.C. was just getting started, and by 1908 it reached the equivalent levels to all four U.S. states combined at their peak.

¹⁷ Only one contract school existed in Oregon for the Umatilla reservation: the Kate Drexel boarding school run by the Catholic church through government funds that began in 1894.

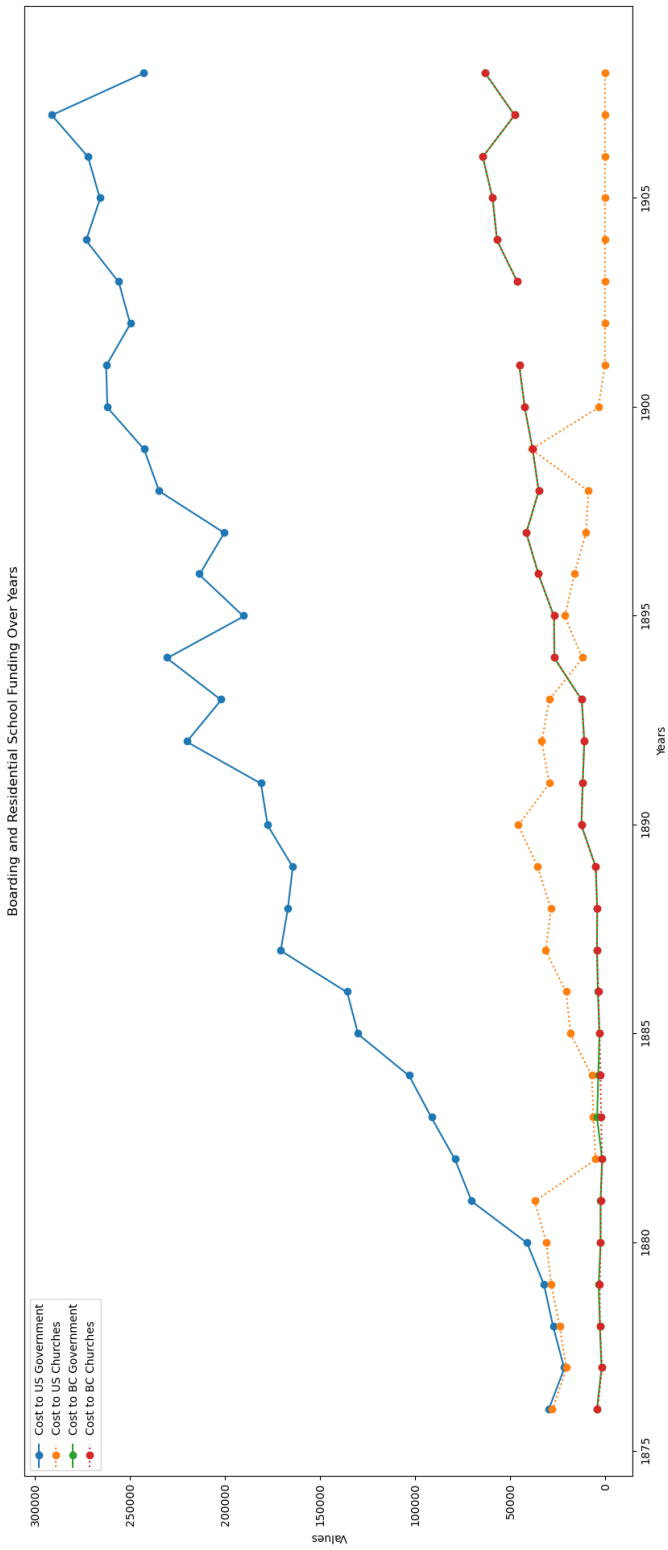


Figure 3: Source of Funds for Native Schools in the Northwest Coast

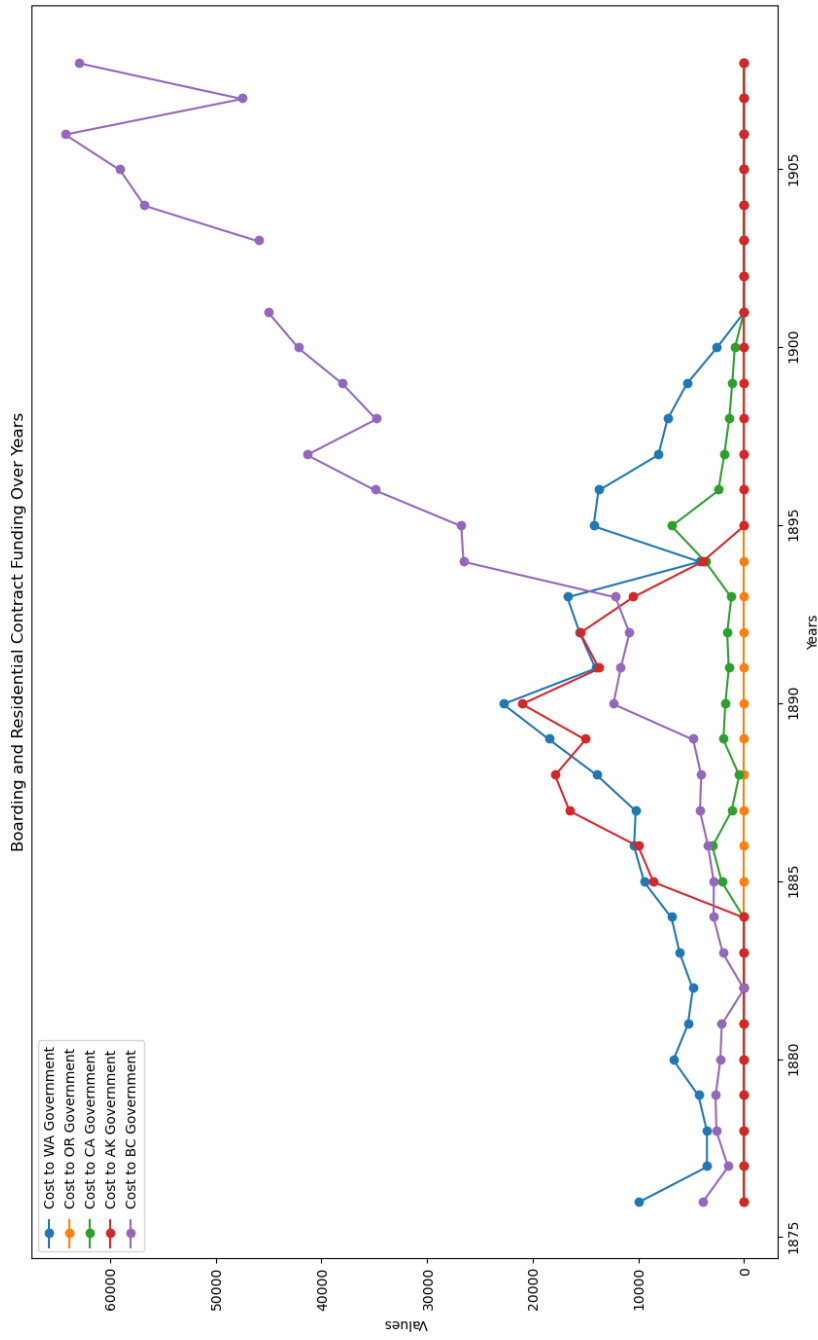


Figure 4: Contract Funding for Boarding and Residential Schools

An additional way of comparing funding to churches in both countries is to look explicitly at what type of school the government funded. Figures 3 and 4 do just that. Figure 3 looks at the average attendance numbers in the United States and Canada for boarding schools and the subset of students at contract schools. Figure 4, provides the same comparison but specifically looking at day school attendance. These two charts are presented separately because comparing day and boarding school attendance to each other can be misleading, given the differences in average months in session between the two different types of schools. However, both charts reinforce the trend of the U.S. government gradually phasing out funding for contract schools while Canada simultaneously increased funding to contract schools as the sole type of school.

Additionally, these charts provide some interesting insights into the relationships between churches and day schools. Up until the mid 1890s in the United States, when contract funding is being phased out in all four states, contract schools account for a significant portion of total day school attendance. Before 1880, contract schools account for nearly all day school attendance in the United States. A significant peak occurs between 1889 and 1895, which aligns closely with the increase (and then decline) of contract schools in southeast Alaska and suggests an outsized effect on these results from this one state. Furthermore, contract funding for day schools in the United States appears to dry up before that of boarding schools due to a few large Catholic contract schools that remain operational through this period. In Canada, I previously noted, contract schools are almost the exclusive model of funding during this period. As can be seen in both countries, the number of children in day schools steadily increases throughout this period.

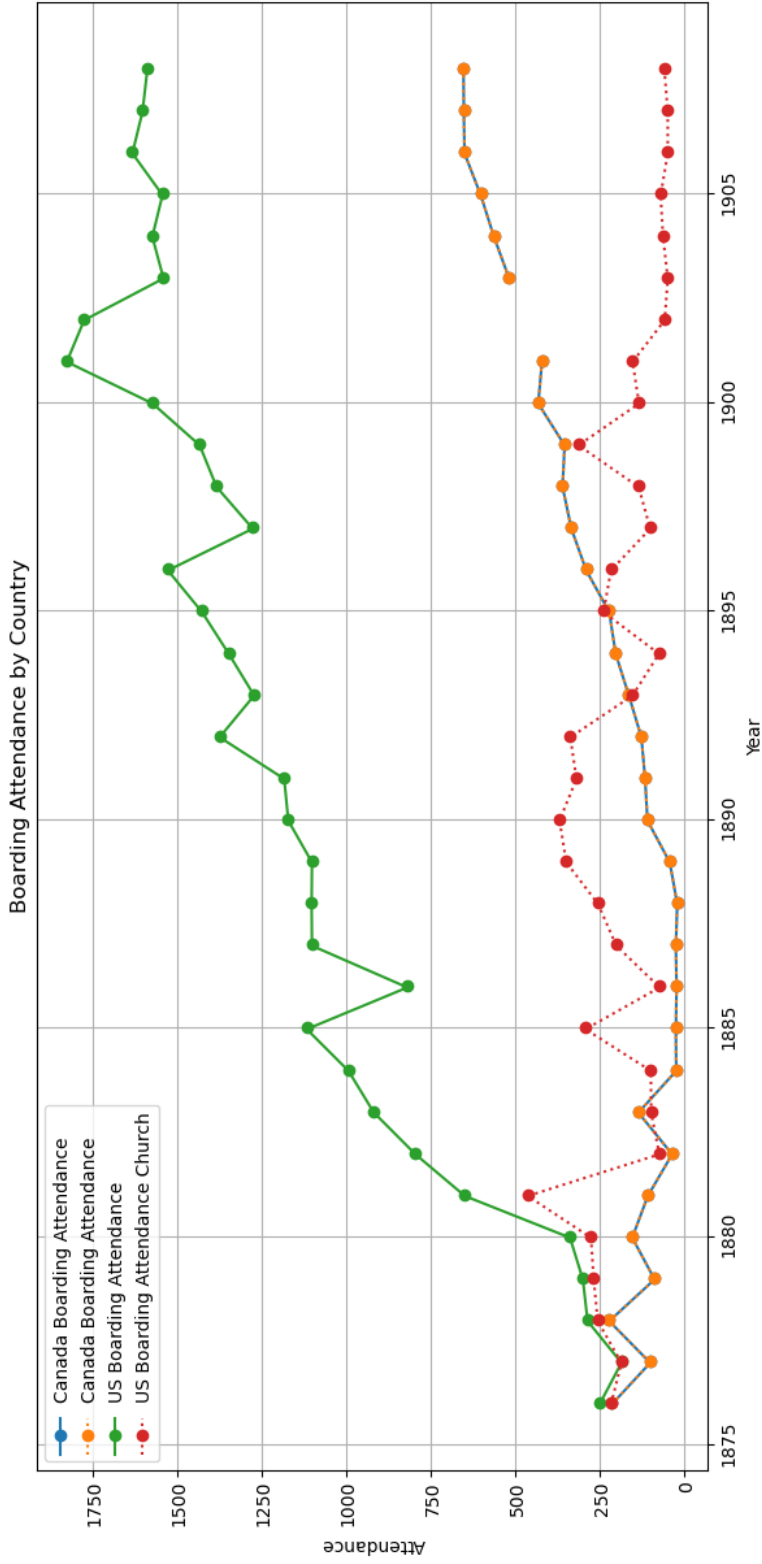


Figure 5: Boarding Attendance by Country

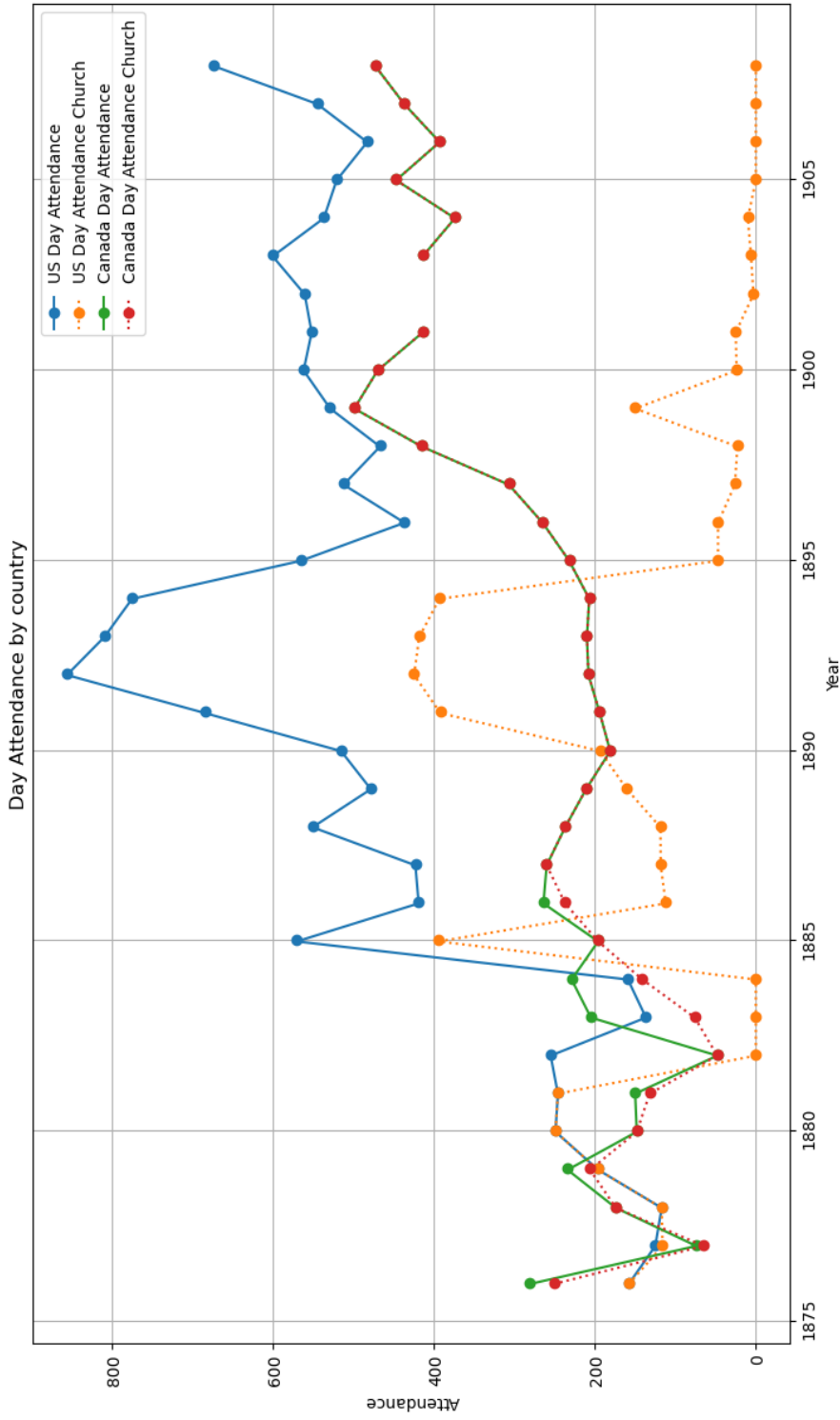


Figure 6: Day Attendance by Country

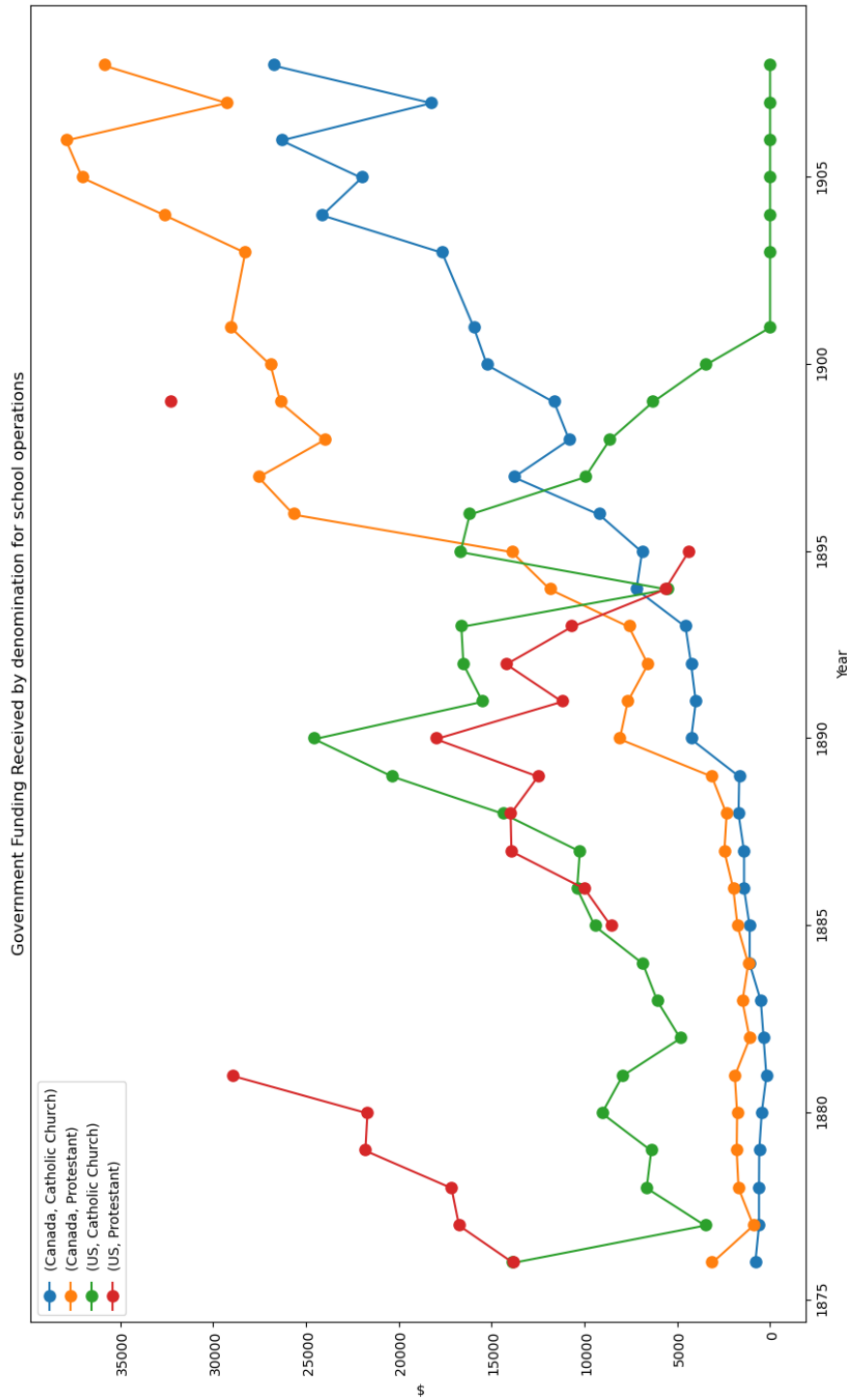


Figure 7: Government Funding by Country, Protestant vs. Catholic

Further results are available about the distribution of funding across denominations. Figure 5 presents a comparison between the United States and Canada of contract school funding as received by the Catholic Church vs. all Protestant denominations combined. In Canada, Protestant and Catholic funding increase mostly at the same pace, with Protestant funding accounting for slightly more than the Catholic Church. In comparison, Catholic funding in the United States is slightly larger than funding received by Protestant denominations, apart from the period before 1881, which is strongly skewed towards Protestant denominations due to Grant's Peace Policy. Furthermore, funding to Protestant denominations is patchy and largely driven by the increase and the decline of contract funding in Alaska. An additional spike in 1899 is due to the brief involvement of the Women's National Indian Association with several schools in Washington State.¹⁸ Overall, the Catholic church is by far the largest single and consistent denomination receiving government funding throughout the region for mission schools.

An additional breakdown of funding to all denominations is provided in Figure 8. This table provides the total government funding received by denomination broke down by country as well as combined. This table demonstrates a much wider variety of Protestant denominations being funded in the United States, with the Church of England and Salvation Army being the only two denominations receiving funding in Canada but not in the United States. These values in the table are converted into U.S. dollars based on inflation from 1890 to 2024. While this calculation is only roughly accurate and does not include interest, it does provide a better sense of the magnitude of denominational involvement during this period. The real numbers are included in the appendix.

¹⁸ For more information on the WNIA, see Adams, 2016 and Jacobs, 2008.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Combined</u>	<u>United States</u>	<u>Canada</u>
Catholic Church	\$18,027,452.61	\$9,263,978.89	\$8,763,473.72
Christian Union	\$13,728.88	\$13,728.88	N/A
Church of England	\$7,656,437.32	N/A	\$7,656,437.32
Congregational	\$596,348.19	\$596,348.19	N/A
Independent	\$449,620.79	\$449,620.79	N/A
Methodist	\$9,641,714.24	\$3,266,821.11	\$6,374,893.13
Methodist Episcopal	\$44,038.47	\$44,038.47	N/A
Non-Denominational	\$502,133.75	N/A	\$502,133.75
Presbyterian	\$5,160,065.12	\$4,044,301.95	\$1,115,763.17
Quakers	\$71,327.36	\$71,327.36	N/A
Salvation Army	\$51,483.30	N/A	\$51,483.3
Swedish Evangelical	\$30,889.98	\$30,889.98	N/A
WNIA	\$1,391,312.41	\$1,391,312.41	N/A
<u>Total</u>	\$43,636,552.42	\$ 19,172,368.03	\$ 24,464,184.39¹⁹

Figure 8: Gov't funding received by denomination between 1876-1908 in the Northwest Coast

¹⁹ Values are in 2024 USD based on a baseline of 1890. Using www.in2013dollars.com

Trends in Land Acquired by Churches

Most literature on boarding schools discusses the effects in terms of cultural assimilation but not always in relation to its direct impacts on land loss. This section demonstrates one avenue through which land dispossession occurred directly through church involvement with boarding schools. During the period of church involvement with the boarding school industry, the government regularly granted allotments on reservations to church denominations for churches, schools, mission, and cemeteries. These grants are listed in Figure 9 for the southern part of the Northwest Coast in Washington, Oregon, and northern California (a full list for these three states is provided in the appendix). Notably, these grants extend beyond the point at which the Supreme Court ruled against government funding of mission schools in 1908, demonstrating that church missionary interest had far from abated at that point. However, the purpose of these land grants is not always listed for later years.

The legal statutes related to these land grants varies depending on the particular grant. The full list of legal statutes is available in the downloadable data supplement for this chapter. However, a few trends are worth noting. Before 1908, land grants were made through BIA policies that allowed churches the right of occupancy without granting a land title. Some of the tables to these charts include a disclaimer similar to that of 1896: “The grants, except in a few instances, do not convey the fee simple of the property, but the right of occupancy for the aforesaid purposes; Note.—In some cases the favorable action of the Indians is still wanting in order to complete the validity of the grants; in others the Government authorization is not clear.” The degree to which Tribes were able to decline these land grants is unclear. However, the legal status of these land grants would have changed in 1922 when Congress authorized the Secretary

of the Interior to issue restricted patents for land occupied by religious organizations, provided they continued to be used for mission or school purposes.

Additionally, legislation passed in 1909 allowed the federal government the ability to grant fee simple land titles directly to religious organizations. Figure 10 lists those fee simple land titles given to religious organizations on reservations for the Northwest Coast in Washington, Oregon, and California between 1911-1920, after which the published statistical reports stop including this information (a full list for these three states is provided in the appendix). Religious denominations would have the authority to unrestricted use of the land with these titles, including for development or sale. Significantly less fee simple land titles were given out during this period compared to land previously occupied by policy. However, several hundred acres were still given to religious denominations, primarily the Catholic and Presbyterian churches.

These land grants represent one significant area for further research. To begin with, some of these land grants were clearly intended for use as cemeteries (see appendix). For others, cemeteries are likely to be included along with the establishment of a mission, church, or school. The *Federal Indian boarding school initiative investigative report* (Newland, 2022) reports identifying the location of “approximately 53 marked or unmarked burial site” (p. 86). However, the report also notes the significant challenges of locating these sites and the complex regulatory context of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Further recommendations for a subsequent report focus explicitly on the need to identify further cemeteries so as to address the repatriation of remains, when appropriate. Furthermore, many local communities are already well aware of the location of these burial grounds, and increasingly they are publicly seeking to grieve and honor their ancestors. For example, on

August 13, 2023 the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians announced they were using ground penetrating radar to search for remains under the parking lot of a Presbyterian mission on the reservation dating back to 1872 (Thompson, 2023). Consequently, further research—carefully following both cultural protocols and NAGPRA—is clearly needed to learn what church land grants might have included burial grounds and what has happened to that land since then.

Date	State	Agency	Reservation	Denomination	Acres	Purpose
1857	WA	Tulalip	Tulalip	Roman Catholic	130	Church
1868	WA	Tulalip	Lummi	Roman Catholic	86	Church
1869	WA	Tulalip	Swinomish	Roman Catholic	89.8	Church
1870	WA	Tulalip	Port Madison	Roman Catholic	82.9	Church
1873	WA	Puyallup	Puyallup	Roman Catholic	NA	Church
1877	WA	Puyallup	Nisqually	Presbyterian	NA	Church
1880	WA	Tulalip	Muckleshoot	Roman Catholic	NA	Church
1883	WA	Puyallup	Puyallup	Presbyterian	NA	Church
1886	OR	Warm Springs	Warm Springs	United Presbyterian	2	Mission/church and parsonage
1887	OR		Grande Ronde	Roman Catholic	NA	Church and parsonage
1888	OR	Warm Springs	Simnasho	United Presbyterian	160	Mission/mission and school
1891	WA	Yakama	Yakama	Methodist Episcopal	185	Three missions with churches
1891	OR		Siletz	Methodist Episcopal	10	Mission
1894	WA	Yakama	Yakama	Roman Catholic	160	Church
1894	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	160	Church
1895	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	184	Church and mission
1896	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	18.5	Church
1896	OR		Siletz	Roman Catholic	1	Church
1897	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	Lot	Parsonage
1911	OR		Warm Springs	United Presbyterian Church of North America	40	Not Listed
1915	WA		Taholah	Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA	0.3	Not Listed
1920	CA		Hoopa Valley	Board of the Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA	3.6	Not Listed
8/18/08	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	115.9	Not Listed
NA	WA	Tulalip	Lummi	Methodist Episcopal	NA	School among Nooksack Indians

NA	WA	Puyallup	Skokomish	American Missionary Association of Congregational Church	NA	Mission
NA	WA	Neah Bay	Neah Bay	Episcopal	NA	Mission. No Land
NA	WA	Puyallup		Quinault	NA	Not Listed

Figure 9: Reservation Land Occupied by Denominations in WA, OR, and CA

Year	State	Reservation	Organization	Acreage
1915	OR	Warm Springs	The Women's General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of North America	40
1914	WA	Cushman	Board of Home Missions of Presbyterian Church in the USA	1.43
1919	OR	Warm Springs	Women's General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of North America	6.09

Figure 10: Fee Simple Reservation Land Acquired by Denomination in WA, OR, and CA

Discussion

This paper identifies specific government transfers of money and land to Christian denominations along the Northwest Coast during the boarding school era. While not by any means comprehensive, this evidence provides clear mechanisms through which the Catholic Church and a wide variety of Protestant denominations materially benefited through state support. As these denominations wrestle with the implications of their formal repudiations of the Doctrine of Discovery, this evidence suggests several important points as well as paths forward for consideration in these discussions. To begin with, the data provide important insights into trends in church involvement throughout the region.

In both the United States and Canada, the government significantly relied on the contract model of funding to establish an early industry of day and boarding schools along the Northwest Coast. Figure 2 shows that Washington Territory (and later Washington State) led in the use of this funding model, which aligns closely with qualitative accounts such as that in 1938 by then Director of the Bureau of Indian Education Willard Beatty who credited Reverend Chirouse's school at Priest's Point as "one of the first 'contract schools'" that by 1892 would account for "one-fourth of the entire appropriation for Indian education." The trends in the Northwest Coast provide a clear quantitative picture in support of this national trend and the importance of Washington as a place of early experimentation between the government and churches in the operation of boarding schools. Once the model became more established, these contract schools spread up and down the coast, first to southeast Alaska and then to California, and British Columbia, though largely absent from Oregon.

Day schools provide an important aspect of this story that is well illustrated in this study. During this early period of establishing the boarding school industry, day schools accounted for a significant portion of total attendance, frequently acting as feeder schools for boarding and

residential schools. Of note, the result of this study appears to highlight the importance of contract schools in this segment of the industry. Speculating, this could be because of the importance of day schools attached to church missions, particularly in remote areas such as Alaska. Regardless, this trend complicates narratives that would equate mission schools with boarding schools. While numerous examples exist of U.S. government contracts with churches for Native boarding schools, Native children were often just as likely to attend a contract mission school that only, or primarily, operated as a day school. This nuance is significant given the seriousness of claims around school administrators being responsible for removing children from their parents, and these results highlight an important distinction between public discourses around Canada's TRC and developing discourses around a Truth Commission in the United States. Translating the equivalence between contract mission schools and boarding schools from a Canadian to U.S. context may be misleading. While this does not necessarily weaken the case for a Truth Commission in the United States (after all Canada reached a separate settlement for abuses at day schools), it does require a clear articulation of what redress is being sought for what specific acts.

One common trend across this entire region is the importance of the Catholic Church. No other denomination received as much money for as long as the Catholic Church and this support is consistent across the entire region. In fact, the Catholic Church received more funding than all other denominations combined. This finding confirms what previous research has suggested while providing tangible numbers for the Northwest Coast. Furthermore, the Catholic Church is one of the few denominations that actively continued operating mission schools through government (trust) funds after the 1908 Supreme Court decision. Consequently, the Catholic Church's role is unique among denominations in the contemporary efforts around a Truth and

Healing Commission and due to their ongoing receipt of government funds after 1908 may mean that equating contract mission schools with the Catholic Church in a U.S. context is accurate. Additional research on trust funding of churches after 1908 would be needed to verify this conclusion.

Such a conclusion does not mean that Protestant denominations have no role or responsibility. One of the key points of contention is the access and control over school records. McCleave and Miron (2021) describe the challenges of obtaining access to government and church archives, particularly as they relate to identifying burial grounds for children who died while away from home at a boarding school. They also detail ongoing petitions with the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (UNWGEID) to pressure the U.S. government for this information. Both Catholic and Protestant church archives may provide some partial insights into student experiences for those schools under church control, including the outcomes for those children who died while institutionalized. For those denominations who explicitly resolved to support UNDRIP, the principles of this declaration would bind denominations to locating, and transferring control to Native governments, those remaining archives they have from affiliated schools. Despite multiple mergers and schisms in denominations over the last century, the growing consensus against the Doctrine of Discovery may serve as common ground for a collective responsibility to repatriate surviving archives. Such a process could help catalyze the U.S. federal government to account for the larger portion of children who attended exclusively federal boarding schools.

Furthermore, those reservation lands occupied and/or acquired by church denominations during the boarding school era provide one possible avenue for denominations seeking to engage more tangibly with the contemporary legacies of their missionary work during this period. Some

of these lands specify their use for cemeteries, while others that were for missions or schools may likely include a portion dedicated as a cemetery. Their presence on reservation land may make their existence already known, particularly by those living nearby. However, denominations looking into their historic involvement during this period should learn and document the stories of these parcels of land after they were granted to the denomination, which is outside the scope of this paper. While churches may have since sold some parcels, the income from these sales would be of interest since the government originally subtracted the land value from Tribal government holdings. For those lands that are still owned by the denominations, these land titles would serve as a starting point for reevaluating their role in relationships.

The history of the Shaker Church in the region provides some insight into the importance of land ownership and spiritual practice. As this paper described earlier, church and government officials actively persecuted this syncretic form of Native Christianity, and only through legal incorporation was the Shaker Church able to own church land and engage in their chosen forms of religious practice. Christian denominations willing to give back reservation land titles to either tribal governments or Native congregations will need to make their peace with changes in religious practices that are better aligned to serve these communities rather than the doctrinal requirements of large denominations. Prucha (1988) described the Protestant and Catholic churches as the only two paths to Christian conversion for Native people in the Pacific Northwest, but his approach is based on the comparison of catechetical charts detailing specific Biblical histories and interpretations. As previously discussed, the role of the Bible in worship services is a longstanding controversy among Native congregations, and Prucha's approach excludes alternative ways exemplified by the Shaker movement.

Recent development in Biblical translations will likely further expand adherents of syncretic forms of Native Christianity. In 2021, Rain Ministries published a First Nations translation of the New Testament that provides a useful bridge between otherwise stark cultural divides. An all-Native council led the process of translation while submitting roughly 1,300 draft copies of initial chapters for community feedback from Native churches across the continent. This translation includes many interesting elements such as the use of dynamic equivalence, described as a “thought-for-thought” translation rather than “word-for-word” to better resonate with “the traditional heart languages of the over six million English-speaking First Nations people of North America (Wildman, 2021). Notably, this translation uses terms such as “Great Spirit, Creator, Great Mystery,” and eschews using the term “God,” suggesting that the latter is the product of religious syncretism between Hebrew and Germanic tribes of Europe.²⁰ This new translation may provide a useful starting point for deeper conversations between denominations and Native congregations about the legacies of boarding schools, religious syncretism, and how control over land can be ceded by Christian denominations.

This study is limited in several dimensions. As a comparison of just one region along the Northwest Coast, it is unclear how many of these generalizations are accurate across the entirety of both countries. Additionally, only a limited time-period is covered within this region. While this period does encompass the peak of simultaneous church involvement in both countries, significant church activities with boarding and residential schools exists both before and after. Lastly, perhaps most glaringly, mission schools are largely excluded from this study when they are not actively receiving money from the government. These unfunded mission schools do not report statistics to the government and including them would require access to a much broader

²⁰ Tinker, 2013 provides an interesting critique of the term Creator for Native worldviews, suggesting it reinforces Western epistemologies.

array of sources controlled by church denominations. However, these limitations point to areas for further research. Perhaps the lowest hanging fruit would be to expand analysis of contract schools across the entirety of the United States and Canada as well as up to the present. Doing so is not only feasible but would provide a much more comprehensive picture of church involvement in the industry, allowing for a more rigorous approach to tracking down available church archives. Additionally, collecting and harmonizing data on boarding schools in New Zealand and Australia would provide the simplest international comparison to the United States and Canada with a focus on former British colonies. This international approach would work towards a broad understanding of Indigenous boarding schools as a global phenomenon and the variations across different locations and time-periods. An expanded dataset would also allow for better causal analysis to explain the varying manifestations of Indigenous boarding schools across the world.

Conclusion

The involvement of U.S. churches in the Native boarding school industry is markedly different compared with Canada. Churches in the U.S. acted as early entrepreneurs in establishing an industry that the government quickly took over, while contract schools in Canada persisted for well into the 20th century. While publicity from Canada's TRC may have contributed to the perception of churches playing a similar role in the United States, the data does not support this conclusion. Except for the Catholic Church, the peak of Protestant involvement appears limited to a period of roughly two decades in the late-1800s. Nevertheless, broad condemnation of the Doctrine Discovery from across denominations requires an accounting of this significant assault on Native peoples and their cultures.

This case study of the Northwest Coast provides one such accounting of the U.S. government and Christian churches widely conspiring in direct opposition of the first clause of the Constitution's first amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Churches clearly oppressed the religious expression of Native peoples through their early and direct involvement with the boarding school industry. During the period of this study, churches received the equivalent of over \$40 million dollars to establish a boarding and residential school industry throughout the Northwest Coast, roughly half of which was in the United States. The 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act explicitly protected the religious freedom of Native peoples, yet this relatively recent law's full implementation is still debatable. The Shaker movement exemplifies how Native expressions of Christianity have strived to stake out a middle ground of Christian and Native spirituality in the context of this longstanding repression in the Northwest Coast.

Churches that have formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery are now in the uncomfortable position of repairing the damage for which they are responsible. As this article points out, one direct way they can begin to address this damage is through reparation for land acquired by denominations on Native reservations. This study identifies roughly 1,500 acres of land grants received by Christian denominations on U.S. reservations in the Northwest Coast. As far as I am aware, no other studies have compiled statistics on church land ownership on Native reservations in this region. By documenting land received by churches during this period on Native reservations, this study suggests ways to shift the conversations on boarding schools to the transfer of land ownership back to Tribal governments and Native congregations. Perhaps what is needed is for denominations to pray together with these Native congregations, but this time the denominations receive a First Nation's Bible and the congregations get back their land.

In doing so, churches in the United States today can also be early innovators in sparking a much larger dialogue on the contemporary challenges faced by Indigenous peoples in their relationship with the state.

“Trying Truths: Native Boarding Schools and Resource Extraction in the Coastal Pacific Northwest”

“There are two kinds of banks in the world: those that control the currency and those cut by the water’s current.”

~Kasaan hereditary leader

In February of 1970s, Quirino Romero (Governor of the Taos Pueblo Council) presented Washington Senator Henry Jackson with a bow-and-arrow during a ceremony hosted by the Yakama Nation in Toppenish, Washington. He explained, “This arrow is not a symbol of killing, but rather a symbol of the truth in doing as much as you can for the Indian people” (Trahan, 2010, p. 40). The Taos Pueblo were in the midst of a Congressional debate over the U.S. Forest Service returning to them 48,000 acres of land from a National Forest in New Mexico that the federal government took many decades earlier without compensation. The Taos consider the Blue Lake lands to be sacred because “their ancestors emerged from the depths of the lake and its waters are the inner-sanctum of the temple where ceremonies are conducted throughout the year” (p. 31). On December 2 of that same year, Congress passed legislation supporting the Taos’ land claim, heralding the beginning of an era of self-determination for Native nations. As the U.S. Congress is now considering legislation to establish a Truth Commission on U.S. boarding school policy, this article weighs some implications of this commission for land claims. Specifically, I conduct a statistical analysis of commercial logging on Native reservations in the Pacific Coast of the Northwest between 1910-20, when federal policies first lifted restrictions for commercial logging. I find a significant causal statistical relationship between Native child custody in boarding schools and Indian agency logging revenues, indicating each child boarded

equated to roughly \$600 of revenues the following year (~\$10,000-20,000 in 2024 dollars).²¹

These findings indicate significant corruption among government officials in their simultaneous negotiations of land management and boarding schools.

This chapter starts with a brief sketch of the U.S. government's twin policies of boarding schools and allotment. I demonstrate how the U.S. government conceived of boarding schools as both a cause and consequence of acquiring Native lands, though most statistical studies have either conceived of these two policies as being separate or of schools as solely consequences of allotment. I then proceed to set up a panel regression exploring the relationship of boarding school attendance on Indian agency logging revenues in the Pacific Northwest between 1910-20. The results of this study indicate that government officials used child custody as leverage in negotiating resource extractions on reservations. I then probe the mechanisms driving this corruption, while also demonstrating ways that Native peoples effectively leveraged their participation in these industries to promote their own self-determination. I conclude with a discussion on these results considering a pending Truth Commission in the United States on boarding schools.

The Twin Policies: Boarding Schools and Allotment

In the late 1800s, the U.S. government began implementing the twin-policies of boarding schools and land allotment to force assimilation of Native peoples into dominant White society.

The 1969 Kennedy Report described the relationship between these twin policies:

From the beginning, Federal policy toward the Indian was based on the desire to dispossess him of his land. Education policy was a function of our land policy.... [T]he stated policy of the Federal Government was to replace the Indian's culture with our own.

²¹ Conversion done through: <https://www.in2013dollars.com/us/inflation/1910?amount=600>

This was considered ‘advisable’ as the cheapest and safest way of subduing the Indians, of helping the whites acquire desirable land, and of changing the Indian’s economy so that he would be content with less land. Education was a weapon by which these goals were to be accomplished. (Kennedy Report, p. 142)

This quote describes well the complicated two-way relationship the government established between land allotment and boarding schools. These schools are often viewed as a “function” of land-grab policies and a destination for landless children. This causal relationship is understandable given the fact that “as much as 95% of the funding for Indian boarding schools came from ‘Indian trust fund monies’ raised by selling Indian land” (Gorsuch, 2023, p. 6). Yet, as this study seeks to demonstrate, boarding schools were also used as tools to not only break-up Native families, but to directly accelerate the process of land loss.

In the mid- to late-1800s, government funding to establish a system of government schools for Native children first went to day and on-reservation boarding schools, including significant funding to Christian denominations who operated their own network of mission schools. In 1879, the first off reservation boarding school opened in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and increasingly Native youth were taken to boarding schools, often far removed from their families. By 1910, roughly 2/3rd of all school-aged Native children attended some type of government school, and over 2/3rd of these children—numbering over 20,000 children—attended some type of Native boarding school (Schmeckebier, 1927, p. 209; Adams, 1995, p. 320).²² Consequently, boarding schools became a common experience for multiple generations of Native families.

Boarding school attendance had an immediate effect on issues of parental custody. In the early evolution of the boarding school system, government agents were empowered to forcibly relocate children to these schools. As the federal government’s own reporting puts it, “There is

ample evidence in Federal records demonstrating that the United States coerced, induced, or compelled Indian children to enter the Federal Indian boarding school system” (Newland, 2023).²³ In 1893, Congress passed legislation requiring the “full consent” of parents to send children to off-reservation boarding schools, while in the same year authorizing Indian agents to “prevent the issuing of rations or the furnishing of subsistence...on account of any Indian child or children between the ages of eight and twenty-one years who shall not have attended school” (25 USC 283). In 1906, Congress reversed itself with a new law that allowed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to designate “Indian reform schools” where “the consent of parents, guardians, or next of kin shall not be required to place Indian youth in said school” (25 USC § 302).²⁴ These laws aside, stories of extra-judicial roundups of Native children were common through the 1920s (e.g. Child, 1998, p. 13; Szasz, 1999, p. 11 and 271). At off-reservation schools, children frequently did not see their parents for years, and many died there from disease or illness. At on-reservation boarding schools, parental visitation might be limited to a few times per year on holidays. The government slowly phased out the boarding school system over several decades after the 1930s in favor of the public school system.

The government implemented policies of boarding schools simultaneous to those of allotment, which sought to privatize Native reservations and open land to settlers. In 1887, Congress passed the Dawes Act to allocate land held by Tribal governments to families and individuals:

To each head of a family, one-quarter of a section; To each single person over eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; To each orphan child under eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; and To each other single person under eighteen years now living,

²³ For a moving visual depiction of forced removals in Canada, see “The Scream” by Cree artist Kent Monkman, 2017.

²⁴ Notably, these two laws and several other similar statutes remained in effect until 2022, when they were repealed under the RESPECT Act.

or who may be born prior to the date of the order of the President directing an allotment of the lands embraced in any reservation, one-sixteenth of a section. (Dawes Act)

The U.S. government opened the remainder of Tribal land to non-Native settlement.

Furthermore, the federal government did not initially provide the title of allotted land to Native people, but rather held it “in trust” for what would initially be a period of 25 years. At the end of the 25 years, the government provided the fee-simple title (along with U.S. citizenship).

Allotment policy had a disastrous effect on the land base of Tribal governments. Between 1889 and 1934, Native people sold or transferred 90 million acres of Native land to non-Natives under significant duress, reducing Tribal land holdings from 138 million acres to 48 million acres (ILTF).

Logging Native Reservations in the Pacific Northwest

To explore the impact of boarding schools on allotment, this study focuses on the Pacific Northwest, specifically Washington and Oregon state, to provide a regional analysis that considers more localized trends. A historically defining characteristic of much of this region is the presence of dense, old-growth forests, including much of the reservation land that became a key factor in the allotment process. This section provides a brief outline of logging policies as they pertain to the Native reservations to demonstrate the important connection between increased allotment and extractive logging in this region.

As early as 1803, Thomas Jefferson had already made the connection between cultural assimilation of Natives and deforestation. “[W]e wish to draw them to agriculture, to spinning & weaving.... [W]hen they withdraw themselves to the culture of a small piece of land, they will perceive [sic] how useless to them are their extensive forests, and will be willing to pare them off

from time to time in exchange for necessities for their farms & families” (Jefferson, 1803). In Washington and Oregon, treaty agreements of the 1850s created a series of Native reservations where these words would still ring true. However, the treaty agreements rarely designated reservations in land that was well-fit to farming, “The enormous stands of timber along the shores of the great estuary [of Puget Sound] provided an all-too-obvious alternative means of earning a living. From the early 1860s on, Indians worked in white-owned mills and camps and logged and sold fir and cedar from agency lands” (Ficken, 2005). Furthermore, the government built sawmills on reservations, either by treaty or policy, for the construction of agency buildings, housing, fencing, and other uses. However, these government sawmills were typically not used for commercial purposes (Newell et al., 1986, p. 1-16). Despite the obvious use of reservation lands in the PNW for logging, Congress would intervene repeatedly in the late 1800s to incentivize farming in lieu of logging. After 1874, the only removal of timber the government allowed on reservations was that necessary to clear fields. Meanwhile, surveyors dubiously altered numerous reservation boundaries away from previous treaty agreements. For example, one survey of the Yakama reservation removed a quarter million dollars of forest from the reservation that were eventually given to a railroad land grant. In this way and others, illegal logging on reservations remained widespread in the 19th century (Newell, 1986, p. xxiii).

Some reservations gained exceptions to this general prohibition, particularly those with easier access to markets. In the Northwest, the Tulalip agency had a reported 17 logging camps on four of its five reservations. Yet, after the 1874, a Congressional ban ground logging operations to a halt, creating a challenge for both Native loggers and non-Native suppliers who had extended significant financial credit to them for food, clothing, and other necessities to operate the logging camps. Native and non-Native protests to the federal government abounded,

including Snohomish Chief Snah-Talc, also known as Napoleon Bonaparte, who petitioned the Secretary of the Interior via telegram, “dont [sic] starve and scatter my children let them continue logging. Answer by telegraph” (Newell et al., 1986, p. 1-28). The government soon complied with an exception for the Tulalip Agency, as long as only Native people conducted the logging and the proceeds went to improving farms.

It wouldn't be until early in the 20th century until the government established a regulatory framework for logging on Native reservations.

Only two national laws governed timber cutting on Indian reservations at the turn of the century. The General Allotment Act of 1887 allowed Indian allottees to clear their allotments, but the Indian Office restricted them from selling timber commercially. The Dead and Down Act of 1889 expanded timber harvesting authority on Indian lands by permitting the cutting of standing, dead trees. (Newell et al., 1986, p. 2-11)

The regulations only allowed for an exception on land that had passed into fee-simple title and therefore could be logged without restrictions.

In 1910, Congress changed its approach and passed a law to allow the Secretary of the Interior to regulate logging on both allotted and unallotted reservation land. The BIA created a forestry department under its first director, J.P. Kinney, who created a tight regulatory system for this logging in which “all timber operations of any importance should be conducted only under contracts and under strict supervision” (Newell et al., 1986, p. 2-28). Any timber sales under \$100 had to be approved by the reservation superintendent while any sales over \$100 had to be approved by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Furthermore, sales over \$500 were subject to 30-days of advertisement and a sealed-bidding process with a required deposit (Newell, 1986, p. 2-24). Proceeds were under the care of agency officials to be used for “the benefit of the Indians” (Newell, 1986, p. 2-15). Kinney vocally opposed the allotment process because of the challenges

it created for forestry management, and he made every attempt to sell contracts by “forest units,” spanning multiple allotments. In these ways, government regulations tightly constrained any Native control over extracting timber resources from reservations.

While 1910 signaled the beginning of commercial logging on Native reservations, World War 1 marked its rapid acceleration. Demand for timber increased rapidly, both on and off reservations. As one example of how the war economy changed nearby forest management practices, “President Wilson returned half the acreage of Mount Olympus National Monument to the Olympic National Forest in 1915 in order to free up timber” (Chiang and Reese, 2002). The Office of Indian Affairs, for its part, leveraged timber resources on reservations to support the war effort. Large timber sales from PNW reservations, such as Spokane and Klamath, went to replacing other commercial sales that were redirected to the war economy. Spruce trees were particularly valuable from places such as the Quinault and Siletz Reservations, as the military deemed them critical for airplane production in Seattle. Yet, once the floodgates were opened for logging on reservations, they did not easily close. After the war ended, commercial logging on reservations only accelerated.

Extensive logging of old-growth forest is damaging to the ecosystem for numerous reasons, but perhaps one of the worst is its impact on water quality and salmon habitats. Extensive slash—forest debris left from logging—clogs streams and rivers making it impossible for salmon to reach spawning grounds. If cleared, salmon spawning is further repressed by a lack of forest cover, root systems, and large logs to form pools on upriver tributaries. Straightening and dredging rivers for transporting logs further damages sensitive fish habitats. For these reasons and more, the scientific community has formed a strong consensus on the negative impacts of old-growth logging on fisheries (Reeves and Bisson, 2009; Meehan et al., 1984).

David Kelly and Gary Brasch (1990) even claim that, “Forest destruction, much more than overfishing, is a major reason for the sharp decline in Northwest fisheries in this century” (p. 54). Furthermore, a decline in salmon spawning also leads to a decreased nutrients for trees and the entire forest ecosystem. Due to this cyclical relationships between the terrestrial and aquatic worlds, salmon are often called the keystone species of the Northwest Coast ecosystem.

Measuring the Impact of Boarding Schools

Despite the clear interconnections between allotment and boarding school policies, most statistical studies treat them as distinct. For example, Leonord et al. (2020) study the causes of allotment by developing sophisticated econometric models predicting the impact of resource endowments on a reservation’s allotment process. For example, they can predict with a high accuracy both the likelihood and timing of a reservation’s allotment using measures of prime agricultural land, gold, silver, coal, timber, water, as well as measures of population pressure and development near reservations, such as railroads and adjacent military forts. They use these models to explain why reservations with mid-quality land have decreased incomes today. They attribute this effect to a later allotment process that resulted in more allotted land being in trust when the policy ended in 1934. Consequently, fractionalized allotments in frozen trust status have depressed incomes over time. The author’s only mention of boarding schools is that they contribute to human capital development but are outside the scope of their study.

In comparison, Dippel and Frye (2019) present one of the only statistical studies of allotment to include a detailed discussion on the connection with education attainment. Their study focuses on the impacts of allotment on Native households, rather than the causes of allotment. In their study, they compare the socioeconomic outcomes for people on reservations

who have received an allotment to those who have not. Notably, they find that, “individuals within a household obtained significantly more education if their school-age years were characterized by living in an allotted household whose allotment had not yet been transferred into fee simple.” The authors consider many possible explanations, finding that “allottees [signal] their assimilation in order to improve their chances of being declared competent by their local BIA agents.” According to the 1906 Burke Law, the Department of the Interior could expedite the 25-year waiting period to convert land from trust to fee status if they deemed the allottee “competent and capable.” The authors only briefly consider the role of boarding schools in their study, dismissing them as drivers of allotment based on several faulty assumptions, including that parental consent was required after 1891 and families were fully able to opt into public schools on Native reservations after 1910. While these faulty assumptions do not undermine their results, they do warrant a more detailed inquiry into the impact of boarding schools on allotment.

In comparison to allotment, only two econometric studies are currently published on the long-term impact of boarding schools, and they notably do not include in their models their impact on land loss. Feir (2016) conducted the first statistical study on Canada’s parallel system of residential schools using a 1991 survey of residential school survivors. They found that “on average, residential schooling achieved its objectives of economic and cultural assimilation,” with the caveat that highly abusive schools eliminated any observed economic integration. Gregg (2018) presents their study as a formal test of the robustness of Feir’s results by looking at the long-term impact of off-reservation boarding schools in the United States. They find that reservations with more children at off-reservation boarding schools between 1911-32 have higher contemporary levels of education attainment, higher per capita income, lower poverty

rates, a greater proportion of exclusively English speakers, and smaller family sizes. Still, both studies are careful not to endorse these policies of coerced assimilation. Instead, they emphasize that their studies do not effectively incorporate the costs and trade-offs of boarding schools.

In response, this study incorporates some of these costs and trade-offs by developing a panel regression to estimate the impact of boarding school attendance on resource extraction on Native reservations through logging by government and non-Native contractors. This study focuses on a sample of heavily forested coastal reservations within Washington and Oregon state that were allotted between 1911-1920. Data for this study is based on official statistics from the U.S. annual report of the Indian Affairs Commissioner. The beginning of the period aligns with the changing federal laws allowing for contract logging on Native reservations, and the study extends until 1920 when the variables of interest are no longer included in the annual reports. Agencies are used as the unit of analysis. This decision is based in large part off the way the data is reported, but also reflects to a certain degree the bureaucratic decision-making process through which the government managed land privatization. In all but two cases, agency boundaries remained constant during this period. In one case, the government dissolved the Roseburg Agency, which spanned the Oregon-California border. This agency was not included in this study. In the other case, in 1914 the government carved the Taholah agency out of the Cushman Agency to survey the Quinault reservation for old-growth logging. For this study, the values for these two agencies are aggregated after 1914 to keep a constant unit of analysis, and a more detailed analysis of the Quinault reservation logging during this period is included in the results.

For each agency, the school attendance at boarding schools is reported annually by school type, including off-reservation boarding; on-reservation boarding; and boarding at mission/private schools. These values are aggregated to create a total boarded variable per

agency. Additionally, the measure of total number of eligible school-aged children is used as a control as well as to create a new variables for the percentage of children in boarding schools per agency over time. Tracking the percentage addresses potential issues with multicollinearity between schooling variables. For the dependent variables, this study uses the annual value of timber cut by non-Indians. This measure includes timber cut down directly by the government or contractors and excludes the value of any timber cut down directly by Native nations. However, contractors conducted most of the logging. Additional controls are also used including the total acreage of both allotted and unallotted land on the reservation, as well as the number of sawmills present within the agency. Trends are separately reported for logging by Native nations during this period, but are not included in the regression models.

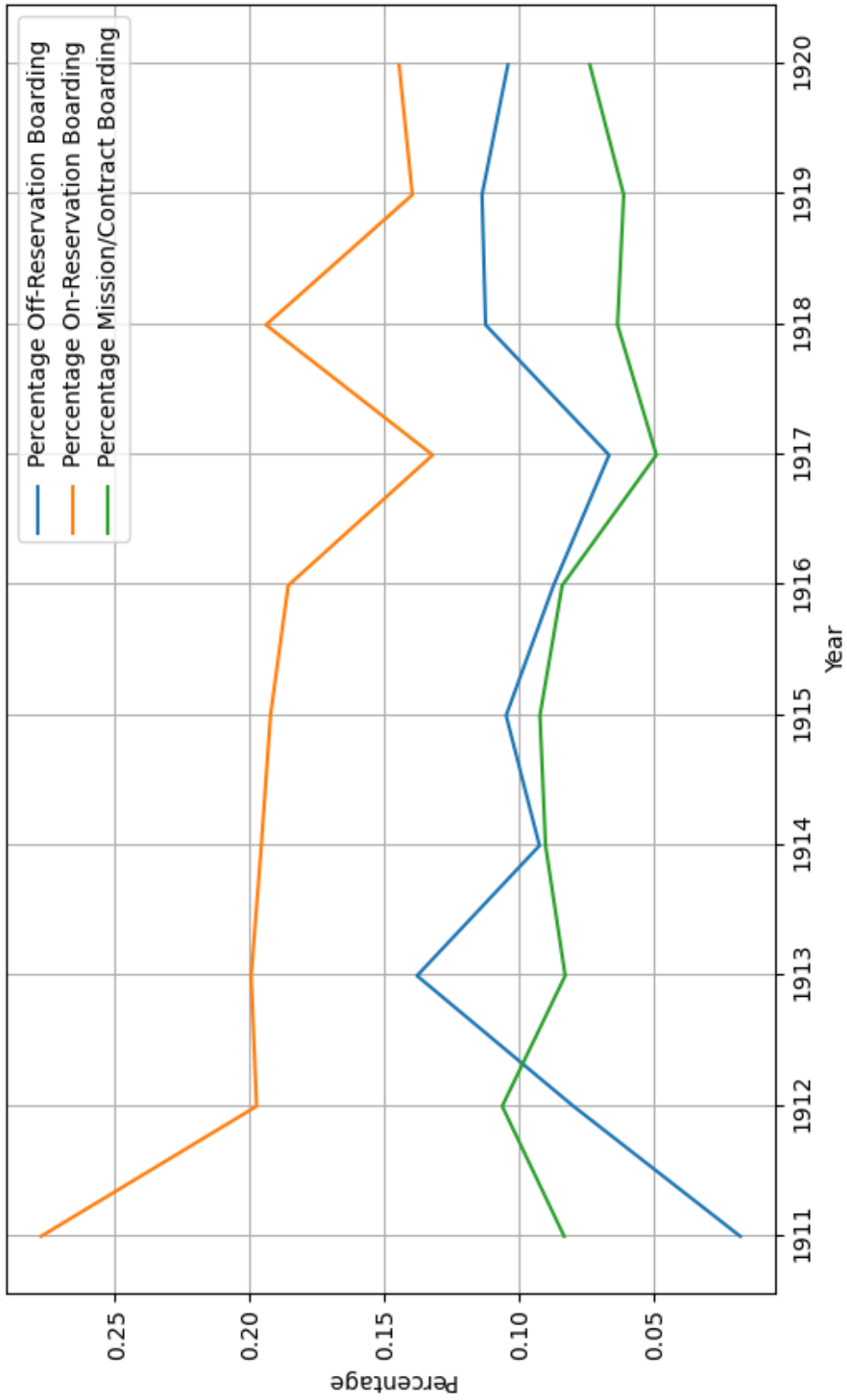


Figure 11: Percentage of eligible school-aged children in boarding school by type, WA and OR

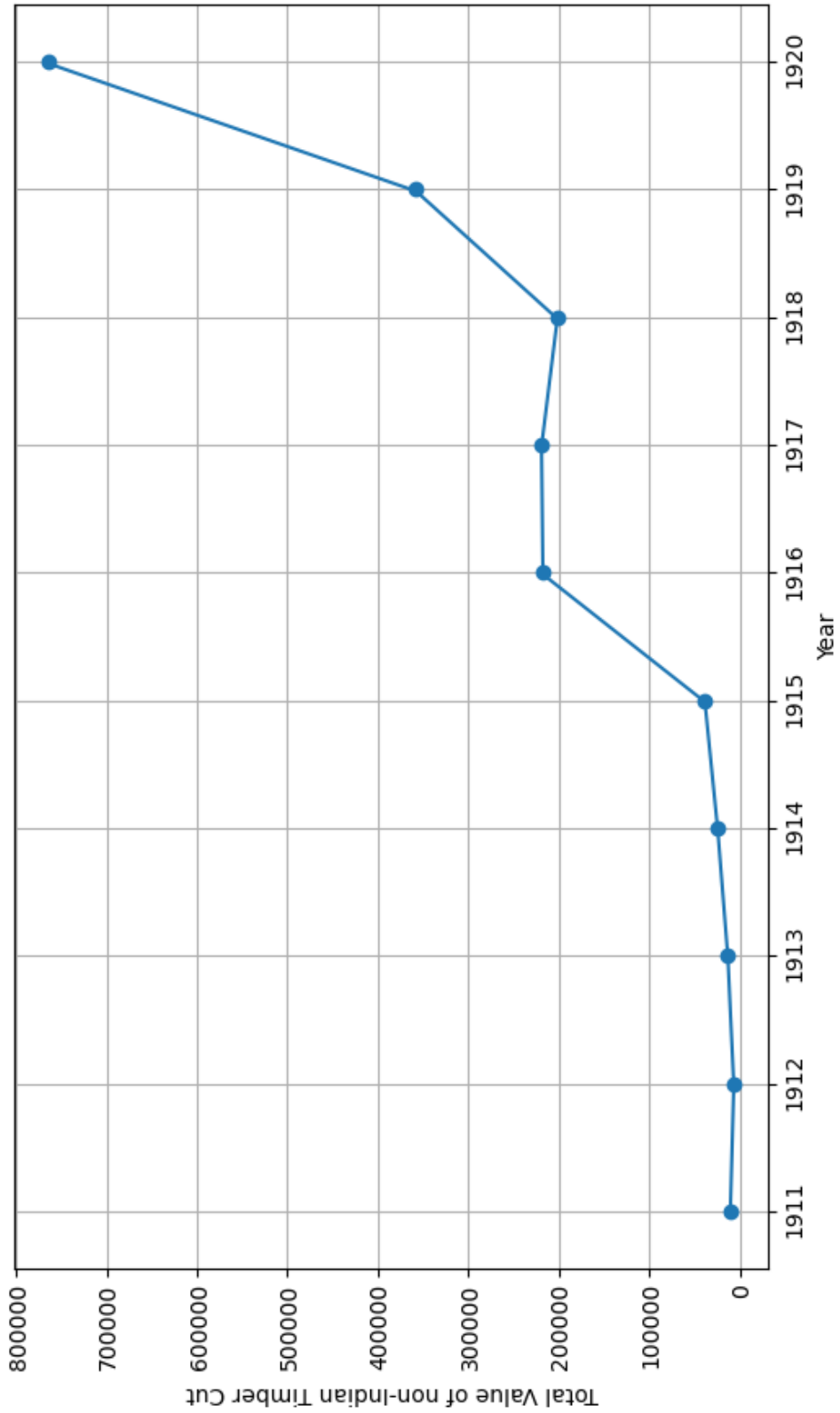


Figure 12: Annual Value of non-Indian Timber Cut on Reservations, WA and OR

Regression Results

I study three regression models to assess the causal impact of boarding schools on reservation logging. The first model assesses the effect of the percentages of children at boarding schools on logging revenues. The independent variable in the second model is the total number of children boarded. The third model uses the disaggregated numbers based on the type of boarding schools. To assess whether there was a causal impact, rather than just a correlation, I compared the school variables from the previous year to the timber sales of the following year. All three models of the coastal region have sufficiently low p-values for the F-test to accept the hypothesis at the 99% confidence level that these models explain more than a simple average of the dependent variable (i.e. all the independent variables combined are meaningfully explaining logging revenues). Furthermore, all three of the models show significant p-values to indicate that higher boarding school attendance from the previous year increased the annual value of timber cut on reservations the following year.

Interpreting the coefficients on the boarding school variables explains the size of their impact on subsequent logging revenues. In model (1), the coefficient for the percentage of children is significant at the 99% level, indicating that each additional percentage of children that are boarded would provide \$2,841 for an agency in logging revenues the following year. In model (2), the coefficient for total children boarded is significant at the 95% level, indicating that each additional student would provide, on average, \$599.58 in logging revenues for the agency the following year. In model (3), the coefficient for off-reservation boarding schools is significant at the 90% level, indicating that each additional child at an off-reservation boarding

school would provide \$896.2 of logging revenue for the agency in the following year. The coefficient for on-reservation boarding schools is significant at the 95% level, indicating an agency would generate \$728.69 per child.

The results of the panel regressions in this study indicate that boarding school attendance is a significant causal mechanism in the process of resource extraction between 1911-1920 on the Native reservations of the Coastal Pacific Northwest. Given the limitations and messy nature of historical data, high r-squared values are not necessarily reasonable to expect. Yet, all three models have an r-squared of roughly 0.5. These results indicate that a significant relationship is indeed present, though some additional significant driving factors are still missing from the model. The demonstration of this statistically significant causal relationship between boarding schools and resource extraction provides an important connection between two bodies of literature that have otherwise been siloed. These statistical results imply a significant endogeneity between boarding schools and allotment that has not been previously documented.

Figure 13: Regression Results of Boarding and Agency Logging Revenues

Regression Models	(1)	(2)	(3)
Percentage of eligible children boarded	284,100*** (0.0032)	-	-
Total number of eligible children	-	-199.75 (0.1175)	-192.253 (0.1200)
Total boarded	-	599.58** (0.0435)	-
Non-reservation boarding	-	-	896.2* (0.0668)
Reservation boarding	-	-	728.69** (0.0240)
Mission/Private Boarding	-	-	-533.68 (0.4088)
Additional controls	Allotted Unallotted	Allotted Unallotted	Allotted Unallotted
Time and Fixed Effects	X	X	X
F-Test p-value	0	0	0
R-Squared	.5270	.4956	.5514
# of observations	59	59	59

These results also indicate the presence of significant corruption among government officials responsible for Native boarding schools and reservation land management. The case of the Quinault reservation provides one illuminating example. After 1895, the federal government assigned the superintendent of the Puyallup boarding school in Tacoma as the authorized agent for reservations throughout southern Puget Sound (Puyallup, Nisqually, Squaxin, Muckleshoot, Shoalwater Bay, Chehalis, Skokomish, and Quinault reservations). Consolidating the duties of school and land management in one role created a conflict of interest and clearly incentivized corruption. Superintendent Harry Liston (1903-1907) is perhaps the most egregious examples. According to the 1908 annual report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (p. 122), Liston “absconded” after the government found “\$885.41 of the allotted funds and \$960.32 of the Indian additional funds which he had collected” in his personal bank account rather than deposited with the U.S. Treasurer. An additional \$2,000 were “misused,” and an investigation of concurrent land sales from the agency found clear evidence of fraud.

Henry Sicade (1866-1938), grandson of the Puyallup Chief Stann and grandnephew of Chief Leschi, recalls this period as both a student and alumni of the Puyallup boarding school. In 1903, according to Sicade, issues with the school management became bad enough that he and other Puyallup leaders lobbied to create a new public school on their reservation at Fife to start funneling their children out of the boarding school. These issues with school management were not new Sicade. In the early 1890s, Native parents compelled lawyers to intervene when the “cruel system of beating boys and girls with clubs and whips again came into vogue and flourished” simultaneous to the government establishing a commission in 1893 to sell off the school’s land (Collins, 2000).

In 1910, the government rebranded the Puyallup boarding school as the Cushman School, and its enrollment increased significantly until its final closure in 1920. During this decade, no fewer than four different Superintendents followed Liston as the official in charge of both the school and the agency's reservations. This high turnover was the norm throughout the agency, as the Quinault Natural Resources journal (1984) demonstrates. Lumber companies would regularly double the salaries of the BIA employees, creating a rotating door between industry and the underfunded agency. "Thus, the BIA had employee attitude problems as well as financial difficulties in administering the contracts, with the result that its priority became that of attending to the welfare of the timber company before that of the allottee" (p 7). These conditions only furthered an environment rife for corruption.

On the Quinault reservation, allotment began in 1906 under the administration of Superintendent Liston. According to the Aloha Lumber Company (Sterling, 2007), Cushman Superintendent H. H. Johnson (Liston's replacement) reported to the federal government that the Quinault Tribal Council voted unanimously on July 20, 1910 to open the reservation to leasing for mining. Quinault Tribal Council records may indicate details of how this consensus was manufactured, but the conditions for consent were clearly not present.²⁵ In the following year, a Puyallup agency report stated that, "There is an insane clamor to sell all their timber," and on March 4, 1911, the agency "authorized the enrollment of members of the Hoh, Quileute, and Ozette tribes, because all eligible residents of the Quinault and Queets area had been enrolled" (Sterling, p. 50). The reservation had enough land that the agency could allot for an additional 1,500 people, which could then be leased for logging, and the Quinault numbered roughly 800 people at the time. In 1912, the first logging contracts began to clear allotments for agriculture,

²⁵ These records are only accessible to enrolled Quinault citizens.

but the BIA forestry director Kinney stopped further logging after visiting the reservation in 1914 so that a survey could be conducted of the forests. This same year the Taholah agency was carved out of the Cushman agency to manage the Quinault reservation. Logging eventually picked up again at the tail end of World War 1 to support the airline industry. By the 1920s, allotment began in earnest and Aloha signed several large contracts to begin industrial logging across the reservation.

The Taholah agency clearly manufactured Native consent to log the Quinault reservation, and in the case of further resistance, the agency forced it. After the agency negotiated a contract with industry, lumber companies still required a power-of-attorney signed by allottees before they could begin logging. However, in 1920 Sally Williams (Quinault) refused to sign the power-of-attorney on a key allotment that Aloha needed for a railroad to access to log their contract for the Moclips forest unit. Superintendent Steer wrote at the time, “[T]here is no reason except the mulish stubbornness of an old Indian woman why the timber on the Sally Williams allotment should not be sold to the Aloha Lumber Company at this time” (Steen, 1969, pp. 42-43). He cited a May 1920 telegram from the assistant secretary of the interior, “no allottee will be permitted to interfere with or obstruct timber operations of successful bidder Moclips Unit” (Steen, 1969, p. 42). The BIA promptly declared Williams “an incompetent Indian,” giving them legal management of her allotment. Clearly, Native allottees were not allowed to directly contest the deforestation of their land by contractors, and the experience of Williams set an important precedent whereby the agency used incompetency as a readily available tool against allottees resisting logging (Quinault Natural Resources, 1984).

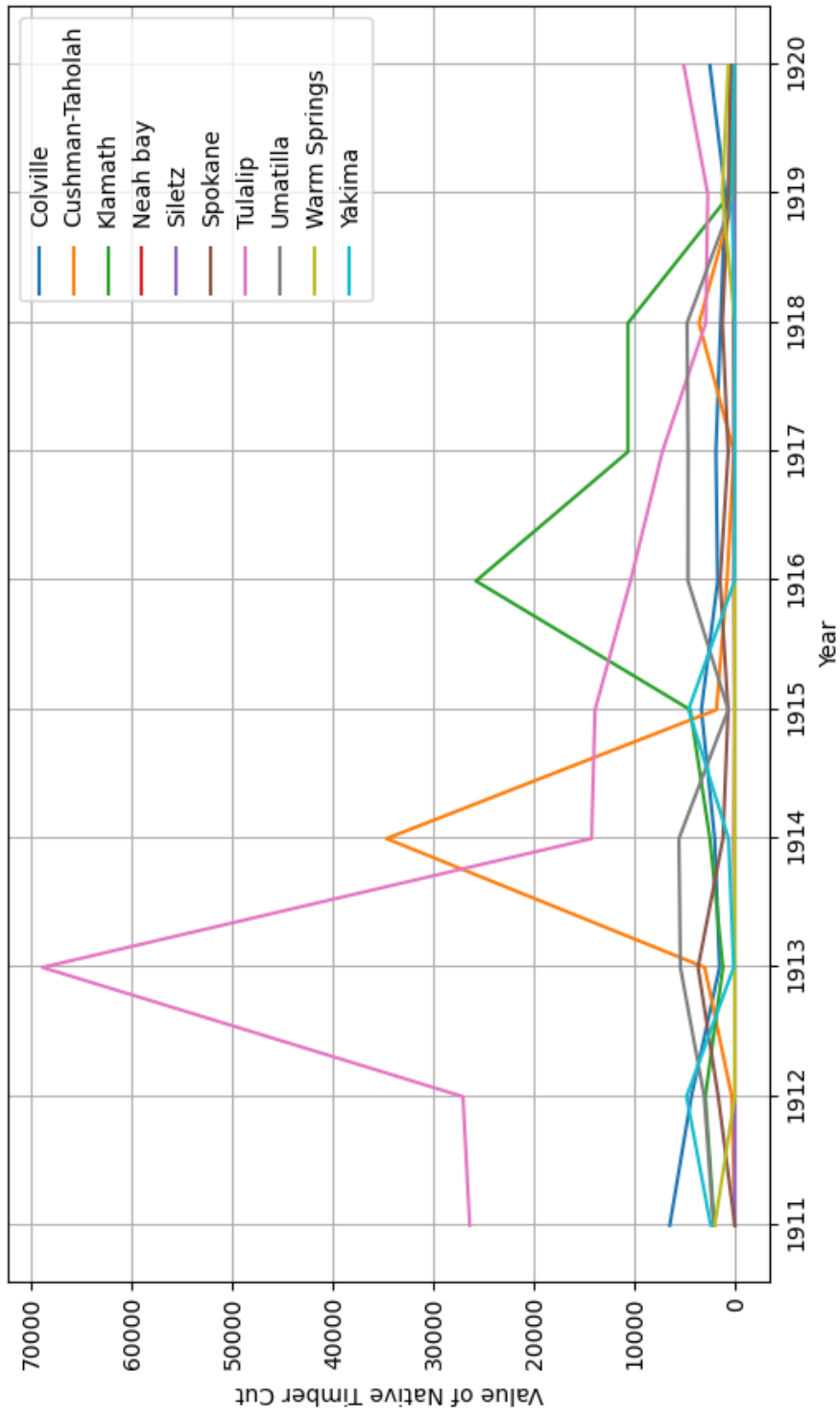


Figure 14: Value of Timber Cut by non-Indians (\$)

Simultaneous to the exploitive drive of the surrounding settlers, Native people were actively leveraging their ability to generate money from logging their land to further their own self-determination. As Figure 4 demonstrates, Native nations throughout the region were generating logging revenues, with the Tulalip, Klamath, and Cushman-Taholah agencies most pronounced during this period. Of note is the large spike in 1913 from Tulalip logging. A closer examination of events in Tulalip provides an indication of what events drove this spike. Much of this spike can be attributed to the leadership of William Shelton (Snohomish) whose life provides an interesting example of how Native leaders were able to leverage aspects of Western culture in order to revitalize their own Native cultures.

Shelton himself opted into several years of schooling at the Tulalip Mission School when he turned 18 years old, before beginning to work at the Tulalip Indian Agency as well as the agency sawmill. He petitioned unsuccessfully for several years before finally being granted permission to establish Treaty Day in 1911. Shelton used the “ruse” of celebrating the treaty to gain permission. However, Shelton’s grandson shares what Treaty Day really meant for his grandfather. “He was adamant that Treaty Days was a commemoration, not a celebration. The treaty really meant the end of our way of life. Hardly anything to celebrate. He wanted to commemorate it.... He wanted the children to be reminded of who they were, the culture they come from” (Gobin and Stevick, 2015). In doing so, Shelton established an enduring legacy of bridging two vastly different cultures.

In 1911, Shelton commemorated Treaty Day for the first time at the Tulalip boarding school. The Tulalip nations held annual commemorations at the school until 1913 when Shelton led the construction of a large longhouse for hosting subsequent Treaty Days using lumber from the sawmill where he worked. This longhouse measured 116 feet by 43 feet in size (Riddle,

2008). On the commemoration of Treaty Day, January 22, 1914, Shelton dedicated the construction of this new longhouse on the Tulalip reservation, symbolizing cultural revival after a long period of ceremonial and language ban by the U.S. government. For this annual event, boarding school students could join their elders in the longhouse, who would sing and dance for them. This longhouse demonstrates how Native leaders were able to leverage the extractive logging industry present on the reservation to support cultural revitalization.



Figure 15: Tulalip Longhouse, outside view



Figure 16: Tulalip Longhouse, inside view

The statistics also show an uptick in Native logging on the Cushman-Taholah agency as well as the Klamath agency during the 1910s. The increase on the Cushman Taholah agency corresponds with early clearing of allotments for farming, previously discussed in this article. For the Klamath, this uptick aligns with reports of logging from this reservation that was closely connected with the war effort to prop up the national airplane industry (Newell, 1986, p. 2-34). The Klamath reservation was well-known across the country for its vast forests, and this early logging presaged several decades later when the federal government terminated its trust status with the Klamath in order to encourage more logging. “On January 4, 1954, Associate Secretary of the Interior Lewis submitted the BIA’s legislation calling for termination of Federal supervision of the Klamath Tribe. In a cover letter to Senator Richard Nixon, President of the Senate, Lewis recognized that the Klamath Indian forest ‘stands out nationally as possibly the

largest remaining block in the nation of high-quality timber” (Newell, 1986, p. 4-37). When the Klamath finally regained their trust status on August 26, 1986, they regained “only a dozen small areas of about 300 acres in Klamath County” (Fixico, 2018).

Discussion

While this study focuses on the corrupt and exploitative logging practices of the BIA in the Coastal Pacific Northwest during the early 1900s, equally important is the way that Native peoples have since taken back control of their land during the intervening period. As Mark Trahant (Shoshone-Bannock) argues in his book *The Last Great Battle of the Indian Wars* (2010), the relationship between Washington State Senator Henry Jackson and Forrest J. Gerard (Blackfeet) is central to understanding this dramatic turn-around that has led to Native people increasingly asserting their self-determination. As Sam Deloria writes in the book’s forward, “Jackson’s undeniable turnaround” is “one of the most remarkable reversals in American political history” (p. ii). In 1953, as a former chairman of the House Indian Affairs committee and a newly elected senator, Jackson led the charge to terminate the federal trust relationship with native peoples by sponsoring House Concurrent Resolution 108 of the 83rd Congress, which directed the government “as rapidly as possible, to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, and to end their status as wards of the United States, and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship” (Fixico, 2018). Yet, by 1970 Jackson became one of the most influential allies of Native people in the United States, hiring Gerard to rewrite much of the laws still in place today that empower self-governance among Native nations.

In early 1970 as an indication of this dramatic turnaround, Jackson attended the annual conference of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) for this first time in “many years” where a series of tense meeting occurred due to his legislative history supporting termination (Trahant, 2010, p. 41). However, the meetings went well enough that both Jackson and the NCAI agreed they should continue meeting annual going forward. Several weeks later in February of 1970, the Yakama Nation decided to formally adopt Jackson in a ceremony in Toppenish, Washington where representatives of tribal nations throughout the region were invited to join, including the Spokanes, Lummis, Makahs, Colvilles, Alaska Natives, and the Taos Pueblo. In this ceremony, the Taos Pueblo presented Jackson with the bow and arrow mentioned in this article’s introduction. Yakama Chairman Bob Jim added that since Jackson is a “member of the tribe, he won’t be able to say, ‘your problems with the government.’ He’ll have to say, ‘our problems with the government’” (p. 40). Just four months later on July 8, 1970, President Nixon endorsed legislation supporting the Taos’s land claim while also launching the policy of self-determination, “We are proposing to break sharply with the past approaches to Indian problems. We suggest a new and coherent policy...most importantly, we have turned from the question of whether the Federal government has a responsibility to Indians to the question of how that responsibility can best be furthered” (p. 37).²⁶ This change in policy marked the beginning of an era of Native self-determination.

In 1971, Jackson hired Forrest Gerard (Blackfeet) who proceeded to write much of the legislation for self-determination that Jackson stewarded through Congress. Most importantly, Gerard crafted the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act that Jackson

²⁶ As Trahant points out, Jackson ultimately voted against the legislation for the Taos land claim passed on December 2, 1970. Jackson’s ailing mentor New Mexico Senator Clint Anderson led the opposition to this bill, and Jackson remained loyal to him regardless of their evolving differences. Even without Jackson’s vote, the legislation still passed in a landslide: 72-12.

introduced in 1973 and ultimately passed Congress in 1975. This act promoted Native self-determination and self-governance by directing the flow of federal funding to Native governments who would implement their own programs rather than having the BIA administer the programs for them. This change allowed for Native nations to rebuild their governance in a wide range of areas, including forestry programs. For example, “With passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (PL 93-638) in 1975, the Quinault Nation established its own forestry and fisheries management programs, which have expanded in scope and responsibilities under Self-Governance authorities” (MacDonnel, 2021).

In this era of Native self-determination, some advocates have argued for further transferring ownership of public lands to Native governments. For example: “The NDN Collective argues for returning all federal public lands—some 640 million acres—to the continent's original caretakers. In a much-discussed 2021 cover story for *The Atlantic*, David Treuer, an Ojibwe writer and historian, called for transferring the national parks to tribal control. ‘For Native Americans,’ he wrote, ‘there can be no better remedy for the theft of land than land’” (Goodluck, 2023). To date, successfully implemented agreements on public lands are more likely to include incremental approaches, such as numerous co-management agreements. However, these approaches reflect the complicated and contested intersection of divergent cultural values and practices with land, often under the pretense of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) (Charnley, 2008; Long and Lake, 2018; Charnley et al., 2007).

Bypassing the federal government, many Native nations are steadily rebuilding their forested land base through buyback programs. For example, the largest buy-back of forest land by a Native government occurred in 2020 when the Bois Forte Chippewa bought back 28,089 acres of forestland from the logging company PotlatchDeltic with the assistance of the

Conservation Fund and the Indian Land Tenure Foundation. The ILTF agreed to help with the process because the Conservation Fund did not try to put any easements on the property, a condition of the ILTF that is often broken by large conservation funds (Goodluck, 2023). These buy-back programs offer significant opportunity to rebuild a forested land base, since an estimated 42% of forest land in the United States is held by private family forest owners, let alone commercial interests (Butler and Leatherberry, 2004).

More local to the Pacific Northwest, the Snoqualmie Tribe recently purchased 12,000 acres that is now called the Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Forest (Aadland, 2022).

[T]he parcel is near an area where the federal government had once promised the tribe a reservation but never provided one. The consequences of that failure reverberated through the 20th century: The tribe's landless status made it easier for the U.S. government to terminate its federal recognition under destructive 1950s-era Indian assimilation policies and to continue violating its hunting and fishing treaty rights. It wasn't until 1999 that the Snoqualmie people regained federal recognition, enabling them to secure a small reservation elsewhere.

This example demonstrates how Native leadership in the Pacific Northwest is pursuing buy-back programs of Native forested lands. Yet, buy-back programs for land that the government took without compensation is a far cry from justice.

Nevertheless, these trends offer some recommendations for a pending Truth Commission on U.S. boarding school policies. As this study demonstrates, boarding school policy directly contributed to land loss and deforestation on Native reservations in the Coastal Pacific Northwest. Currently, the scope of the pending legislation for a Truth Commission on Boarding School Policies does not specifically include mention of the relationship of boarding schools to land loss, though it does include a mandate to investigate "church and government records," including those related to "land" (S.1723). The results of this study suggest expanding on this

mandate as an area for deeper inquiry by a Truth Commission. In this manner, recommendation from a Truth Commission would include ways to increase land holdings by Native governments that saw their land base steadily chipped away by boarding school policies, such as direct transfers of federal lands and funding for buy-back programs using federal dollars.²⁷

This study also points to an additional area of attention for a Truth Commission—the information management system used to organize its research. As this study demonstrates, government coercion of Native people for resource extraction and land sales is not always directly reflected in official records, and the dominant econometric approaches to policy evaluation do not adequately reflect the costs and trade-offs of Native boarding school policies. For example, Quinault Tribal Council records and oral histories would provide useful insights into the impact of corrupt BIA practices. However, the databases used by Truth Commission staff are frequently not well-equipped to steward this data, as Priscilla Hayner (2011) describes in their global survey of Truth Commissions.

Besides the mandate given to a commission, its report will also reflect the methodology employed in collecting and analyzing information. The factor that will most fundamentally affect the kind of truth that a commission will document is the information management system that it uses to collect, organize, and evaluate the huge amount of information that may be available to it. In recent years, larger truth commissions have employed sophisticated databases to record and analyze the details collected in thousands or tens of thousands of testimonies from victims and witnesses. Experts argue that a powerful database is essential to a truth commission's task. It is true that many kinds of analysis cannot be done without the use of such a program, especially if thousands of cases are being documented. However, less attention has been given to how a database focus in information-gathering can also have a limiting effect on how the information is collected as well as the final truth that is told. Some participants in past truth commissions have a critical perspective of the information management system used by modern truth commissions, and have begun to ask whether this approach allows a commission to answer some of the questions that it may want to ask. (p. 80)

²⁷ Such funding is not unprecedented. In a settlement to the class-action *Cobell v. Salazar* over federal mismanagement of Native funds held in trust, the government provided \$1.9 billion for Native governments to repurchase fractionalized ownership of land on Native reservations. However, this funding has quickly been exhausted given the scope of the issue.

Hayner argues that commissions should first decide on the questions and outcomes they would like to achieve before deciding on a methodology and then “bringing in experts to design a database that will shape the final output” (p. 81). By focusing on the causal relationship between boarding schools and land management, this study argues for an information management system in a Truth Commission that will directly contribute to transferring land back to Native governments.²⁸

Conclusion

The relationship between Native child custody, land loss, and resource extraction is consistency overlooked by policymakers and policy studies. This study addresses a small slice of this issue by looking at boarding schools and deforestation on Native reservations in the 1910-20, in the wake of the establishment of a Forestry Department in the Office of Indian Affairs. This study shows statistical evidence of a significant causal relationship between increased boarding school attendance and the revenues brought in by Indian agencies through logging. While these results related to deforestation are not likely to be directly generalizable to other regions of the country, this study suggests similar causal mechanisms to exist in relation to other measurements of land privatization and resource extraction. For example, other regions may find similar relationships between mining or oil extraction. Furthermore, this study suggests that one important area for further research on the relationships between boarding schools and land loss is the implementation of heirship laws that authorized school administrators to control and sell students’ inherited land (Banner, 2005, p. 281).

²⁸ See Arthur, 2014 for further recommendations for Truth Commissions working with Indigenous peoples

The results of this study are significant for pending legislation on a Truth Commission in the Congress that would thrust issue of Native custody into public spotlight. This article suggests clear evidence for several areas in which this mandate could be expanded, specific to increasing Native access to and control over land. Several models already exist to demonstrate large-scale land transfer and buy-back programs. Furthermore, this study argues that focusing on the relationship between boarding school policies and land requires very intentional decisions about a Truth Commission's information management system that would inform relevant outcomes and recommendation.

Skeptics of Truth Commissions for the issues faced by Indigenous peoples may be skeptical of this approach, justifiably arguing that Truth Commissions are typically tools of the state. States are highly resistant to facing accountability for their actions, and controlling the scope of Truth Commissions is a convenient and strategic way to limit accountability. However, lessons from the relationship between Henry Jackson and Forrest Gerard offer a telling truth. “[N]o matter how strong the argument, no matter how right a tribal point of view might be, it meant nothing if it could not be enacted into law. This is an important message because the craft of governing has become increasingly rare” (Trahant, 2010, p. 120). A Truth Commission is surely not the remedy to the centuries-long conflict between Native peoples and the U.S. government. However, a careful and focused approach may well lead to tangible gains in Native governance of their customary homelands.

“Tribal Canoe Journey: an Autoethnography”

“I think the journey is all about reminding everybody, not just non-Natives, but Natives themselves that we have a place here, we still have a connection to this earth, to this water, to the canoes.... We still belong here. And that’s what the journey gave to me.” Cassandra Marie George (Suquamish)



Figure 17: *A Salish Welcome*, Author's photo

Across the street from where I am writing my dissertation is the statue “A Salish Welcome” by Marvin Oliver, commemorating a 2010 shoreline restoration for salmon smolt just outside the Ballard Locks. Migrating salmon must navigate a concrete fish ladder as they traverse the watershed surrounding Seattle’s urban development. The Coast Salish welcome figure reminds people of this natural cycle by holding up a circle of two salmon, with salmon eggs in between, that glint on the rare sunny day. A block down the road, a newly installed sign across the street from the locks’ entrance talks about this statue as an example of Native cultural revitalization along with the 1989 Paddle to Seattle—the first annual Tribal Canoe Journey hosted at nearby Golden Gardens beach.

This article is an autoethnography of participating in Tribal Canoe Journey (TCJ) while also completing a doctoral dissertation on the contemporary legacies of boarding and residential schools. The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe hosted the event as the “Paddle to Muckleshoot: Honoring Our Warriors Past and Present.” This journey occurred in 2023 after several years of being canceled due to the Covid

pandemic. Two related canoe families remained open to the inclusion of non-Native participants, such as myself, allowing me to participate in canoe journey for the first time. I offer this article as a reflection on the experience and how it transformed my academic research from a focus on boarding schools to a focus on cultural revitalization and Indigenous governance. My aim is to illuminate some of the challenges and opportunities of including non-Native people in spaces and places that are otherwise primarily Indigenous.

I also seek to demonstrate how canoes can be powerful metaphors for Indigenous governance that helped frame my understanding of the experience throughout canoe journey. Erickson (2021) and Dean (2013) are both highly critical of Canada's use of canoes as a national symbol, arguing that doing so promotes a dominant vision of the state that indigenizes Canada while ignoring the violence that is inherent in its creation. Yet, I demonstrate how two Indigenous carved canoes in public reconciliation art projects in British Columbia represent alternative approaches to reconciliation that assert Indigenous self-determination and governance. These two canoes—one atop the Reconciliation Pole at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the other, *Shxwtitostel* (“a safe place to cross the river” in Halq'eméylem), that rests in the main rotunda of the B.C. parliament—represent two different approaches to assertions of Indigenous governance in relation to the Canadian state: mutual sovereignty and inclusion. These two approaches framed my experience in canoe journey, and they also provide lessons for how to think about allyship as the United States considers establishing its own Truth Commission.

Canoes, Reconciliation, and Symbolism

The intent to learn more about Native canoe culture arose through a summer of field research in southwest British Columbia as a PhD student at Seattle's University of Washington campus. My research focused on lessons learned from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for a U.S. context where legislation is pending in Congress for a Truth and Healing Commission focused on the parallel system of U.S. boarding schools. In B.C., I encountered two examples of canoes that represent distinct approaches to reconciliation: a parallel canoe and ship on top the Reconciliation Pole of UBC's campus and *Shxw'itostel* ("a safe place to cross the river" in Halq'eméylem), shovel-nose canoe sitting in the main Rotunda of B.C.'s parliament building. Prominent First Nations leaders carved both canoes to explicitly represent reconciliation. Yet, the former presents an image of parallel paths for Indigenous and settler societies while the latter depicts one cohesive society.

I made my first official stop in British Columbia at the Reconciliation Pole where the canoe sits parallel to a ship, representing Indigenous governance in a potent metaphor for reconciliation based on mutual sovereignty and respecting treaty rights. Jim Hart (Haida), also known as Chief 7idansuu, led the carving of this totem pole, and a community of supporters raised it in the center of the UBC campus on April 1, 2017--150 years after the founding of the Canadian Confederacy. Hart and his team carved the pole out of an 800-year-old cedar tree and depicted the history and legacy of the residential school system, including a carved school building with two skeletons painted on the bottom and over 68,000 copper nails representing students who died at the schools.



Figure 18: Totem Pole raising

Further towards the top, a family in regalia symbolizes cultural revitalization and supports two vessels--a canoe and a long boat—just below a perched eagle ready to take flight. A nearby plaque describes the significance of the vessels: “The canoe represents First Nations and governances across Canada. The longboat represents Canada’s governances and Canadian people. This symbolism respectfully honours differences, but most importantly displays us travelling forward together side by side.” The lead carver of the Reconciliation Pole, Jim Hart (Haida), expands on this metaphor:

You see the boats there? The canoe and long boat represent us moving together as Canada — meaning reconciliation.... It’s about understanding and moving forward together. We want to be part of Canada. We have lots to offer. Every nation has been here for thousands of years. We’re part of the country. Really, we want to be part of Canada but not the destructive part. My hope for the pole is that it moves people to learn more about the history of residential schools and to understand their responsibility to reconciliation. (Eng, 2017)

This metaphor provides two parallel systems of governance into the future, but the pole also makes clear that Native cultural revival is necessary to reach this point. Notably, Hart does not seem to think that precludes Indigenous people participating as a part of Canada as long as the differences are honored.

The canoe and ship metaphor have a long history in treaty relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers. One of the earliest examples is the 1613 Two Row Wampum treaty, in what is now upstate New York, that Chief Irving Powless Jr. (Onondaga Nation) called the “grandfather of all treaties” (1994). This treaty is embodied by a belt depicting two parallel lines, representing a canoe and ship, against a background representing the water of a river. Mark

Hirsch states that, “each vessel carries its people’s way of life, culture, and government” (2014). Further, he quotes Onondaga chief Jake Edwards, “In the Two Row, we agreed that we will travel the river of life together, side by side. We will not try to steer each other’s boats, but travel side by side linked by peace, friendship, and forever.” A 2014 Renewal Campaign to strengthen contemporary treaty relationships increased public awareness of the Two-Wampum Treaty (Hallenbeck, 2018), and researchers have also used this treaty model as a metaphor for Indigenous-university research partnerships (Hill and Coleman, 2019). Consequently, the Reconciliation Pole’s use of this metaphor draws on a long tradition of Indigenous-settler relationships based on treaties.²⁹

Yet not all approaches to the two vessels metaphor are based strictly on separate governance. In an analysis of the Northwest Territories’ consensus style of government, Mercer (2019) suggests a change of focus in this metaphor from the vessels to the water to address Melissa Williams’s (2004) idea of “shared fate” vs “shared identity” as the basis of citizenship. Put simply, moving forward together depends on working together to take care of the river. Consequently, Mercer develops a theoretical framework to allow for shared political institutions that blend cultural traditions.

It can be thought of as constituting three distinct normative and legal spaces. The first two spaces, the purple rows, symbolize Indigenous self-governments in all their current and future varieties and Canada’s federal, provincial and territorial liberal democratic institutions. The bed of white beads constitutes a third normative space occupied by both Indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians. It is preoccupied with the relationship between the first two spaces as well as those inescapable areas of shared jurisdiction and interdependence. To succeed, the political culture of this shared space must be agreed to by both Indigenous and non-indigenous people. It must involve the creation of institutions that reflect both traditions, and from which both can take ownership and derive a sense of shared community. It must involve more than simply making room for

²⁹ James Tully’s *Strange Multiplicity* also begins with a reading of the *Spirit of Haida Gwaii* by Bill Reid, another powerful canoe metaphor.

Indigenous people within Canada's liberal democratic institutions. It may mean changing the ways our institutions operate to better reflect Indigenous political culture.

Mercer does not claim the governance of the Northwest Territories perfectly reflects this model. Yet, they do suggest an interpretation of the canoe and ship metaphor that still allows for shared institutions.

In comparison, the hand-carved canoe *Shxw̓itostel*, resting in the center of the B.C. parliament's main rotunda, provides a much more direct metaphor for reconciliation based on shared institutions. The Honourable Steven Point (Skowkale First Nation), 28th Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, and Chief Tony Hunt, a hereditary chief of the Kwagu'ł and master carver, worked together to carve this inland river canoe. Steven Point is a particularly interesting figure, whose resumé also includes serving as tribal chair of the nearby Stó:lo Nation's government as well as Chief Commissioner of the B.C. Treaty Commission. Point is clearly a person who repeatedly broke glass ceilings for First Nations in the Canadian government, and as part of his legacy gifted this canoe to the people of British Columbia. During the gifting, he stated, "*Shxw̓itostel* is a gift to all peoples in British Columbia as a symbol of my belief that we need to create a better understanding amongst all people that we are in the same canoe. No matter where you are from, we all need to paddle together." B.C. Premier Campbell, in accepting the canoe, stated, "This canoe showcases the beauty of First Nations art and symbolizes the importance of reconciliation between people" (Office of the Premier, 2010). This metaphor for reconciliation is much different than that of the Reconciliation Pole. In this metaphor, everyone is in the canoe rather than separated between two vessels, perhaps a fitting perspective for someone at the top of the provincial government.

Yet, on closer observation, this canoe offers a different story than of simple reconciliation between people. The exchange between Point and Campbell reminded me of what John Lutz argues is central to understanding cross-cultural exchanges, “*what was given may not be what was received...* [O]bjects in circulation from one culture to another are often transformed by the act of exchange itself” (Lutz, 2008, p 10, italics in original). The name for this canoe offers a subtle clue to this exchange: *Shxwtitostel*, meaning “a safe place to cross the river.” Perhaps this canoe doesn’t so much represent everyone moving forward together into the future as much as it represents a way for people to safely bridge the divide between Indigenous and settler societies. Furthermore, the design of this shovelnose canoe is also instructive. Waterman and Coffin (1920) describe the design of this canoe as ideal for spear hunting salmon on rivers and lakes, but of little use out in open waters. They also suggest that this type of canoe is one of the earliest canoe designs in the region. These particulars of the shovel-nose canoe draw attention to the importance of maintaining salmon habitats upriver in British Columbia, an ongoing area of conflict in the province (e.g. Cunningham and Braun, 2023; Finn et al., 2021; Richardson, 1999), as well as reminding those in settler society of their relatively recent arrival.



Figure 19: Residential School on Reconciliation Pole, photo by Ray Van Eng.



Figure 20: Top of Reconciliation Pole, photo by Kevin Ward



Figure 21: Shxwritstsel in BC Parliament rotunda, author's photo

THE TALKING STICK



The Talking Stick is a symbolic reminder of the need for respectful dialogue in the ongoing process of reconciliation.

INDIGENOUS SYMBOL

Symbols and ceremonial traditions are an important part of parliamentary practice in British Columbia. Just like the rules that govern the Legislative Assembly's proceedings, parliamentary symbols can evolve and new traditions can develop.

The Legislative Assembly of British Columbia resides on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen people, today known as the Songheew and Esquimalt First Nations.

The Talking Stick on display in the Legislative Chamber unites First Nations' culture with parliamentary traditions. Carved by the late James Delorme of the Songheew First Nation, it is a symbolic reminder of the need for respectful dialogue in the ongoing process of reconciliation.

British Columbia

Several South Island First Nations Chiefs, including Chief Ron Sutt of the Songheew First Nation, Chief Gerald Phoenix of the Tsou-ke First Nation, and Chief Jeff Jones of the Pacheebah First Nation, joined the Elders and all Members on the floor of the Chamber to participate in this blessing and presentation ceremony.

This indigenous symbol in the Legislative Chamber serves as a reminder that First Nations and reconciliation should be a consideration in all debates and discussions in the Legislative Assembly.

Talking sticks play a significant role in the traditions and ceremonies of many Indigenous peoples on the west coast of British Columbia. While the history and design of each Talking Stick is unique, they often take the form of a carved wooden staff that resembles a small totem pole.

Talking sticks are a powerful symbol and communication tool used to foster an atmosphere of active listening and respect. Only the bearer of the Talking Stick has the right to speak, and those present must listen quietly to what is being said. The Talking Stick is then passed on to other speakers in turn.



The journey of the Talking Stick began in July 2010 when the late Chief Robert Sutt of the Songheew First Nation gifted the Talking Stick to the Honourable Steven Point, then Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, to commemorate the naming of the Sixth Sea. At a dinner with First Nations leaders, the Honourable Steven Point presented the Talking Stick to his successor, the Honourable Judith Guichon, recognizing that it be given to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and put on display in the Legislative Chamber.

A special blessing ceremony in May 2014 marked the presentation of the Talking Stick to the Honourable Linda Reid, then Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and its placement in the Legislative Chamber. The blessing was led by Elder Elmer George and Elder Mary Ann Thomas from the Songheew and Esquimalt First Nations, who used a prayer in the traditional Lekwungen language.

A closer look at the design painted on *Shxwtitostel* offers a darker side to the story. The canoe is painted to have the features of Slahkum/shla-lah-kum/slalakums, a type of legendary unnatural creature associated with Cultus Lake, though also widely seen throughout other Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast (National Park Service). Cultus Lake, located roughly 50 miles east of Vancouver and just north of the U.S.-Canada border, is considered by numerous oral histories as being a place of spiritual power. Margaret Robbins (2009), who compiled Stó:lō stories about Cultus Lake, translates *Cultus* in Chinook jargon to mean “bad” or “worthless.” According to Stó:lō oral history, Cultus Lake was once a basin with a river that flowed underground and a village in the center of the basin. A young man foolishly built a dam above the basin, and the village flooded when the dam burst causing debris to plug the tunnel into which the river drained. Since then, aspiring Medicine Men would travel to the lake that formed in search of the tunnel and Slahkum/shla-lah-kum/slalakums, who were said to grant spiritual power. However, these creatures were more likely to kill those who found them than grant spiritual power, and stories abound of dead bodies found in the lake as well as passing through the underground tunnel to be later found floating in Mud Bay in Puget Sound.

These stories are hard to detach from the meaning behind *Shxwtitostel*, and they highlight a darker undercurrent inherent in state projects of reconciliation. In doing so, the canoe acts as a work of public art that helps transform the heart of B.C. parliament from a settler space to an expression of Indigenous sovereignty and ancestral connection with the land. Smetzer (2024) describes the impact of similar public indigenous art projects in the Northwest. “[T]hese artists place a heavy responsibility on local, regional, and federal governments, as well as settler citizens, to recognize Indigenous sovereignty.” For both settlers and their descendants who live in British Columbia, as well as the countless tourists who pass through the B.C. parliament,

Shxwtitostel offers a nuanced way to think about the importance of canoe culture for bridging the gap between peoples.

Nevertheless, *Shxwtitostel* is clearly caught up in the fraught symbolism of reconciliation. Further around the rotunda can be found several additional symbols of reconciliation. A display describes affixing a “ring of reconciliation” to the Black Rod, the center of parliamentary procedure that recognizes the Head of State as Queen Elizabeth, reminded visitors that Canada is officially a constitutional monarchy and member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Another display describes the role of a Talking Stick that the B.C. Lieutenant Governor first gifted as part of the naming ceremony of the Salish Sea in 2010, and in 2016 gifted again to the legislature, with the blessing of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations, where the legislature displays it as a “reminder of the need for respectful dialogue in the ongoing process of reconciliation.” Last but not least, an Orange Shirt is on display to commemorate the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, a federal holiday as of 2023 to recognize the legacy of the residential school system. Below the shirt is a quote by Eddy Charlie, a Residential School Survivor:

“Reconciliation should not be about an apology, nor should it be like a holiday or a birthday when we have a ceremony once a year. Reconciliation should be like a river, continuous and always making changes.” Combined, these displays highlight the different ways that the B.C. parliament is changing in response to the process of reconciliation as well as the disputed notions of what reconciliation even means.

Looking up above *Shxwtitostel* in rotunda, I’m also reminded of a very different reality. The rotunda roof is covered by four large murals symbolizing each of British Columbia’s major industries: agriculture, fishing, mining, and logging. This art glorifying extractive capitalism stands in stark contrast to the canoe below, and I learn the murals were painted by George

Southwell in 1935 and installed in 1952. I also learn that no longer visible in the rotunda are Southwell's four additional murals painted between 1933-35: *Courage, Enterprise, Justice, and Labour*. In 2007, the B.C. legislature deemed these Native depictions, including bare-breasted women working while colonial men supervised and signed documents, to be too offensive, and they voted 68-3 to remove them (CBC News, 2008). However, much controversy surrounded this near-unanimous decision, as many saw the move as a meaningless distraction from the treaty process; as rewriting history rather than allowing people to critically engage with them as a learning opportunity; and even as a misinterpretation of the artist's contemporaneous efforts at peace and reconciliation given the norms of the time (Tafler, 2007). Regardless, the juxtaposition of these two very different artistic styles makes clear how vastly different the worldviews are that they represent.

The two metaphors for reconciliation evident in the Reconciliation Pole and in *Shxwtitostel* appear to represent two poles of a spectrum, one respecting mutual sovereignty and the other using reconciliation as a tool to further integrate Indigenous peoples into the liberal political project that is Canada. While the U.S. and Canadian governments lean heavily towards this latter approach, numerous scholars have identified the inherent challenges of trying to integrate Indigenous peoples within a liberal nation-state. In these colonial contexts, the resulting legal pluralism puts into conflict Western liberal societies, with their focus on individualism, and Indigenous community-based values (e.g. Tully, 1995; Henderson, 2002; Short, 2014; Mills, 2016). The consequences can be brutal, and the government's forced assimilation policies through boarding schools are in many ways "a useful and powerful metaphor for...American colonialism at its most genocidal" (Child, 2018). These tensions do not seem lost on those in the

United States advocating for a Truth Commission. The pending Congressional legislation is notably absent the idea of reconciliation, instead focusing on the need for truth and healing.

If I wasn't convinced enough of the need for healing in the wake of these genocidal policies, the Pope's weeklong apology tour in Canada between July 24-29, 2022 drove the point home. This "pilgrimage of penance" culminated with official apologies to residential school survivors in Edmonton, Quebec, and Iqaluit (Kohli, 2022), which numerous critics immediately pointed out did not include enough institutional accountability and tangible reparations. Analysts also drew comparisons to previous apologies in the United States in Canada. Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper formally apologized on June 11, 2008 before the launch of the TRC. In the United States, President Obama signed a defense appropriation bill in December 19, 2009 that included a general apology to Native peoples, a commitment to reconciliation, and a legal disclaimer that the apology had no bearing for ongoing land claims. Obama never publicly read the apology.³⁰ These apologies reflected the critiques of reconciliation politics by Penelope Edmonds, "Reconciliation as a state-based and top-down social program, and its associated performances, can be repressive and reinforce colonial hegemonies as a poor symbolic substitute for actual and substantive reparations" (2016). Yet, some tangible benefits have flowed from formal apologies such as Harper, and the Pope committed to "conduct a serious investigation" as well as to "assist the survivors of the residential schools to experience healing" (The Canadian Press, 2022). In the process of holding institutions accountable, these formal apologies appear to be essential starting points, rather than a point of closure. In the case of the Pope's apology, many lingering questions do persist. What does it mean for the Catholic Church to practice

³⁰ For a poet's response to this non-apology apology, see Layla Long Solidier's poetry collection *Whereas*.

penance, not to mention other Christian denominations? If they were to follow the story on the Reconciliation Pole, what would a focus on cultural revival look like? If they were to focus on the lessons of *Shxwtitostel*, what would it be like to be inside a canoe?

Preparing for Journey

An opportunity to step into a canoe arose when the Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies (CAIIS) decided to start a canoe family at the University of Washington in 2022 to prepare for the 2023 journey. They recruited an elder named Philip Red Eagle to lead the effort, who I would soon learn was a bit of a legend in the canoe journey movement as one of its earliest leaders. He began weekly meetings at the artist studio of the Burke Museum to carve canoe paddles. On inquiring if I could join, he replied, “We have decided to remain open to non-Natives,” and with his characteristic guile, he added, “...for now.” And so I began carving a paddle using Phil’s design that featured a diamond handle in honor of the diamond willow walking cane used by his father. The only tools we used were hand-sharpened curved knives and an adze to chip away at a block of sweet-smelling yellow cedar. No power tools allowed—Phil insisted on this point as part of his “methodology.” For a researcher such as myself, this word stuck out. This was not just a way of *doing* something, it was a way of *knowing* something.

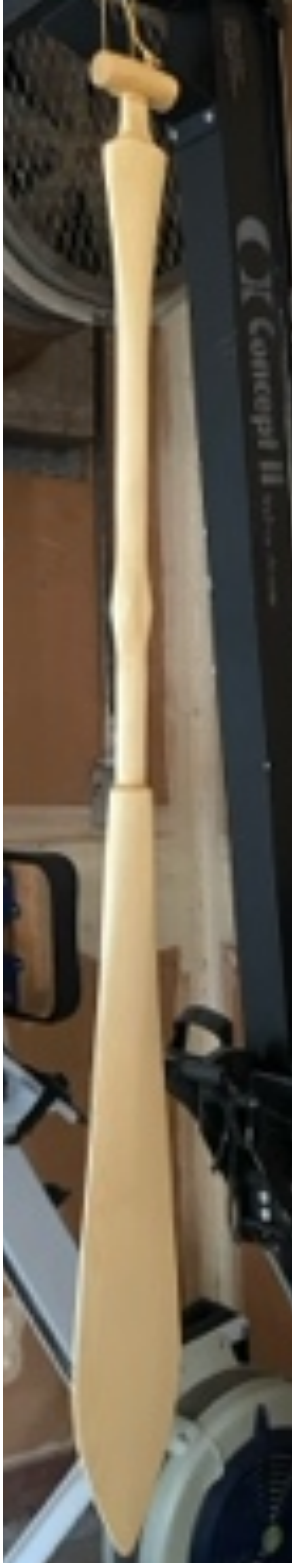


Figure 23: Canoe paddle with diamond carved into handle, author's photo

Canoe family became a way for me to witness firsthand Indigenous cultural revitalization as it appeared on the Reconciliation Pole. Every week for the next year, I would listen to Uncle Phil (as students affectionately referred to him) talk with us about culture and share stories from his life. Phil had a way of connecting with people regardless of where they came from, and he easily shared his travels and family heritage, from Dakota to Coast Salish and beyond, to build relationships with everyone who came by. My ears perked up when I learned that his parents first met at a nearby boarding school. Yet, most of his stories came from his war tours in Vietnam, and he and I bonded over a shared military history since both my grandfathers served in the military during WW2. His return from Vietnam led him through a long and difficult journey of reconnecting with his culture.³¹ Hearing his stories gave me a different perspective of these otherwise familiar places, and I couldn't help but be grateful that we were able to meet in this canoe family at a time and place where we could carve together rather than fight in a war.

Besides war stories, canoe family members were always discussing Indigenous cultures. Phil served as an early activist in the global Indigenous movement, including attending UN conferences in Geneva. During our carving sessions, he would frequently say, "Everyone is Indigenous to somewhere." The canoe family allowed intertribal participation, and so everyone took turns sharing a bit about their own

³¹ See Phil's book on the subject: Red Eagle, 2007.

culture and where they were from. Phil quickly shortened my last name to “Olly,” and I became the token Swede of the group. Yet, just because we weren’t at war didn’t mean that subtle power dynamics weren’t constantly at play. I would watch people come and go in the carving sessions, observing how group dynamics would change depending on how many non-Natives were in the room or when curious museum guests dropping by to ask questions about what we were doing. Over time, I began to appreciate how Phil worked to create space for Indigenous students to share not just their cultures but also their challenges and struggles. I couldn’t help but wonder how the conversation changed when I was not there. Regardless, trust began to slowly grow and community along with it. As Phil would frequently say, it was called “canoe *family* because that reflected the kind of relationships we were trying to build.”

These conversations left me with lingering questions about my own place and role. I felt awkward trying to reconcile the irony that while most people in this group identified as Indigenous to distant places across the continent, my mother gave birth to me within walking distance of the museum where our carving group met. Furthermore, I have never been to Sweden! I may be a descendent of people who settled here, but how can I be a settler for living in the same place I came into this world? Where am I Indigenous to? To try answering these questions, I began learning more about the Native history of the neighborhood where my mother gave birth to me, and I found its Lushootseed place-name is líq'təd (Licton Springs), which means “red mud.” The name came from natural hot springs that gave the mud a reddish tint and the place a reputation for healing. Tragically, urban development only spared one small spring, left as a reminder of what this place was like before concrete roads and suburbia, but Native students at the local school recently advocated for Seattle to designate it as a protected historical

site. As another example of Indigenous law, the right to harvest the red pigment belongs only to those Duwamish descendants with ties to this place (leI?elás, 2013).

A reoccurring feeling throughout Canoe Journey was the unsettling feeling from learning the difference between my relationship with a place and Native peoples' relationship with that same place. It didn't take much investigation to learn that no one else in my family knew about the meaning of líq'təd, though everyone had their own personal stories about the park where this spring is located. I decided to go for a walk along the creek that this spring drained into and discovered that it flowed right by my childhood church. I felt surprised to learn in a book about the church's early history that Swedish Baptists first founded it as a "mission to the local Native Americans." I had to recognize the impact of Christianity in my own upbringing and my approach to research. In particular, the words at the end of the book's preface echoed in my head, "Ultimately, our homeland is in heaven." The unsettling feeling deepened as the distinction became clear: my *home* may be here, but this place is also another people's *homeland*. Perhaps rather than me being Indigenous to somewhere, a better way to put it is, in the words of Robin Kimmerer, that I come "from people who were once Indigenous" (2013, p. 377). In this manner, perhaps I too could go through a process of "reculturation" that Phil kept talking about—reclaiming the cultures of my own Indigenous ancestors. Nevertheless, this did not erase the differences between myself and those Indigenous to this place I now live.

As the paddles neared completion, canoe family members regularly discussed whether we could carve our own canoe. Phil frequently dreamed of finding a log to carve, and he took me up on my offer to help him find one. However, this process taught me how difficult it can be for Indigenous peoples exercise their rights to revive canoe culture. Phil was clear about what type of tree would be necessary for a canoe: a Western red cedar, 4-5 feet wide. I did the math to

estimate how old that tree would be, and it came out to roughly ~500 years old. This age was just old enough to predate most people from Europe arriving to this continent, a point not lost on Phil. Since the UW is a state institution, I started by reaching out to the Forestry Department, which I knew managed numerous acres of forested land in the Cascade Mountains. While sympathetic to the request, it slowly became clear they were not very willing to broach cutting down the oldest trees on the UW's land, which were unlikely anyways to be large enough to meet Phil's standards. They could only spare a smaller log in their normal harvest cycle.

I began to look at state lands as the next obvious option, and the Forestry Department kindly walk me through the layers of bureaucracy it would take to cut down a tree on state lands. After looping in the relevant tribal liaisons, I contacted the state's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) who responded: "Currently, we have about 4-5 requests from Tribes we are unable to fulfil because the resource doesn't exist." A convenient way to avoid saying they've all been logged, but at least they responded. As a last avenue, the Forestry Department helped put me in touch with people who worked for the National Forests within Washington State, including a federal Tribal Liaison. However, after multiple inquiries, quite poignantly timed both before and after Thanksgiving, I never heard back. Increasingly, I began to realize the scope of the breakdown in communication around the issue of old-growth logging. I also began to realize how the issue tied into tribes' treaty rights to harvest these old-growth trees. I concluded that there were only three ways for a log of this size to be acquired. One, a federally recognized tribal nation would have to find one on their reservation land that they could cut down on their own. Two, a federally recognized tribal nation must make a formal request for their reserved treaty rights to harvest a tree on federal lands. Three, we could pay tens of thousands of dollars to a

logging company in British Columbia where old-growth is still actively being cut down. Though, this last one option would obviously not be acceptable to the canoe family.

Furthermore, I increasingly began to realize that another layer of complexity existed around finding an old-growth tree to harvest. In addition to the web of U.S. laws, which were complex but not impossible to manage, another web of cultural protocols existed for how a tree should be found, harvested, and carved. And I quickly found that the details of these protocols were carefully guarded cultural property that people did not consider me privy to as a non-Native. While this conclusion didn't bode well for me finding a log to carve for our canoe family, it did leave me with lingering questions. What does accountability and justice look like for exercising treaty rights when a millennia is needed for these forests to regrow? And what about those Native peoples who do not have a reservation with old-growth forest they can access? What does cultural revitalization look like in the face of all these challenges?

I unpacked some of these questions in a new class on Tribal Canoe Journey offered at my university. Yet again, the instructor drew a clear connection between boarding schools and canoe culture: our first readings of the course were on none other than boarding school reparations and Native religious freedom (Irwin, 1997; Smith, 2004). Tribal Canoe Journey stood in contrast as a ceremony that revived not only Native cultures but spiritual practices. In 1989, Washington State sponsored the first Canoe Journey—the Paddle to Seattle—as part of its centennial celebration, and Native leadership made reviving the practice of dugout canoes a central part of this journey. The historical context of cutting down old-growth cedars in 1989 gave me new appreciation for the current challenges of finding an old-growth tree for our canoe family.

This historical context also helped me understand how Native leaders can transform the state's desire to include Native people into a process of cultural revitalization. In this story,

Emmet Oliver (Quinault) is a key figure who served as the official Coordinator of the Centennial's Native American Canoe Project for the 1989 Paddle for Seattle as well as the Supervisor of Indian Education for Washington State. In 1989, he "got permission from the U.S. Forest Service to fell the 600-year-old cedars under the 1978 Religious Freedom Act because of the canoe's religious and ceremonial nature" (Smith, 1995). As Emmett Oliver further explained in his own words, "It would have never happened without the cooperation of the Forest Service. I don't think we could have pulled it off. Cedar trees, materials, could be provided to Indian groups for cultural purposes, to keep the culture, because this, [sic] they were so dependent upon the cedar tree" (Oliver, 2017). Obtaining the old-growth trees to harvest required a high-level government partnership, and Emmet's advocacy reflected this approach, "He did not challenge or tear down other people's value-systems nor did he ask that other people accept his. However, he demanded that if he accepted the value system of others, others should accept the Indian culture" (Dr. Monica Schmidt in Smith, 1995). Similar to Steven Point, Emmet Oliver clearly worked within the U.S. government to advocate for Native peoples. Yet, they both did so in ways that reflected the idea of two separate, parallel paths for both Native and non-Native cultures.

Once the federal government agreed to felling the trees, specific cultural practices were necessary during the harvest. "Two trees were felled for each tribe, before and after which women sang a song of blessing and offered a prayer, explaining to the tree that it was giving its life, but would have a new life as a canoe" (Smith, 1995, p. 237). New cedar seedlings would then be planted because "When we take from the Earth, we must always give something back" (Marya Moses—Tulalip in Smith, 1995, p. 239). These cultural practices surprised me by directly recognizing a spiritual consciousness of the trees during the harvest. Hilary Stewart (1984, p. 182) shares one such prayer from the Kwakiutl before feeling a cedar tree:

Before feeling a cedar in the forest, a Kwakiutl man beseeched the spirit of the tree, with ritual, for the trunk to fall in the right direction. He chiseled into the heart-wood and picked up four chips. Throwing the first where he wanted the tree to fall, he said:

O Supernatural One!
Now follow your supernatural power!

He threw down a second chip in the same place and said:

O friend, now you see your leader
Who says that you shall turn your head
And fall there also.

He then threw down the third piece in the same place and added:

O Life Giver! Now you have seen which way
Your supernatural power went,
Now go the same way.

When he threw the fourth chip in the same spot, he ended his plea:

O Friend, now you will go
Where your heartwood goes.
You will lie on your face
At the same place.

Answering for the tree with the assurance he sought, the tree faller said:

Yes, I shall fall with my top there.

This prayer makes sense when thinking about the enormity of the task required to fell an old-growth tree, both in terms of the danger as well as the time and energy required to carve something that would provide lasting benefits to their community for generations. Furthermore, the use of spiritual and friendly language make sense in the context of the intimate relationship formed between these communities and trees over many millennia. As Hilary Stewart (1984) discusses, “Mother Cedar” has customarily been used from cradle to grave at the heart of Northwest Native cultures.

This ritual reminded me of the trees used to carve both the Reconciliation Pole and *Shxwtitostel*. Both reflected ways that the Indigenous carvers asserted their connection to this land long before settlers arrive in these places. Yet today, the U.S. government clearly retains tight control over cutting down the remaining old-growth trees, undermining the heart of many Indigenous cultures throughout the region. I was also reminded of the two separate paths of the Reconciliation Pole by another fact in the 1989 Paddle to Seattle. To allow camping at Golden Gardens beach for the final gathering, Oliver invoked treaty rights in his arguments to Seattle City Council to continue gathering there as Native people have been doing for over 8,000 years. In doing so, he clearly demonstrated two separate forms of governance for Native and non-Native people.

I also learned during this class that there were other plans already in motion to obtain a canoe for our growing canoe family. Emmet's daughter, Marilyn Oliver Bard, shared with us the story of deciding to donate her father's honor canoe, the *Willapa Spirit*, to the university through the support of the university's president. As she told it, her father died in 2016 at the age of 102, but not before witnessing 103 canoes land on the beach at the Squaxin Island Tribe in 2012. "And that was his dream," Bard said, "to see 100 canoes land on a beach" (Colgan, 2018). Of note, the *Willapa Spirit* was a strip canoe instead of a dugout canoe, which combines a Native design with European carpentry. This approach is increasingly common now that old growth cedars are so rare, giving forests more time to age before they can be harvested sustainably. Regardless, like all Indigenous canoes, it was said to hold knowledge about the place from which it came (Waterman, 2015). However, at the time I did not fully understand what this meant.



Figure 24: Willapa Spirit, photo from UW American Indian Studies Department

The Awakening Ceremony

The introduction of the *Willapa Spirit* noted a clear beginning for not just Indigenous cultural revitalization, but Indigenous governance. Before the *Willapa Spirit* could go in the water, custom required an Awakening Ceremony, and all the canoe family members were invited to participate. At the ceremony, Marylin quoted Frank Brown (Heiltsuk), another founding member of the Canoe Journey, who described Tribal Canoe Journey as a ceremony: “To lose a ceremony, is to lose a past. To create a ceremony, is to create a future” (Smith, 1995, p. 246). Brown’s invitation to host a second journey in Canada three years after the Paddle to Seattle helped turn Tribal Canoe Journey from a one-time event into what is now an annual tradition by default.³² As part of the Awakening Ceremony, we then walked around the canoe, blessing it with cedar branches dipped in water. Ken Workman, a direct descendant of the Chief Sealth, the city’s namesake, gave a speech in front of the assembled group, including the university president. He talked about the importance of Duwamish burial grounds, where their ancestors have been laid to rest for millennia, and how Chief Sealth’s first condition of treaty negotiations was continued access to their burial grounds. Workman also repeated what he’s said elsewhere in public talks, that through the decomposition at their burial grounds, “at a molecular level the Duwamish people are in the trees” (Workman, 2023). They are consequently in the building surrounding us, the wood that makes up the canoes, and even in the food we were eating. Another canoe family member presented the Duwamish with gifts and sang songs to thank them for being in their homeland as an uninvited guest. I felt embarrassed I didn’t have anything similar to share with them. If that is what it meant to be a guest, then surely I was not one.

³² Many have also attempted to host the annual event alternatively across the U.S.-Canada border ever since, though some exceptions exist.

However, Marilyn Bard invited the canoe family to pull in the awakened *Willapa Spirit* for the annual spring boat parade through the Montlake Cut. I was skeptical to join at first, not wanting to take a seat in the canoe from a Native student, but I joined when it became clear they needed as many pullers as they could find. I began to see how the canoe can serve as a bridge between people and how entering the canoe also meant entering a different form of social relations. As Emmett Oliver's grandson Owen Oliver said, "The *Willapa Spirit* brings everything that my grandfather worked for, but also connecting to all these indigenous people in need.... Canoe journey marks a place where natives and non-natives can come together and experience these traditions" (Colgan, 2018). As we pulled through the cut with matching t-shirts in the university's purple and gold colors with crowds of cheering people on either side, I wondered what these people thought of this Native canoe otherwise surrounded by powerboats and yachts. How many knew the Lushootseed name of the nearby Duwamish village, *sluʔwił* (Little Canoe Channel)? How many knew the Lushootseed name for the place we pulled through, now called the Montlake Cut?

Owen Oliver shares this knowledge and the tragic impact of foreign settlement on this place, in his Indigenous Walking Tour of the UW campus.

Understand that this is the place called 'Carry a Canoe'. *stəxʷugwił* which is no longer. The opening of the Montlake Cut in 1917 destroyed this place, lowering the water of the lake. 'Carry a Canoe' was shadowed by writers of history, traders, businessmen, city planners, and instead of carrying a canoe, they carried the misrepresentation of Native history forward. Understand that the opening of the Montlake Cut caused a ripple effect across Duwamish and neighboring lands. Stories are told of Natives in their canoes at the time, sinking with the water miles away from the Montlake Cut much like you had just experienced. Understand that the opening of the Montlake Cut dried up the Black River, rerouted Lake Washington's aquatic system, and changed the course of Seattle forever. Understand that this is just one story out of thousands that are connected to the Montlake Cut. (Oliver, 2021)

I couldn't help but think about the connection between this place, where developers breached the lake, and the Ballard locks outside where I now live, which are now the only thing keeping the rest of the lake from washing out to sea. What does justice look like to know the government permanently altered the watershed when the lake was drained nine feet to flow out of the canal instead of into the Duwamish river? What is my role in this story?



Figure 25: Muckleshoot Messenger, 2023

On Journey

If the Awakening Ceremony was an introduction to Indigenous governance, Canoe Journey was an immersion. Our departure for journey began at the Lummi Nation, west of Bellingham in July of 2023. Several people from the university canoe family were starting here with Uncle Phil's "home" canoe family. We'd meet the new university canoe family at Tulalip, just a bit further south down the coast. When we first arrived at the park along the coast, we were greeted by a sea of tents and a long line of intricately designed canoes on the beach. The Lummi nation served dinner at the Big House, and the trunks of at least 10 old growth trees framed the spacious interior. I thought back to how hard it was to find, let alone obtain, one old growth tree for a canoe, and the experience of walking inside reminded me of entering a cathedral. Evening protocol began shortly, and representatives from Muckleshoot began by honoring the names of those who had died during Covid, helping to put together this journey. The emotion was palpable of holding this journey after several years hiatus due to the pandemic.

We went back to our base camp amongst the sea of tents and went through a round of introductions since there were some people meeting for the first time. Phil's home canoe family included several non-Native people who had been doing Canoe Journey for many years. I didn't notice anyone introduce themselves as being a settler or white. Instead, people introduced themselves by the culture of their ancestors. We discussed the importance of following protocol, recognizing privilege, supporting Indigenous cultural revitalization, and caring for those who needed it most. We ended with an exhortation to take care of the elders in our group first and foremost, even before the pullers. Phil gave me a fist bump when I told him goodnight, and I felt grateful to feel like I belonged.

The next morning began early with the buzz of a double rainbow on the horizon, which set the stage for departure protocol. A representative from Lummi granted each canoe's request to leave, and they gave each canoe a wreath of cedar boughs. I sat on the beach watching the process, which reminded me of an exit visa when leaving a country. I heard the representative saying "Thank you for remembering the old ways. We need to learn to work together." Unfortunately, the weather quickly turned foul – strong winds, heavy rain, and clouds in every direction. Nevertheless, people waded fearlessly up to their waist in the cold water to hold the large canoes steady as people climbed in. Our canoe family had needed an extra volunteer for ground crew, and I felt lucky to not be on the water that day. Before I knew it, people had all but deserted the park as we departed for the next stop along the way.

The Samish Nation hosted the next stop. While I missed most of the landings because of the time it took to set up camp, we arrived in time for one last welcome protocol. When word of the canoe approaching reached the shore, several Samish rushed to the beach to sing and drum while the canoe pulled close to the beach. The canoe asked for permission to disembark and "honor your shores." On that note, everyone present on shore raised their hands in enthusiastic response, and the Samish welcomed them to disembark onto what they stated clearly was their "territory."

The following day was my first day pulling in the canoe, and I felt a bit odd to be a part of the departure protocol but not yesterday's welcome protocol. Perhaps only gaining permission to leave would be poetic for a settler, or at least someone the Samish had never granted permission to be there in the first place. However, participating in protocol provided an interesting comparison to an immigration visa for going across another country's border. Both required careful preparation to meet the standards of the host's governance protocols and

ultimately respecting their decision. Our non-Native skipper took the lead by enthusiastically shared their gratitude with the Samish delegates on the shore, ending by saying “We love you!” In turn, a Samish delegate responded in the Lushootseed language before adding, “I’ll see you later.” This exercise of sovereignty over who arrived and who left their territory clearly demonstrated the ways that Indigenous cultural revival supported separate Indigenous governance from that of settler society.

As we set off, our canoe had to navigate the imposing oil refinery just across the bay, one of the largest in the region. We carefully pulled underneath a long pier stretching out over the water with a pipe running its length that tankers could use to unload their black gold. Along the way, I learned—and would confirm later—that the whole peninsula on which the refinery sits was within the original boundary of the Swinomish reservation. The original treaty included much of the surrounding land including the oil refinery, which was later reduced in size unilaterally by President Grant in 1873. However, the Swinomish are still fighting to get the land back, claiming that only Congress can legally change a reservation’s boundaries (Kramer, 2020; Wilkinson, 2016). Simultaneously, the Swinomish have spent the last half century fighting with the Environmental Protection Agency to address hazardous waste from the refinery being dumped in their current borders, threatening the aquifer that provides their source of clean water, and just months before journey another oil train derailed from the refinery, spilling oil once again in the reservation (Zaferatos, 2006; Breda, 2023). A voice from our canoe pulled my mind away from this tragedy, “Look, it’s Jesus!” Sure enough, a man out in the distance looked like they were walking on water at least a mile from the nearest shoreline. On closer inspection, a nearby canoe hit a sandbar, and its pullers all trudged through the shallow water so the canoe was light enough to stay afloat. I laughed at the poignant symbolism while also noting one more fact about

the transformed landscape. While dredging had created a channel that large boats can pass through, straying to either side could easily get a vessel stuck.

After several hours of pulling, we finally arrived at the Swinomish Nation just next to where other members of our canoe family had set up our campground. Three huge picnic coverings in the shape of cedar hats sheltered the shore where we arrived, just across the water from the town of Edison. I couldn't count the number of times I had eaten at the restaurants lining the waterfront of Edison, looking across the canal to the Cedar Hats with curiosity. Now, I learned these Cedar Hats were originally built to host a previous canoe journey. For the first time, I looked back from the other side at the small gaggle of tourists watching the canoes pull ashore. The Swinomish set up a stand with a mic system to help participants hear what was going on, but it also helped put on a good show.³³ A small Catholic parish sat across the street from where we were camping, its artwork a blend of Christian and Native symbolism. Taped on the door were several flyers for forums on healing from boarding schools hosted by Catholic priests. I wondered how many people showed up for those events.

The next day was a long one, nearly 35 miles between tribal nations. In between, two large state parks sat adjacent to each other: Cama Beach Historical State Park and Camano Island State Park. However, we were only stopping there for lunch, hosted by the Stillaguamish Tribe. At one point, their numbers had dwindled to below a dozen, but now they have rebounded to over two hundred, according to the Stillaguamish Tribal Clinic. Still, they only had a small reservation further inland that was recognized in 2014. In 2002, state contractors dug up Native burial grounds while trying to lay new utility lines for opening a new state park at Cama Beach. Several years of legal battles between the state and nearby tribal nations including the Tulalip,

³³ Eighty years earlier, two Indigenous racing canoes and two UW Husky crew team ("The Boys in the Boat") put on another show in these same waters. For more info, see Miller, 1998 and Seattle PI, 1941.

Swinomish, Samish, and Upper Skagit sought further surveying, care and preservation of the remains, building an interpretive center, and even buying the land. However, these efforts were unsuccessful, and the state opened the park on June 21, 2008 with tribal participation noticeably absent (Riddle, 2008). The conflict over these burial grounds demonstrated how tribal nations shared overlapping homelands even though settler state's sought to confine them to reservations with fixed boundaries.

Throughout the day, I swapped on and off the canoe and for the first time spent time enjoying the conversation on our support boat—a large sailboat and its non-Native crew that graciously accompanied us along the way. The time on the sailboat provided a good opportunity for reflection. In many ways, Canoe Journey reminded me of a Native Olympics. Even though a different Native nation hosted journey each year and Native governments clearly supported it along the route, journey had a distinctly transnational character, not belong to any one nation or even all of them combined. Instead, it represented its own social movement that went beyond the political boundaries of the U.S. and Canada or any reservation or reserve (Hundley, 2022).



Figure 26: Stain glass on Catholic Church parish, author's photo

This distinct nature also led me to think about the difference between Western and Indigenous hospitality. For many, hospitality might be what you experience at a restaurant or

hotel. Others may think of Christian hospitality of welcoming people into their home and caring for those who are less fortunate. Instead, Native hospitality felt distinct as canoe families followed protocol by asking permission to land and depart. A territorial border existed, but not the one drawn on the map by the U.S. government. Rather, the shifting line of where water met land is what mattered, and the frequent use of the term protocol evoked the idea of governance, between people but also with the land and water. I wondered what impact it would make if non-Natives focused their attention on honoring this coastline, as the Samish and others had done so far on this journey.

Yet, the U.S. government has a long history of dishonor in its relationship with the Native peoples of this region, not to mention elsewhere. As Pauline Hillaire (2016) recounts, an act of Congress on February 12, 1925 allowed 20 western Washington tribal nations to file a claim against the United States in *Duwamish et al. v. U.S.* that the U.S. government failed to honor the Treaty of Point Elliot, including land boundaries, compensation and services owed for giving up land, destruction of property including numerous longhouses, and much more. The court determined that no compensation would be awarded after they factored in the overhead costs of the government administrating the treaties, a practice they have inconsistently utilized across similar cases. Hillaire also gives an account of the Lummi nation, where this canoe journey began for me, filing suit again in 1951 after the government established the Indian Claims Commission. The Lummi claimed the U.S. government only paid \$13,636 for the land they ceded in the Treaty of Point Elliot, significantly less than it was worth, and they submitted a claim for the current market value of the land \$30 million, plus interest. After over two decades, the court determined that the Lummi were entitled to \$57,000. The Lummi refused to accept the money. In the 1925 case, Lummi elder Albert Descanum (born ca. 1840) testified: “And . . . we

are still waiting, we haven't seen those promises which was made at that time by Governor Stevens and the people that was there present at the treaty; the chiefs, they were waiting up to the time they were all passed away and never received all those that was promised, and it was almost a daily discussion among the people. When is those promises going to be fulfilled?" These accounts demonstrate clear malpractice by the U.S. government to avoid living up to its treaty obligations.

Moving back and forth from the canoe to the support boat reminded me of the two vessels on top of the Reconciliation Pole in Vancouver. Each had their own rules. The canoe with its skipper and the sailboat with its captain. Another canoe requested help over the radio from our support boat, and the exchange immediately reminded me of treaty protocols between nations. The support boat captain first confirmed with canoe skipper to ensure proper protocol before making the decision to help. I was becoming used to the careful decision-making, and throughout canoe journey I repeatedly felt the kind but firm exclusion of non-Natives, such as myself, from Native governance. While we were just navigating the open waters, I couldn't help but draw parallels to the larger process of Native nation-building. In her study of Native governance, Jean Dennison (2012) discussed the growing relevance of the nation-state model for Native peoples: "with its power dynamics and internal workings, [it] is anything but ideal, but it is currently the primary tool for exerting sovereignty." In discussion Native constitutions, she argues, "that the constitution must be understood as a container, always striving to encompass more than it can reasonably hold. It must also, however, be understood as a boundary, keeping particular bodies and authorities at bay." This approach resonated as I increasingly felt like a foreigner in the metaphorical Native canoe—apart from but subject to the governance structures

they put in place. Yet, only by our two vessels working together did we make it to our destination.

At the end of our long day, we finally reached the Tulalip Nation, where we'd be spending the next couple nights joining with the UW canoe family and the *Willapa Spirit*. Arriving at Tulalip by water was quite different from the casino resorts and shopping centers of Quil Ceda Village lining the freeway on the other side of the reservation. Instead, longhouses stretch along the bay, giving the sense that the cultural heart of the reservation lay along the coastline. Two nights here gave enough time to visit the Hibelb Museum that presented the story of the Tulalip Nations and did not shy away from this distinction. Instead, a large sign in their permanent exhibit proclaimed, "Business is the Modern Way to be Independent." The same exhibit boasted Quil Ceda Village as one of the largest employers in the county and "the first and only IRS-recognized tribal city in the United States." The museum also dedicated a large corner of their permanent exhibit to boarding schools, including the proud accomplishments of their sports teams in the face of relentless racism. However, the curators maintained an overarching narrative that their own "unique education system" continued to persist despite its prohibition in boarding and public schools. A section of the exhibit also talked about several churches on the reservation that had served as sanctuaries for spiritually healing in the face of the damages caused by boarding schools. This exhibit helped further connect the dots around canoe journey. I began to see more clearly our canoe family as a form of Pacific Northwest Indigenous education from within a Western university. I wondered how much of the revenues from Quil Ceda village they spent hosting canoe journey that year.

By the time of our departure from Tulalip, it became clear that the university canoe family had recruited enough Native people eager to pull in the *Willapa Spirit*. Consequently, I largely stayed

with Phil's "home" canoe family where there were elders whom I could help support. However, the shared support boat insured plenty of crossover. When we reached Suquamish, our first destination together, the UW skipper allowed me to sit "princess" for their first landing protocol, meaning without a paddle to help pull. So many people packed the canoe that it almost sat low enough to take on water. The Suquamish chairman Leonard Forsman, also a UW regent, stood on the shore to welcome us along with a young Suquamish child who he was clearly training as part of the next generation. On shore, the Suquamish nation served one of the largest feasts I have ever seen in my life, with enough food for over a thousand people, including fresh smoked salmon, oyster, clams, and shrimp.



Figure 27: Chief Sealth's gravesite, author's photo

With a full stomach and a couple days of downtime, I began to explore the area near our campground. I could see headstones from a well-maintained cemetery across the street, and I found a large gravestone for Chief Sealth, Seattle's namesake, in the middle. The cross on his gravestone was a potent reminder of his conversion to Christianity, including a baptism in 1839 and confirmation in 1864 as well as the adjacent Saint Peter Catholic Mission (Buerge, 2017). The history of this mission is complicated, as attested by a booklet sold in the nearby tribal museum. In 2004, the mission celebrated its 150th anniversary, accompanied by a formal apology by the Catholic Archbishop after he arrived to Suquamish shores via canoe, brought by the Raven Canoe Society. I was surprised to learn that the Archbishop apologized decades ago for past abuses by the church. Then again, the brochure also includes a copy of a 1987 "Public Declaration" in Seattle by the Church Council of Greater Seattle, which includes the leadership of most major Christian denominations of the Pacific Northwest. This declaration was presented on Thanksgiving day of the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution at the site of a now paved over Native burial site in downtown Seattle. In addition to a "formal apology on behalf of our churches for their long-standing participation in the destruction of traditional Native American spiritual practices," they also "pledge our support and assistance in upholding the American Religious Freedom Act" for Native peoples (St. Peter Catholic Mission, 2005). The declaration now hangs in the United Nations.

Yet, despite the gratitude expressed for these apologies by the Suquamish Tribal Council, the booklet also describes the "lessening church influence" of recent years. Suquamish Chairman Leonard Forsman offers several explanations:

Part of it is attributed to a 'cultural resurgence' among tribal members reclaiming their traditional belief system—a choice they didn't always have. Some tribal members

recovering from alcohol and drug addictions have found strength in Indian spirituality. St. Peter Mission is an important part of our history ... and we honor our elders who have been involved.

This account describes the delicate balance between “Indian spirituality” and Christianity in the Suquamish Nation, and the impact of cultural revival in shifting this balance over time.

A centerpiece of the Suquamish Museum further demonstrates some of the tensions between Christianity and cultural revival. This exhibit shows three stages of Suquamish ancestors carrying a canoe together through time, and, in doing so, it emphasizes the importance of canoe culture in connecting the Suquamish Nation with their earliest ancestors and ancient creation stories.

CARRYING OUR CULTURE THROUGH TIME

There are many creation stories among our people. These stories do not contradict one another; these stories are more a pleasant curiosity between the people, tribes, families and villages. Stories could be basic or formal education, theatrical entertainment and/or important morals and values instruction from the elders to the youth.

A common threat in all our *Canoe Nation Creation Stories* is that the Creator, or the “Changer”, as we refer to him, created animals and people and allowed them to shape shift and have full freedom of communication and sharing of responsibilities between their villages. That is until he *CHANGED* all the animals and all the people into the forms that they still have today.

The sculptures that hold up the canoe give homage to the *Carriers of the Canoe Culture through Time*.

The two animals in the back of the Canoe are *OTTERS*, representing the earliest times of creation, when people and animals shape shifted. The two people in the middle are representative of our *ANCESTORS*, from the time before our land was shared with non-Indians Finally the two people in the front of the canoe are our Suquamish *PEOPLE* today. These six are Carrying Our Canoe Culture through Time! (Suquamish Museum, emphasis in original)

This exhibit presents a third perspective on the importance of canoes in Indigenous cultures, separate from state politics of reconciliation. Not only does it emphasize the importance of Coast Salish canoe culture throughout time. It also demonstrates the importance of animism in Suquamish cultural practices and creation stories. The exhibit makes clear that these creation stories within different Native cultures don't have to contradict each other. Yet, this exhibit also demonstrates how official doctrines of Christian denominations have created longstanding tensions between Indigenous cultural practices.

Figure 28: Suquamish Museum exhibit, author's photo



The next day, the powerful turnout for the *Willapa Spirit's* gifting ceremony surprised me, demonstrating how important this canoe is to bringing people together from vastly different cultures. Our canoe family chose the Lushootseed name čawayaltx^w, which means Shell House Family, after the Shell House building on campus where the canoe is kept and where the Awakening Ceremony occurred back in April of that year. The leadership of the canoe family required everyone to participate, and the President of the UW and the UW Board of Trustees were both present to witness the ceremony. On the way to the ceremony, I struggled to understand what people expected my role to be, and I what my own expectations were, in this ceremony from a culture that is not my own, and I silently made a commitment to learn more about my own Nordic heritage going forward. The Board President said a few words about how grateful he felt to be there with his family and their journey learning about “Native American culture.” This phrase also surprised me in this setting, since by this point I was increasingly aware of the subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, differences between each canoe family coming from a different tribal nation as well as the differences between each stop of this Journey. I can better appreciate why Indigenous peoples advocated so hard for the “s” at the end of the “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” (UNDRIP). Maybe a part of my role is sharing the importance of this diversity with other non-Natives.

Philip Red Eagle held one additional ceremony that evening that our canoe family had been anticipating for a long time. Over the last several decades, Phil has made thousands of copper ring necklaces for participants in Canoe Journey. The necklaces are common fixtures throughout any Canoe Journey gathering, and a different color bead is added to the necklace for each Journey that a person completes. The ring has a small break in it that Phil explains,

The circle is always open for those who want to rebuild our cultures. It isn't about being at war with White people. Though not everyone may agree with that... When Tribal Canoe Journey first started, it was barely a decade after the US government passed religious freedom for Natives in 1978. I think that passed because President Carter knew how many Natives died fighting in Vietnam. We had to go to houses along the coast in advance of the first Journey to let them know not to shoot at the canoes when they came by.

His words reminded me of a conversation during our carving class many months ago where we were talking about what brought each of us to the canoe movement, and all he said was, "Peace."

This response was a powerful example of the theme for this year's canoe journey, "*Honoring Our Warriors Past and Present*," and a reminder that not all warriors are found on a battlefield.

Who are the warriors today, and how are they fighting for peace?

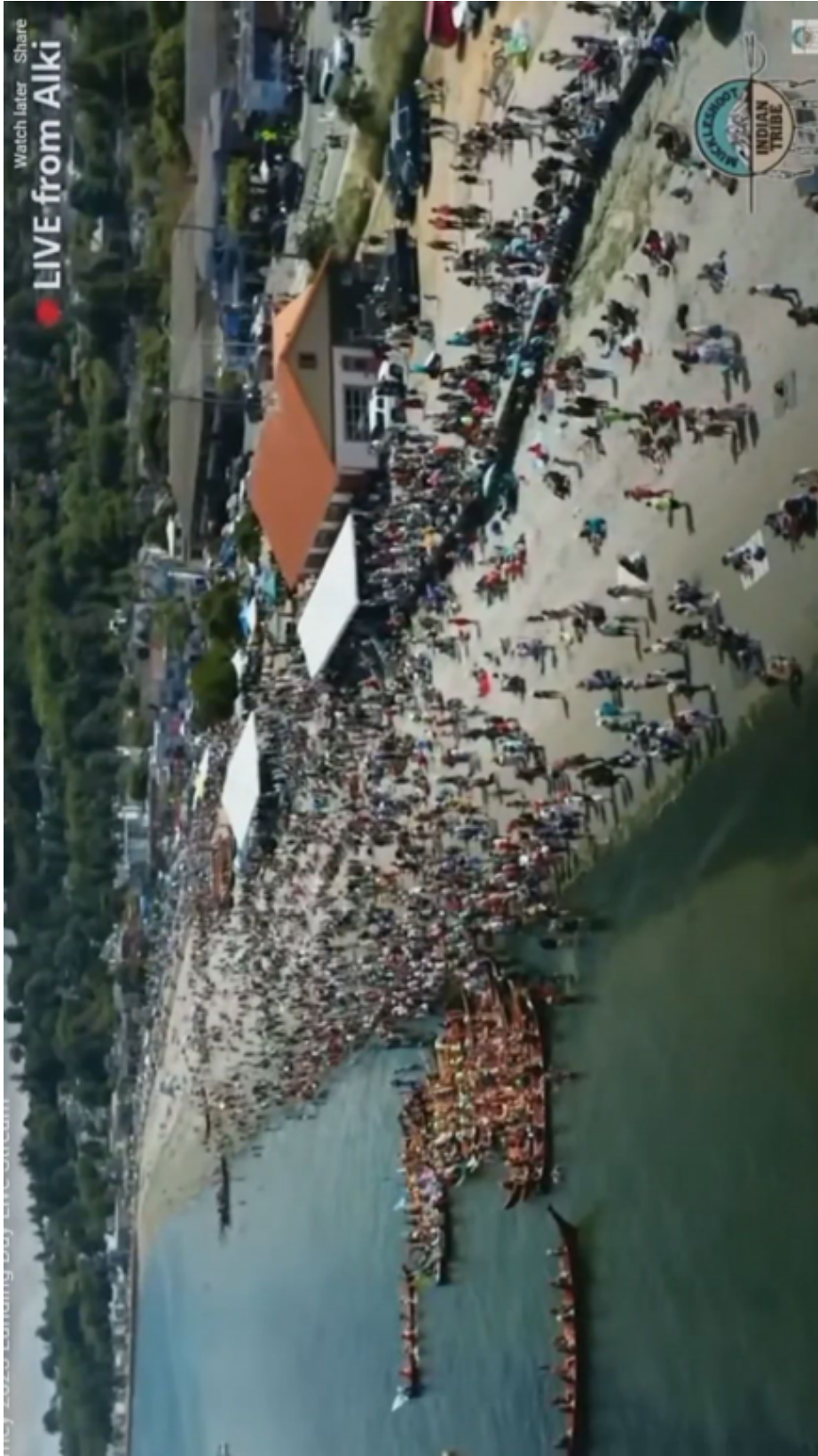


Figure 29: Alki Landing Protocol, Tools, 2023

For the final day of pulling, we traveled the next day from Suquamish to Alki Beach. As we made the final approach, I said to the university skipper that I should probably stay out of the canoe this time or else it would be too full for the landing. I could feel the gratitude in his response for stepping back to allow the Indigenous students to land on their own. They pulled away from the support boat with their matching hand-carved paddles while singing in Lushootseed. Here was an example of Indigenous language warriors reviving their culture and working for peace, and they reminded of Phil's methodology. Canoes do indeed carry knowledge.

For the first time since we started journey, we ended the day on a beach not located on a Native reservation. Driving back home over the bridge spanning the mouth of the Duwamish River, also the Port of Seattle, was a telling reminder of the tragic impact of Seattle's urban spread on the Duwamish people. The government has designated the river a Superfund site since 2001, identifying it is one of the most polluted locations in the country and allowing the federal government to provide emergency funding measures for its cleanup (Cummings, 2022). Meanwhile, the Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center opened in 2009, and their legal battle for Duwamish federal recognition is still ongoing (Jones, 2009). Instead, the federally recognized Tulalip, Suquamish, and Muckleshoot Nations hosted us on three of the primary reservations that some Duwamish moved to in previous generations. Nevertheless, Canoe Journey gave me a better sense of the ongoing struggle to maintain relationships across the onslaught of urban development.

Sadly, we received bad news in between the arrival at Alki and reaching the Muckleshoot campgrounds. An outbreak of Covid was being widely reported, and I made the difficult decision to stay home and watch the final protocol on video-streaming. It was a poignant reminder of the

challenges presented by the pandemic for Native peoples. Nonetheless, many chose to stay and perform their first Journey protocol together, and fortunately no one in our canoe family lost their life. Yet, it also reminded me how different my relationship was with the pandemic compared to many of the Indigenous members of our canoe family and how the pandemic could significantly magnify different people's privileges.

The end of the Muckleshoot protocol brought home the connection of canoes and treaties. Muckleshoot gifted four canoes, one to the family of a recently passed Muckleshoot chief and three others to each of the other tribal nations connected by the 1855 Treaty of Medicine Creek: Puyallup, Nisqually, and Squaxin Island Nations. Not only would these canoes create relationships within and among these four nations that could last for a generation or more, they would also build them strategically in ways that strengthen their shared legal position with the U.S. government. One can only imagine how these canoes will continue to impact treaty relationships in the future.

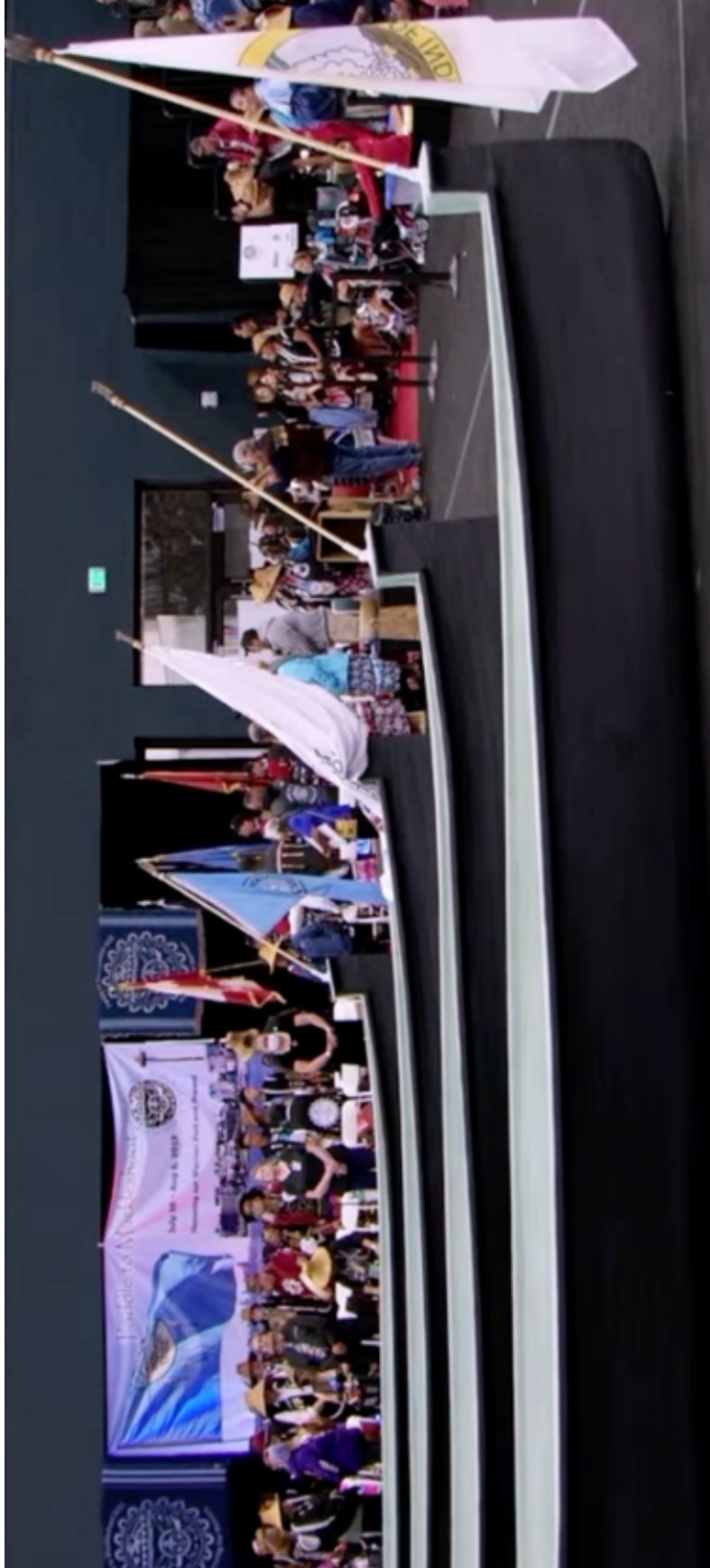


Figure 30: Muckleshoot protocol video streaming, author's photo

After Journey

In the aftermath of Journey, I was left with the desire to learn more about my relationship with the Duwamish people and the land we share. The last time I visited the Duwamish Longhouse, I had learned about the Duwamish Hill Preserve where one of the oldest Duwamish stories takes place. Developers were going to dynamite a small hill, located a little ways inland from the mouth of the Duwamish River, to make room for an industrial zone, but a coalition of people, called Friends of the Hill, organized to purchase the land because of its cultural importance. Despite the relatively humble size of the hill, the view from the top provides a surprisingly far look in both directions. A small, well-maintained campfire site is present with benches around one side. This hill is the location of numerous stories known as the “Epic of the Winds” that describe, among other things, flowing lava from volcanoes and glacier ice retreating. Notably, these stories align quite closely with what geologists have learned about this place. Lava from Mount Tahoma (which also goes by Mount Rainier as well as many other local names) has repeatedly flowed past this point over several millennia to create what is now the Duwamish River watershed. And roughly 10,000 years ago retreating glaciers carved out what we now call Puget Sound. According to the city park sign at the Duwamish Hill Preserve, one of the fascinating facts about this hill is that it is one of few geological features that actually predates the glaciers, going back an estimated 40 million years. I felt humbled to think of people gathering in this place for millennia to tell stories in a language that I do not understand.

This feeling and the undercurrent of Lushootseed language revival throughout Canoe Journey left me interested in what words there are in Lushootseed to describe myself. The

Lushootseed Dictionary (Bates et al., 1994) provides several possibilities, albeit in the Northern Lushootseed dialect most commonly spoken north of Seattle between Tulalip and Suak-Suiattle. One option might be *ʔasʌkʷədɪdʌp* that translates to “squatter” or “settler,” which has a similar root as to “take” or “grab.” Alternatively, *xʷəl̥təb* translates as both “Caucasian” and “shotgun.” Still another option is *ləliʔáʔkʷbixʷ* that translates as “foreigner” or someone “different.” Or *tulʌl̥il* that can also mean “foreigner” and shares a root with “from where?” Finally, a bolder option might be *dəčʰágʷtxʷ* that translates as “neighbor” and is also the root of “to visit,” both terms that resonate with moving between the metaphorical ship and canoe, next to each other on the B.C. Reconciliation pole. These various terms add some context that can be lost in English and highlight different relationships with a changing landscape that ties us all together. They also seem to provide some flexibility beyond that of the identity politics inherent in terms like Native, Indigenous, guest, and settler.

Canoe Journey also left me with a deeper sense of the intersection of Indigenous and Christian identities, which is a complicated legacy of boarding and residential schools. Despite all the damage done by churches, Christianity still plays a central role in the lives of many Native people. The longstanding commitment of some churches to protecting Native spiritualities surprised me, despite portrayals in the media to the contrary. In this context, the concept of *dəčʰágʷtxʷ* strikes me as particularly useful. What does it mean for Christians to be a good neighbor? A particularly hard pill to swallow for Christian churches seems to be that Christian practices are selectively integrated into Native spiritual practices in ways that do not align with official denominational doctrines. Jesuit Father Patrick Twohy put it this way:

Respected elders have always told me that the reason the people were interested in the Catholic way was because it so closely resembled their own ancient lifeway. This doesn't surprise me for I understand that there is one mystery, one source of all wisdom and

goodness. I don't think that the early missionaries saw it that way. They felt compelled to teach the people and baptize them as Catholics without fully acknowledging the profound wisdom that had guided the people for thousands of years. (Hibulb, 2008)

This perspective represents a shift from an “exclusivist model” of mission work, in which salvation can only be granted through the church’s narrow understanding of Christ, to a “pluralist model,” in which different religious traditions can simultaneously be of divine inspiration (Race, 1984). Consequently, this process of penance by Christian churches is slowly leading toward shifting boundaries of what denominations do and do not consider expressions of Christian faith, perhaps most evident in the shifting tide of official church repudiations of the Doctrine of Discovery. Perhaps even more challenging for churches to accept is that through their recognition of the harm caused by Christian missionizing, denominations may be left morally obligated to support (or perhaps not prevent) Native cultural resurgence in which some people opt out of Christianity completely. Perhaps aspirational, this result represents a “particularism model” in which multiple religions coexist without the need to share common religions goals (Race, 2015).

A different timeframe is helpful to better understand these shifting boundaries. For example, instead of one focused on a government’s legislation and policy schedule, perhaps it is more useful to think about the lifetime of trees that can grow for over a millennia and maybe one day become a canoe. This sense of time offers a different context for relationships in the region. Put another way, glaciers are estimated to have receded from the region less than 10 lifespans ago, in terms of a Douglas Fir. Some of the oldest redwoods in the region were already a millennia old when Mary gave birth to Jesus. With most of the deforestation of the region happening barely a century and a half ago, much of the ecological damage in this region will take many more centuries to recover in areas that remain undeveloped. Thinking about the lifespan of

a tree also offers a unique perspective due to their relationship with dug-out canoes. While canoes are not the only way that trees are used by Indigenous peoples in the region, they do offer an interesting and relevant symbolism for Native sovereignty, as has been described in, for example, the collective essays in *The Politics of the Canoe* (Erickson and Krotz, 2021). These essays discuss the canoe as a political vessel for both state assimilation and Indigenous resistance. In the Pacific Northwest, in part due to the exceeding scarcity, old-growth trees hold a unique role in the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the US and Canadian governments. They also hold a unique relationship within Indigenous cultures and spiritual practices.

Conclusion

The metaphors of the two canoes from The Reconciliation Pole and *Shxw̓itostel* offer a useful framework for understanding my experience in Tribal Canoe Journey. In one sense, I was literally in the *Willapa Spirit* as we all paddled together. Doing so gave me a window into indigenous governance systems of the awakening ceremony and the gifting ceremony, as well as throughout canoe journey. However, I also gained an appreciation of the inherent differences between myself and the Indigenous canoe family members. In comparison, I was also literally moving between the canoe and a support boat as we travelled along the coastline. In each vessel, I experienced the separate governance systems that oversaw decision-making, and I witnessed how careful coordination allowed us to reach our destinations together. At different times and places, both metaphors helped explain the social dynamics around me. Yet, a third canoe at the Suquamish Museum helped me understand the role of all Coast Salish canoes in connecting

Indigenous peoples and cultures across time. Regardless of the metaphor, these canoes served to forefront Indigenous governance in the face of settler society.

These metaphors also allowed me to see shifting boundaries as a constant theme of Tribal Canoe Journey. My initial focus was on binaries in identity, such as Native or non-Native, or colonial boundaries, such as the US-Canada border. However, these boundaries blurred throughout journey and shifted to other important relationships, such as that between land and water or between human and non-human persons. For example, cedar logs, boughs, and canoes constantly ordained journey and highlighted the centrality of these trees in Coast Salish cultures. The feasts of fish and shellfish hosted by each tribal nation highlighted the importance of their relationship with the sea and coastlines. In learning more about these important relationships, I began to appreciate the importance of cultural revitalization and Indigenous governance for addressing the legacies of boarding schools.

I also learned about the important distinctions between each tribal nation along the journey. One canoe is not enough to symbolize the variety of cultures, customs, and histories between each tribal nation that hosted us. I also began to appreciate how each canoe family along the way is its own delegation from tribal nations throughout the region. Perhaps most importantly, journey changed my awareness and approach to my relationship with the Duwamish people and their homelands, and the importance of finding ways to honor their struggles and hospitality. Throughout journey, I witnessed the central role of ceremony in shaping my understanding of history as well as Indigenous cultures, customs, and governance along the Northwest Coast. Tribal Canoe Journey is conducted as a collective ceremony, as well as many smaller ceremonies, all of which serve to remind and reinforce particular social and

governmental relationships. I learned that these relationships are intimately connected to Native hospitality, and honoring this hospitality means working to uphold Indigenous governance.

Throughout journey, I also learned many important lessons for allyship. Perhaps most importantly, effectively working with Indigenous peoples requires time, self-study, and relationship building. Learning to work together requires taking the time to learn the particular histories, cultures, languages, political struggles, and personalities. In this manner, trust is slowly built, and roles are slowly defined. Being ready to get into the canoe and know what do afterwards is just as important as knowing when to get out. Knowing when to let people speak for themselves is as important as knowing how to amplify their voice by using my own. And knowing that it's okay to enjoy a big meal after a long day of work, as long as you've made sure those around you have enough to eat first.

Conclusion: Pulling Forward

“If research hasn’t changed you as a person, then you haven’t done it right.”
~Shawn Wilson

The Northwest Coast provides a unique opportunity to look at the impact of Canada’s TRC and its implication on a pending Truth Commission in the United States. While critics have demonstrated how the reconciliation politics in Canada’s TRC have caused further harm to Indigenous peoples, this dissertation finds that Truth Commissions can still provide important benefits to Indigenous peoples if thoughtfully implemented. I have suggested at the beginning of this dissertation that religious arguments are central to the policymaking process of the United States in determining whether or how to establish a Truth Commission on Native boarding school policies. Essential to this debate is the translation of religious arguments into rationalizations that are understandable by those who hold vastly different worldviews. I suggested that metaphors for water are useful in unpacking the different assumptions about justice imbedded in three different vantage points: Christian denominations, secular policymakers, and Indigenous peoples.

Consequently, each of the chapters in this dissertation has sought to lay out important arguments related to addressing the legacies of boarding schools while engaging with three distinct perspectives. Each chapter relies on its own forms of evidence, methods of analysis, and theoretical framework. While the conclusions are not always commensurate, I suggest that such agreement is neither necessary, nor to be expected, in the policymaking process. Rather, I highlight wide-ranging perspectives of the ongoing impact of Truth Commissions for Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast, a specific region of the continent known for its old growth

forests set between coastal mountains and abundant fisheries. This approach highlights the importance of transnational perspectives driving the global Indigenous movement as well as for understanding the historical context of Indigenous boarding schools.

The first article focuses on the implications of Christian denominations repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery given their roles as key mediators of forced assimilative boarding school policies. I provide a financial accounting of money received by distinct church denominations from the Canadian and U.S. government throughout the Northwest Coast during the period when this funding was at its peak between both countries. While this study does not cover all funding received by church denominations from these two governments for boarding and residential schools, nor cover the entire continent during this period, it does provide a baseline for understanding the scope of financial responsibilities taken on by specific denominations. This study also identifies land on Native reservations given by the U.S. government to church denominations during this period that highlights the connection between boarding school policies and land loss. This article provides a roadmap for church denominations seeking to engage more fully with the pending Truth Commission as well as willing to repatriate these lands grants, many of which likely include Native cemeteries.

The second article focuses directly on the relationship between boarding school policies and resource extraction in a portion of the Pacific Northwest in Western Washington and Oregon. Written for a policymaking audience, this article provides an econometric analysis that demonstrates how boarding school policies directly contributed to resource extraction in the region through increased logging revenues for Indian agencies. This analysis points to systematic government corruption in the simultaneous management of boarding schools and land. This article also demonstrates how despite these exploitative policies, Native peoples in the region

managed to leverage these policies to assert their own sovereignty. In this manner, this article provides recommendations for a Truth Commission to use an information management system that can effectively support recommendations for expanding the land base of tribal governments.

Finally, the third article is focused on my participation in Tribal Canoe Journey. This article combines interpretation of Native art with an autoethnographic exploration of my experience as part of the UW Canoe Family. The chapter begins with a consideration of two public art projects of Indigenous carved canoes in British Columbia that symbolize competing models of reconciliation. In one approach, the state seeks to incorporate Indigenous peoples into Canadian society while the other shows First Nations and settler society living separately in parallel, while still cooperating. These two metaphors are used to frame the authors experience in the 2023 journey, a transnational Indigenous movement hosted that year by the Muckleshoot Indian Nation. This article provides a model for allyship that strengthens Indigenous governance to address the contemporary legacies of boarding schools.

Each of the articles brings into a conversation a different discourse community over the controversial, and frequently painful, topic of Indigenous boarding schools along with the possibilities of repairing relationships and cultural resurgence. A key issue at the heart of challenges to incorporating these different approaches are challenges around the use, interpretation, and governance of data. Blending scripture, statistics, and ethnography creates numerous tensions and conflicts, but this dissertation demonstrates how these varied methodologies can provide a richer and more full perspective on the complicated dynamics under examination in this dissertation.

While I present metaphors for water as a useful bridge between these three worldviews, the challenges posed by these different perspectives also highlight the often insurmountable

barriers to synthesis across different ways of knowing. Perhaps these challenge are best understood through a fourth water metaphor based on an insight I have heard repeated by many boarding school survivors over the years: tears are sacred. In this metaphor, *water is grief*. And there is plenty of grief to go around. Nevertheless, I have learned through researching this dissertation the importance of people having their own safe spaces to grieve and heal. In doing so, hopefully we all learn to better support people different than ourselves when our healing journeys intersect.

When these intersections do occur, this study has illuminated the frequently vast power differentials between Native peoples, church denominations, and the state. Consequently, it seems only fitting to end this dissertation with a brief discussion of one last canoe. Outside the entrance to the Burke Museum, Washington State's official museum, 11 larger-than-life canoe paddles rest pointed towards the sky in the now familiar protocol of a canoe requesting hospitality at a foreign shore. As the sun moves through the sky each day, their shadows each take one stroke forward. These paddles are part of a work called *Guests from the Great River*, and Owen Oliver (Quinault/Isleta Pueblo), who helped install these paddles, provides a detailed description of this artwork in his Indigenous Walking Tour (2021) of the University of Washington campus, where the Burke Museum is located.

Imagine a canoe coming out of the Columbia River, paddling north along the territories of the Washington Coast, turning the corner of Neah Bay, continuing parallel strokes alongside Vancouver Island and Washington, and entering into the Puget Sound.

Imagine landing on the tide flats of the Southern Lushootseed speaking Coast Salish people's territory.

Imagine a canoe filled with Pacific Ocean treasures.

Imagine the declaration of intent upon these shores and what Chinook people would be doing here.

Now look up, you don't have to imagine, it's right here.

The Guest from the Great River is a piece that describes the intricacies of the land that the University of Washington was built upon. This land wasn't uniquely one peoples'. It's an active eco-region filled with relationships of peoples building on the foundation of landscape learned knowledge. The land explains the trade and movement of stories, language, and ceremony throughout the region. Here, the artists Tony (naschio) Johnson of the Chinook People and Adam McIsaac designed with these elements in mind. This canoe, filled with ten paddlers and the skipper at the stern, is landing at the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture . Each set of larger-than-life paddles cascades a different story from the Chinook People. 3-D printed models were cast in bronze to bring a futuristic vision to this landing. At the back is a single paddle representing the skipper, who is depicted as the matriarch leading this story, community, and canoe.

As Oliver points out, the designs of these paddles are from customary Chinook styles and symbolize stories from the Chinook people whose homelands are the Columbia River region.

When interviewed about this work, Johnson says, “My interest in sharing these stories and teachings is that people will treat the place differently, these aboriginal lands of ours—and the aboriginal lands of our neighbors—if people were to really understand these stories” (Johnson and McIssac, 2020). Yet, many of the stories symbolized on these paddles are meant only to be told in person during winter gatherings. One notable exception is the matriarch on the skipper's paddle, Io'i, who is an important figure in Chinook oral histories. Two stories of Io'i feature key themes of hospitality, and I paraphrase them below.

In the first story, “Bungling Host” as told by Emma Luscier (Cowlitz and Wahkaiakum) in 1931, Io'i and her brother Blue Jay are hosted four different times by nearby animals who feed them both. Each time, Blue Jay insists on inviting them back to visit where he attempts to feed them the same way they did previously. However, the first three times he makes mistakes when he is hosting, and his guests end up either quickly leaving or having to feed themselves along with Blue Jay and Io'i. However, by the fourth time, Blue Jay learns to host and is able to

prepare food properly for his guest using his own skills. Coyote visits him and says: "People in the future will try to do things that they can't. If they have power, they will be able to; otherwise, they won't. You will be Blue Jay after this. You won't try to do those things. You will tell hunters whether to go hunting or not" (Verne, 1938, p. 146). In this way, this story provides a clear lesson of learning to be a good host by first being a good guest.

The second story is called "Blue Jay visits Ghost Town" and is based on a report by Franz Boas in 1894. The story begins when ghosts appear one night who "decided to go out and buy a wife," and they marry Io'i who disappears soon after. Her brother Blue Jay goes out to look for her, and he reaches a ghost town where the houses are filled with bones that turn into people at night. He finds his sister there too, who explains that these are ghosts, and since Blue Jay wants to stay with his sister, she tells him to go fishing with the ghosts at night. He finds that when he speaks too loudly to the ghosts, they turn back into bones. He goes fishing in a canoe with a young ghost, only to catch stick and leaves. Yet, when he returns back, Io'i explains that these are really trout and salmon. The next night, Io'i tells him that there is a whale on the beach. Yet, when he gets there, he finds ghosts peeling bark off a large log. When Io'i explains that the bark is really whale meat, he goes back to yell at the ghosts so they turn into bones and he can then take their bark. The next day, Blue Jay then goes around the village rearranging bones, so when the night comes, the ghosts' parts are all mixed up.

The ghosts tell Io'i that she needs to send her brother out of the village because of his pranks. So she tells Blue Jay that to leave he will need to go through four burning prairies, and she gives him five buckets of water that she warns him to save until the last prairie. However, Blue Jay uses up all his water before the last prairie, and he ends up burning to death. Now he ends up back at the village, but this time he is a ghost too. None of the ghosts want anything to

do with him, and he begins to pester some conjurers. Shortly after, Io'i finds him, "dancing on his head, his legs upward. She turned back and cried. Now he had really died. He had died a second time, made witless by the magicians" (Boas, 1894). While this story has several deeper meanings embedded in it, two stand out in particular. The first lesson is perhaps the most direct: don't mess with ghosts. The second lesson is in the transformation between the decomposing plants and living animals that occur in the ghost town; things are necessarily what they seem.

Combined, these two stories of Io'i give much greater meaning to the ideas of hospitality embedded in this bronze canoe's welcome protocol outside the Burke Museum. They include lessons on how to be a good guest and the consequences of failing to respect the dead. As more stories come to light about Native boarding schools, these are good lessons to take to heart. Yet, the fact that boarding school history, paddle carving, and canoe cultures can all cohabitate in the Burke Museum is a hopeful sign about the possibilities of repairing broken relationships while continuing to pull forward.



Figure 31: Artwork copyright Tony A. (naschio) Johnson and Adam McIsaac. Photo courtesy of Washington State Arts Commission.



Figure 32: Artwork copyright Tony A. (naschio) Johnson and Adam McIsaac. Photo courtesy of Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture.

Appendix

	Combined	US	Canada
Catholic Church	525241.79	269912.17	255329.62
Christian Union	400.00	400.00	nan
Church of England	223075.38	nan	223075.38
Congregational	17375.00	17375.00	nan
Free Mission Society of Sweden	0.00	0.00	nan
Independent	13100.00	13100.00	nan
Methodist	280917.74	95181.00	185736.74
Methodist Episcopal	1283.09	1283.09	nan
Non-denominational	14630.00	nan	14630.00
Presbyterian	150341.92	117833.42	32508.50
Quakers	2078.17	2078.17	nan
Salvation Army	1500.00	nan	1500.00
Swedish Evangelical	900.00	900.00	nan
WNIA	40536.81	40536.81	nan

Figure 33: Total contract funding by denomination in real dollars

Date	State	Agency	Reservation	Denomination	Acres	Purpose
1857	WA	Tulalip	Tulalip	Roman Catholic	130	Church
1868	WA	Tulalip	Lummi	Roman Catholic	86	Church
1869	WA	Tulalip	Swinomish	Roman Catholic	89.8	Church
1870	WA	Tulalip	Port Madison	Roman Catholic	82.9	Church
1873	WA	Puyallup	Puyallup	Roman Catholic	NA	Church
1877	WA	Puyallup	Nisqually	Presbyterian	NA	Church
1880	WA	Tulalip	Muckleshoot	Roman Catholic	NA	Church
1883	WA	Puyallup	Puyallup	Presbyterian	NA	Church
1883	OR		Umatilla	Roman Catholic	80	Church and residence
1884	OR		Umatilla	Presbyterian	13	Church and residence
1886	OR	Warm Springs	Warm Springs	United Presbyterian	2	Mission/church and parsonage
1887	OR		Grande Ronde	Roman Catholic	NA	Church and parsonage
1887	CA		Round Valley	Woman's Baptist Home Mission Society	2.5	Mission and school
1888	OR	Warm Springs	Simnasho	United Presbyterian	160	Mission/mission and school
1889	OR		Umatilla	Presbyterian	60	School
1889	OR		Umatilla	Roman Catholic	160	School
1889	CA	Mission	Coahuila	Women's National Indian Association	5	Mission and school
1889	CA	Mission	Portrero	Women's National Indian Association	5	Chapel and missionary cottage
1889	CA		Mission	Wisconsin Indian Association	NA	Mission
1890	CA	Mission	Coahiula	The Ladies' Missionary Society of Riverside, CA	5	Mission and school
1891	WA	Yakama	Yakama	Methodist Episcopal	185	Three missions with churches
1891	OR		Siletz	Methodist Episcopal	10	Mission
1894	WA	Yakama	Yakama	Roman Catholic	160	Church

1894	WA	Colville	Spokane	Woman's National Indian Association	5	Mission Day School
1894	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	160	Church
1895	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	184	Church and mission
1896	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	18.5	Church
1896	OR		Siletz	Roman Catholic	1	Church
1896	CA	Mission	Torres	Women's National Indian Association	10	Mission at Torros Reservation
1897	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	Lot	Parsonage
1911	OR		Umatilla	Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions	160	Not Listed
1911	OR		Warm Springs	United Presbyterian Church of North America	40	Not Listed
1915	WA		Taholah	Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA	0.3	Not Listed
1916	CA		Cold Springs	Northern California Baptist Convention	2.5	Not Listed
1916	WA		Colville	Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions	470.86	Not Listed
1917	WA		Colville	Roman Catholic Mission	12.5	Not Listed
1918	CA		Campo	Catholic Church	1	Not Listed
1918	CA		Fort Bidwell	American Missionary Association	5	Not Listed
1918	CA		Fort Yuma	Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church	1	Not Listed
1920	CA		Hoopa Valley	Board of the Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA	3.6	Not Listed
1920	OR		Umatilla	Tribal cemetery	1.13	Not Listed
1920	OR		Umatilla	Tribal cemetery	0.15	Not Listed

8/18/08	OR		Klamath	Methodist Episcopal	115.9	Not Listed
NA	WA	Tulalip	Lummi	Methodist Episcopal	NA	School among Nooksack Indians
NA	WA	Colville	Colville	Roman Catholic	NA	Two chapels
NA	WA	Puyallup	Skokomish	American Missionary Association of Congregational Church	NA	Mission
NA	WA	Neah Bay	Neah Bay	Episcopal	NA	Mission. No Land
NA	WA	Puyallup		Quinault	NA	Not Listed
NA	CA		Mission	Roman Catholic	NA	Churches at St. Ignacio and at Santa Isabel

Figure 34: Reservation Land Occupied by Denominations in Washington, Oregon, and California

Year	State	Reservation	Organization	Acreage
1911	OR	Umatilla	Board of Home Missions of Presbyterian Church in the USA	160
1911	OR	Umatilla	Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions	258.1
1915	CA	Morongo (Malki)	The Society of the United Brethren for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen (Moravian Church)	10
1915	CA	Torres (Malki)	The Society of the United Brethren for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen (Moravian Church)	5
1915	OR	Warm Springs	The Women's General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of North America	40
1914	WA	Cushman	Board of Home Missions of Presbyterian Church in the USA	1.43
1916	CA	Fort Yuma	The Roman Catholic Bishop of Monterey and Los Angeles	3.13
1919	OR	Warm Springs	Women's General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church of North America	6.09
1920	OR	Umatilla	Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions	0.67
1920	WA	Spokane	Board of Home Missions of Presbyterian Church in the USA	26.25

Figure 35: Fee Simple Reservation Land Acquired by Denomination in Washington, Oregon, and California

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