Increasing Visibility of American Indians Through Improvements to School Curricula:

Urban American Indian Centers' Unique Position

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INTRODUCTION

American cities are built on land that was once occupied and cared for by Indigenous people. Yet today, many Americans do not understand the history of those people, that they even still exist, or that they are not all sequestered on reservations. The majority of American Indians today live off reservations; many have moved to urban areas. Unfortunately, this minority population faces a myriad of challenges and both active and passive resistance to their cultural identities. While there is not one change that can address the generational trauma, socioeconomic and health disparities, and cultural invisibility, educating the mainstream population will go far towards reconciliation between American Indians and non-Native people.

When large groups of American Indians moved to cities, they began to gather together for cultural support. This evolved into the development of American Indian Centers (AIC) in many major U.S. cities as gathering places for Native people, regardless of tribal affiliation. This thesis references urban AICs as Native-run organizations, not government-run Indian Centers that have historically negative connotations attached to them. Today, these centers are the touchpoint for non-Native people and organizations in cities that desire to connect with American Indians and begin to address systemic and personal ways of ignoring the Native people of this land. This thesis will focus on the responsibility of the education system to do this. There is great potential for an increase in empathy and understanding if American Indian Centers in metropolitan areas across the United States can partner with local school districts. This partnership will develop history and social studies curricula that accurately portray American Indian history and provide students a basic understanding of current American Indian culture. Education of the mainstream population will significantly aid in the fight against urban American Indian cultural invisibility stemming from erasure, tokenism, and stereotypes created

by pan-Indianism. Based on lessons identified during my research of American Indian Centers and the experience of invisibility, I will illustrate the benefit of centering efforts around the American Indian Centers as the organization best suited to represent the urban American Indian population.

This thesis will provide an overview of the history of the Indigenous populations of the current-day United States of America and how these cultures have adapted to this day, including a movement from reservations to urban centers across the country. Following this, the experience of invisibility is explained, including the contributing factors, strategies to combat, and the role of education in building understanding within the dominant culture. Moving forward, partnerships between American Indian Centers and urban school districts will increase the accuracy of history and social studies curricula. This will result in a more knowledgeable and empathetic non-Native population, similar to some current initiatives that encourage input from tribal entities for schools in the local area.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF INVISIBILITY

The experience of invisibility can be hard to picture for members of the dominant culture, and the negative impacts are not always obvious. Because of this, some react to advocates of these issues by dismissing them as either invented or overblown. This ignorance and lack of empathy to try and understand the experience of Native American men, women, and children is a barrier to policy and social improvements. The goal of my research was to "understand how [urban American Indians] make sense of their lives and their experiences" and base my proposed change on that information (Merriam and Tisdell 24). Concrete examples of the experience of invisibility that I gathered from my interviews with staff members of various urban American

Indian Centers across the country will help move non-Natives from viewing invisibility as a

theoretical concept to a lived reality.

Will Miller (Cherokee/Blackfeet) recounted via email an all-too-common experience for

him that exemplifies what he means by invisibility after a performance as a grass dancer: "One

time I went to perform for a high school and after we held a Q&A, one of the students asked,

'Are you a real Indian? I thought you all were extinct.'" Many people who have received a

standard public education and who do not interact with American Indians simply do not know

that there are over 6.9 million American Indian/Alaska Natives in the United States (Census

Bureau). This lack of knowledge is a symptom of the erasure of Native American people, one of

the components of the continuum of invisibility.

In addition to not knowing that Native Americans exist today, much of the American

population forms a picture of Native Americans based on what they see from Hollywood

productions or sports mascots. This picture of a Native American frequently does not match the

actual Native American people as Nikki McDonald (Tunica-Biloxi) described:

> I'm very aware of the fact that I don't look like the Native Americans on TV. It is
>
> brought to my attention a lot: 'You don't look Indian'…but that doesn't make me any
>
> less part of my tribe and traditions. That to me is one of the most hurtful things that are
>
> said to me.

The cognitive dissonance between what is shown in popular media and mascots of sports teams

and real American Indians contributes to invisibility.

Another personal experience of invisibility that is common among leaders in advocacy

and policy within the urban American Indian community is the relative lack of statistics available

for American Indians as a whole. This is another example of erasure that Gaylene Crouser

(Hunkpapa Lakota/Standing Rock) explained she encounters as the Executive Director of an urban American Indian Center: "When you look at statistics on anything, and the pie chart— we're not on it. We are in the tiny piece of 'Other'…we are statistically insignificant." Issues of a population that is considered statistically insignificant are easily overlooked or ignored by policymakers and mainstream society. This has proved true in the American Indian experience over multiple generations.

"LOADED TERMS"

As a non-Native individual writing on this topic, Charles C. Mann states, "anyone who attempts to write or even speak about the original inhabitants of the Americas quickly runs into terminological quicksand" (387). I have followed his example by addressing the use of applicable terms in this thesis in an attempt to avoid confusion or insult.

During my research and interactions with members of the subject population, several terms have been used to describe the ethnic group. These include "American Indian," "Native American," "Indian," "Native," and "Indigenous." The U.S. Census Bureau and federal government organizations use the term "American Indian/Alaska Native." All of these terms were used by various individuals who I interacted with during research and also in the literature regarding this ethnic group. I will use "American Indian" and "Native American" to maintain consistent language for the purpose of this thesis, and I have made an effort to use each of these terms consistent with the individual quoted or literature cited in each instance.

The terms I will be using are generalized to mean the people groups who inhabited the land now known as North America and their descendants. This is not meant to discount each individual's tribal affiliation, which is how many American Indians identify. When referring to specific individuals, I will indicate their tribal affiliation after their name. This generalization of

a rich variety of tribes, each with their own culture, histories, and traditions, into one ethnic group is in itself a product of the controlling image that reinforces a stereotypical conception of an American Indian (Jacobs 82). This concept will be discussed further in the Misconception section and the exploration of the Invisibility Continuum.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Despite physically occupying the same land for generations, the collective non-Native population of the United States knows very little about the original inhabitants and descendants. This is the result of several factors that would be an ample task for another academic paper. Some of these factors will be discussed in this thesis when considering the history of American Indians and how it is presented in school curricula. But because of this high degree of unfamiliarity, walls built on suspicion, mistrust, stereotypes, and biases have been erected and have made inter-cultural dialogue a rare commodity. Lacking a strong motivation or proximity to American Indians, many non-Natives in this country will live in ignorance of American Indian culture.

Much of the impetus of my interest in this topic came from a recognition of the misconceptions I held about American Indians. I began to learn and be aware of how much I did not know about the history and current experience of American Indians. Bluntly, I thought that they were mostly living on reservations and were essentially segregated from mainstream society. Lack of meaningful interaction with American Indians allowed Hollywood depictions of American Indians to feed these thoughts. The words associated with American Indians reveal their standing in the mainstream culture. As Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater contend, "cultural assumptions can hide inside the adjectives and adverbs" used (173). Some examples of these words used to describe American Indians in much of American history texts are: "savage," "pagan," "wild," "dirty," "nomadic," and even worse ("Stereotyping"). The words I heard in the

classroom also "perpetuate[d] fictions and stereotypes in the language…use[d] to talk about Indigenous Americans and to describe their histories and cultures" (Rindfleisch). All of this was built on the foundation of the history I had learned in school that, among other shortfalls, did not cover American Indian culture at all and barely covered the basics of American history that involved the people indigenous to this land. There was no focus on American Indians.

This ignorance is fertile ground for misconceptions to grow and sprout into biases and stereotypes. These misconceptions are varied but include a vision of American Indians frozen in the past and that all American Indians are secluded on reservations. Carolina Castoreno-Santana (Lipan Apache) explained it simply based on her experience as an American Indian living in Indianapolis: "they literally only think of us in that past tense, the 'Indian on the plains'…stereotype." Another piece of anecdotal evidence to this is the Seal of the City of Chicago. According to the Official Seal of the City of Chicago Users Guide, "the Native American (depicted on the seal) represents the discovery of our Chicago's original site, and honors the contributions of Native Americans to our grand metropolis" (1). However, according to Heather Miller (Wyandotte), former Executive Director of the Chicago AIC, the American Indian depicted is "what non-Natives think a Plains Indian looks like" not an accurate representation of what the tribes who lived on that land would have looked like. These inaccurate depictions of American Indians from an authoritative source have a significant influence on the non-Native population. Without learning from American Indian voices, the messages about American Indians generated by the government or Hollywood perpetuate misconceptions.

IDENTITY

American Indian identity is not easily defined nor is there much consensus regarding it. There are 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages in the

United States today (BIA). Each one has varying methods of determining tribal citizenship, which includes blood quantum in some cases. In addition to the federally recognized tribes, there are many tribes that lack the official government-to-government recognition. For example, the Duwamish people whose ancestors inhabited the land upon which I am living and writing do not have federal recognition. So federal recognition is an inadequate method of determining American Indian identity, let alone the absurdity of the government that descends from the occupying forces of this land determining who is considered to be Native American. There have been cases of individuals identifying as American Indian on surveys without satisfying any requirements outlined by federal or tribal entities (Jacobs 79). One more famous example of the controversy that can arise surrounding Native American identity is Elizabeth Warren. Her campaign for a Senate seat highlighted statements she had made indicating she had Cherokee ancestors in her family tree, citing evidence of family stories passed down for several generations. Many non-Natives who attacked Warren for this claim pointed to the benefits she allegedly received as a result of claiming Native American identity, such as college admission. As disheartening as it was to hear the President of the United States mockingly calling her "Pocahontas," the most disturbing results of this controversy was the mocking stereotypical photoshopped depictions of Warren as an "Indian" (Jacobs 80). The question of American Indian identity does not have a straightforward answer. This is best stated by Laura Waterman Wittstock (Seneca) who writes: "between the Indian and non-Indian sides of the coin are a million slices of what-ifs and others" (qtd. in Jacobs 80).

Perhaps a large contributing factor to the complications of American Indian identity is that it is regulated by the U.S. government. There are political and economic factors that influence this, often more heavily than cultural factors. Because of the obligations of treaties, it is

financially beneficial to the U.S. government if the population of federally recognized tribes is reduced. This is why Heather Miller (Wyandotte) told me that she considers blood quantum and the current enrollment requirement to be a manifestation of the "ongoing genocide of Native Americans." This issue of identity is a direct result of the history of American Indians from the time Europeans landed on the shores of "Turtle Island" through the various genocidal campaigns to the current experience.

HISTORY

Self-Reflection

Before discussing a brief overview of the historical experience of American Indians, I found that it may be helpful to illustrate two of the reasons why an improved curriculum is necessary. This example is anecdotal as it is reflecting on my own experiences and thoughts concerning this topic, but I am confident that many non-Native people share similar thoughts or opinions. The first draft of this section showed these two reasons: American Indian history "starts" around the arrival of Columbus and all the events and actions associated are negative.

Starting American Indian history with Columbus and the year 1492 is a product of the canonization of Christopher Columbus as an American hero. He is one of only two individuals who are honored by name by a national holiday. In addition, "historians use [Columbus] to divide the past into epochs, making the Americas before 1492 'pre-Columbian'" (Loewen 32). I was one of the myriads of children who grew up learning about Columbus sailing the ocean blue in 1492 and "discovering" America. The elevation of Columbus coupled with the sparse and inaccurate information regarding him drives this narrative in mainstream American culture. 1492 is the default starting point when discussing history in North America. There may be less specific information available in historical records about North America before Europeans arrived. But

essentially ignoring the thousands of years prior to Columbus reinforces the doctrine of discovery and centers history around the European settlers.

The second example is the overwhelming number of negative stories that fill the catalog of the mainstream understanding of the history of American Indians. From diseases decimating Native populations to massacres and policies of ethnocide, the story of American Indians readily available is horrifying. The main reason for this is that after European contact, Indigenous tribes constantly experienced the victimization of the European settlers. The constant victimization does not leave room for the positive aspects of American Indian cultures. One study of American Indian curricula in nine states found that all "depict American Indians as victimized rather than providing examples of societal contributions made by tribes" (Journell 18). Some of these societal contributions include democracy principles, environmental stewardship, and the ability to meet challenges with resiliency.

For instance, after I graduated from high school in 2007, the following is my summary of what knowledge I held about American Indian history:

- There were various European settlements along the East Coast when the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620 and were assisted by local tribes of American Indians, leading to the traditional First Thanksgiving.

- Many American Indians tragically died from diseases like smallpox that Europeans, unfortunately, carried with them and unintentionally infected the native population.

- As the settlers constantly pushed westward, American Indians were forced off their land by force or through unfair treaties.

- Several tragic events occurred such as the Trail of Tears, the massacre at Sand Creek, the Battle of Little Bighorn, and the Wounded Knee massacre.

- Eventually, almost all of the American Indians remaining were pushed onto Reservations.

While this is a simplified summary of what I took, it is a woeful amount of knowledge about cultures that have a long history before Europeans arrived and have survived the myriad of attempts of ethnocide and genocide. Also, several things I learned were not accurate, such as the story of the First Thanksgiving. This is perhaps the easiest myth to correct as it is often used in examples of how insufficient American history textbooks and curriculum are. Books such as *1492* and *Lies My History Teacher Told Me* spend chapters debunking the traditional story told about the pilgrims and Squanto. The common myth perpetuates American exceptionalism, and the ritual of Thanksgiving promotes ethnocentrism and marginalizes American Indians (Loewen 89). It does not allow that Indians have complex motives and instead Divine providence was behind the settlers (Mann 37). This is only one example of a historical event that is portrayed in a feel-good manner and avoids or twists the actual facts.

My perspective of American Indian history and current-day experiences are heavily impacted by the myths and mis-portrayals I learned through school. Ignoring the history prior to European discovery helps support the view that North America was a wilderness awaiting settlement and discovery. This, in turn, tacitly endorses the actions taken by settlers to sprawl across the country and push out the Indigenous tribes. As evidence that this is still an extremely common misconception, the recently published *1776 Report* offers that the people of the United States "have a shared history of common struggle and achievement, [including] carving communities out of a vast, untamed wilderness" (2). The negative tint surrounding American Indian history, and, to much extent, modern-day realities imply victimhood and helplessness of American Indians. Much of the history is full of attempts at genocide and ethnocide, and the

truth of those events and policies should be told. However, by focusing on the victims, I do not see the admirable aspects of American Indian culture or appreciate the historical achievements of tribes. For example, the resiliency of Native tribes to have survived as distinct cultures for the past 400 years is incredible. Their relationship with nature can and should be studied and adopted by mainstream culture. And it should not take researching a graduate thesis to realize that the Iroquois Confederacy is the oldest living participatory democracy on earth. As such, it was an example for the future founders of the United States of representative democracy, and many principles were incorporated into the Constitution of the United States ("Native Voices").

The purpose of this section is not to lay out the whole history of American Indian tribes in North America as that would be too involved. Generalizing events like those I had learned in the education system also defeats the point by obscuring the individual American Indians and tribes and their stories. But a general timeline is beneficial here to understand how the current-day experiences of urban American Indians are contextualized with historical events and policies. As Loewen states, "the antidote to feel-good history is not feel-bad history but honest an inclusive history" (92). In that spirit, here is some of the honest history of American Indians.

Overview

Upon the arrival of European explorers, one unintended consequence was the arrival of infectious diseases that the Indigenous communities did not have developed or natural immunity to and therefore experienced decimating consequences of their populations. Although it can be said that the initial introduction of smallpox and measles was unintended, there are instances of intentional infection by British and American forces (Perry 234). In the end, disease eliminated whole nations and possibly millions of Indigenous individuals across the Americas. The 19th century contained many explicitly genocidal practices like military assaults on American Indian

villages. Examples include the massacre at Sand Creek where hundreds of Arapahoe and Cheyenne women and children were brutally killed by U.S. soldiers. At Wounded Knee, South Dakota, hundreds of Lakota Sioux were killed by U.S. cavalry after the famous leader Sitting Bull was killed by police on the Pine Ridge reservation. Alongside these massacres and others during various conflicts, many tribes were forcibly removed from their tribal lands under the Indian Removal Act, signed by President Andrew Jackson in 1830. The Choctaw and Creek were two of the first people to be forcefully driven to lands referred to as "Indian Territory" west of the Mississippi River. The Trail of Tears is the common term for the removal of the Cherokee people. The Indian Removal Act displaced many tribal nations and also led to the devastating loss of life on the forced marches.

Before the Indian Removal Act, the Civilization Fund Act was implemented in 1819 which spurred the creation of the somewhat infamous Indian boarding schools (Pember). American Indian families were coerced into sending their children to boarding schools, some of which were run by Christian denominations, with the goal of "civilizing" the children. This entailed forced assimilation by removing the children from their cultures, practices, and languages. This was often enforced by beating children who spoke their Native language, even before learning English and cutting their long hair (Perry 236). Many children died or were sexually abused at the boarding school (Pember). During the civil rights movement, Native Americans were one of the minority groups seeking reforms. As such, they were often seen as "agitators" like their African American counterparts that were organizing sit-ins and Freedom Rides ("Freedom Riders"). The American Indian Movement was perhaps the most well-known organization and was the target of the deadly clashes on the Pine Ridge reservation in the early 1970s. This simple summary of atrocities committed against the American Indian population

since Europeans arrived provides a glimpse of the generational trauma experienced and makes the existence of modern-day American Indian people all the more incredible. The backdrop of this history informs the distrust of the U.S. Government and non-Native cultures held by American Indian communities.

FINDING COMMUNITY IN CITIES

A wave of American Indian military veterans began to settle in urban areas after the completion of World War II. The number of American Indians grew in the 1950s through the 1970s due to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Voluntary Relocation Program. The thousands of American Indians who left the reservations under this program moved to urban areas to find employment and education promised by the Relocation Program. The families and individuals who moved to cities like Chicago, Los Angeles, and Denver were the foundation for the urban American Indian communities now found in many major urban areas across the United States (Lucero, *Creating* 1). For reference, the population of American Indians in Chicago in 1950 was 775 which grew over 8 times to 6,575 by 1970 (Laukaitis 139).

The Relocation Program was viewed with suspicion by much of the American Indian population as another attempt at assimilation by transplanting individuals from their tribal communities to large cities and surrounded by mainstream American culture. Those who relocated found it difficult to adjust, as is common among those who leave behind their centers of community. The issues and struggles of the new occupants of the urban areas became apparent and in response, community organizations began to form. These were the precursors to what is now known as some version of American Indian Centers. Many were started to provide youth education and cultural services (Laukaitis 140). These centers were developed to form a sense of tribal community when physically distant from their reservations.

The development of American Indian communities in urban areas is another example of the resilience of their culture and the resistance to assimilation. If the government assumed that the Relocation Program would urbanize much of the American Indian population, it did not have the desired outcome. Instead, "for many Indian people the urban areas are visualized more as an extension of home territory, or as one person put it, 'our urban encampment out here'" (Lobo and Peters 4m). The rigid tribal structure may not have relocated with them, but the Native sense of community remained and was restructured with a more fluid structure that was based on social connections within the geographic space of the city. In other words, "American Indian communities transcends neighborhood boundaries" (Eubanks 7).

The urban American Indian population was not constricted by tribal affiliation and continued to grow as a community was found through Native-run organizations and American Indian Centers. One important factor is that the American Indian organizations became an "Indian space" or a "place that is Indian" in an area that has no land base to which to tie identity (Lobo and Peters 4m). While American Indian identity has been shown to be a complex issue, urban communities have helped maintain a connection to the individual's customs, traditions, and culture while physically distant from their ancestral lands and tribal center. Maintaining their cultural identity in the urban context is a powerful tool and is directly related to an individual's and community's wellbeing. For instance, a study of middle school aged American Indians in an urban context found that those with a high degree of ethnic pride "adhered more strongly to certain antidrug norms" and there was little difference due to other factors like age, gender, and socioeconomic background (Kulis 101). However, the urban American Indian population and its lack of visibility in mainstream culture are an extension of the characteristics that make the American Indian population as a whole invisible to the majority of non-Native people. Despite

all the historical trauma, broken promises, and attempts at assimilation, American Indians face the challenge of invisibility.

INVISIBILITY CONTINUUM

Native Americans have experienced various types of violence, both historical and current day. It is helpful to understand these types of violence as a continuum "including not only direct political violence but also structural, symbolic, and everyday violence" (Holmes 89). The previous sections have outlined different examples of each variation along the continuum. Likewise, the invisibility sustained by Native Americans can be described using another continuum including erasure, tokenism, and pan-Indianism. The genesis of many of these issues is the imagery held by non-Natives regarding Native Americans:

> The Indian Imaginary is a "controlling image" that reifies stereotypical notions about Indians and normalizes their oppression. It is part of a "generalized ideology of domination" that assists whites in constructing fictive "realities" that reinforce hegemonic (mis)perceptions of race relations. Images of ruthless Indian warriors, for instance, allow U.S. residents to casually dismiss one of the ugliest truths of U.S. history—the genocide of American Indian people. Simultaneously, American Indians are depicted as simple savages who saved an entire village of "Pilgrims" and then broke bread with them at the "First Thanksgiving." These examples and myriad others locate American Indians in the context of history, which causes non-Natives to overlook the various spaces they occupy in contemporary society. (Jacobs 82)

As Jacobs explains, these factors of invisibility are generated by history taught from a colonial perspective, stereotypes reinforcing the view that American Indians are solely historical figures, and pan-Indian communities that developed as a means of resiliency.

The toll of invisibility is felt in the communities of American Indians through limited

opportunities and wellbeing, particularly in the urban setting ("Making the Invisible Visible" 6).

Even though a majority of American Indians live away from Reservations and tribal lands in

urban areas, they are the portion of the whole American Indian population most impacted by

invisibility. Upon moving to cities, "Native people found a world in which non-Indians

dominated social, cultural, and political life and where the presence of living Indian people

garnered little consideration or respect" (Rosenthal 104). As a result, the issues faced are

magnified for American Indians living in cities. These issues include disparities in children and

family services, housing and homelessness, economic development and employment, and health

and wellness ("Making the Invisible Visible" 6). It has been shown that American Indians are at

a disadvantage compared to the non-Native population of cities in many health indicators (Castor

et al. 1478). American Indians face almost twice the unemployment rate of the white population

as well as double the percentage of children under 18 living below the poverty line. These

figures are all from prior to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately

affects American Indian populations. Initial studies indicate that American Indians are 3.5 times

more likely to be infected with COVID-19 than the white population and 1.8 times more likely to

die from the infection ("Covid's Assault"). While not all of these impacts are results of explicit

racism, Pellow points out that institutional racism does not have to be intentional; "it is evident

when institutions make decisions that appear to be race neutral in intent but result in racially

unequal impacts" (16). The previous statistics are results of implicit biases in our social systems.

Social service availability and efficacy is a representative microcosm of the impact of

invisibility. In St. Paul, MN, a 1996 report by the American Indian Research and Policy Institute,

found that "most of those [social service] agencies were unaware that Indians even lived in the

[subject] neighborhoods" (quoted in Eubanks 1). While this awareness of the existence of American Indians in cities has been increased since this report, it is not yet to a level where non-Native social service agencies provide adequate, culturally sensitive services. Many non-Native social work practitioners "feel uncomfortable discussing identity and culture with Indian clients in therapeutic and other practice settings, either for fear of responding in a way that makes them appear insensitive or because they feel unequipped to know where to take the discussion once it is opened up" (Lucero, *Creating* 332).

Invisibility as a people group has many detrimental effects, many of which were mentioned previously and are generally the objects of direct service Native-run non-profit organizations. The majority of these organizations provide similar services to non-Native organizations, but with an emphasis on, and integration of, Native cultural practices and traditions. Because they are led by Native people, their target population to serve is not invisible or foreign as they may be to more mainstream organizations. However, these organizations themselves often can be considered invisible as "there has been insufficient efforts to develop comprehensive national policy or effective infrastructure at the local, state, and federal levels to serve urban Native communities" ("Making the Invisible Visible" 6). Organizations such as the National Urban Indian Family Coalition seek to raise the issues experienced by urban American Indians to a position where policies are changed to better serve their communities and to dislodge them from the invisibility continuum. The symptom of invisibility is caused by the underlying root causes of erasure, tokenism, and pan-Indianism in our society.

Erasure

The brief history section outlined some different methods of erasure that the European settlers and the U.S. government have used against American Indians. After centuries of attempts at

genocide and ethnocide, along with inadequate education, it is not surprising that many non-Natives are not aware that American Indians exist off of reservations. Historical figures are easier to ignore, and the dominant culture may not feel the need to acknowledge the atrocities committed against American Indians. This is a byproduct of the infrahumanization of American Indians, that is, seeing them as less than human. This "occurs when one group of people comes to believe that another group of people does not possess some vital and defining human quality" (Beck 102). An example of this is the reference to "merciless Indian savages" in the Declaration of Independence (Charles). Reconciliation is impossible if one of the parties involved is not in existence. In addition, the historical methods of erasure must not be ignored or forgotten. As Katongole and Rice state, "reconciliation without memory ignores wounds and history of trauma" and leads to a fake peace between groups (28). In this sense, erasure has whitewashed the conscience of the non-Native population.

Erasure is slowly becoming a less prevalent phenomenon relevant to American Indian culture. There has been a rise of Native-run organizations that seek to not only provide for the needs of American Indians but also to raise the visibility of these communities. Perhaps the most recognizable way that the impacts of erasure are being lessoned is the growing number of American Indians holding national public office. After the 2020 election, there were 5 Native American members of the House of Representatives, the most ever in Congressional history. In March of 2021, Deb Haaland was confirmed as Secretary of the Interior, becoming the first Native American to lead a cabinet agency (Davenport). Despite these indications of progress, there is still much of the history of American Indians that have been attempted to be erased. Even if non-Natives are aware of the history and current-day American Indians, they can still be tokenized.

Tokenism

A feature of tokenism that can crop up is the expectation outside the urban American Indian community that one person can speak for all the members of that community. This is especially prominent within the urban American Indian communities where many different tribes are represented. Carolina Castoreno-Santana (Lipan Apache) conveyed this feeling to me in an interview: "you're supposed to have the answer for the Native perspective on everything." This notion disregards the unique tribal traditions and histories. It also allows the perspective that American Indians are historical figures that played a minor role in the development of the United States. Therefore, non-Natives can ignore the modern-day American Indians who live among the dominant culture in many cities across the country. This continues to reinforce the ignorance of non-Natives about American Indian history.

Pan-Indianism

Pan-Indianism is understood as "a generalized and 'detribalized'…identity that meld[s] beliefs, values, and practices from various tribal groups while lacking identification with any specific tribe" (Lucero, "Making" 327). On one side of this coin, Pan-Indianism was necessary for the American Indians who moved to urban areas during the Relocation Program to maintain a community with similar cultures. However, on the other side is the authenticity doubts based on false constructions of "Indianness" by the dominant culture. "Non-Natives have preconceived, stereotypical notions about where Indians live, what Indians look like, and how Indians act" (Jacobs 84). Any variation from this preconceived "Indianness" causes confusion and sometimes outrage. As Carolina (Lipan Apache) explained to me when discussing her experience in Indianapolis, "[non-Natives] want you to embody what they think an Indian should be…if you don't fit their stereotype of what Natives are supposed to be, they get very angry and defensive."

Pan-Indianism allows a heavily stereotyped view of American Indians. Perhaps the best example of this negative aspect of Pan-Indianism is the use of mascots for sports teams.

Many high school, collegiate, and professional sports teams have American Indian-related names, mascots, and logos. Names range from specific tribes (i.e., Blackhawks) to generic names (i.e., Braves, Chiefs). Many of these teams use caricatures or constructed images of American Indians and utilize vaguely Indian behaviors like the tomahawk chop and war dances. These manufactured images and actions serve as a method of cutting ties to actual Native American tribal history and culture. It has also been shown that these "negative images, symbols, and behaviors play a crucial role in distorting and warping American Indian children's cultural perceptions of themselves, as well as non-Indian children's attitudes toward and simplistic understanding of American Indian culture" (Pewewardy 181).

There has been a growing movement to change mascot names and symbols and to discontinue mock behaviors by fans. The American Psychological Association "called for the immediate retirement of all American Indian mascots, symbols, images and personalities by schools, colleges, universities, athletic teams and organizations" in 2005 because they teach "stereotypical, misleading and too often, insulting images" ("Summary"). However, the strong resistance to these changes is an example of the power of the Pan-Indian stereotype and the act of disconnecting these stereotypes from actual history and culture. After years of resistance, there have been recent changes to some teams, most notably the Washington (D.C.) football team removing the overtly racist mascot name. One other recent occurrence is the Cleveland baseball team announcing they will be changing their mascot from the "Indians." Despite these changes, there are still many mascots with Pan-Indian inspired names and caricatures across the

country. The danger of Pan-Indianism is that it allows non-Native individual's perspectives to be shaped by Hollywood portrayals and these sports mascots.

"WE ARE STILL HERE"

Janeen Comenote (Quinault) told me that American Indians take great pride in their Native culture and that it has "survived the attempted genocide." A vast majority of those individuals I interviewed while researching this topic said something along these lines: finding pride in the fact that American Indians still exist. Not only are American Indians still physically present today, but they have also managed to maintain their culture to various extents. This has not been a simple or easy feat. In fact, "reclaiming identity and tribal definition of culture is a serious challenge for American Indians. This is a fundamental step for any Indian community that wishes for empowerment of itself. For too long, definitions of American Indians were in the hands of non-Indians" (Eubanks 3).

The resiliency of American Indians in the face of many hardships can be likened to communities coping through disasters. As Collins writes with respect to disaster reduction, resilience is "the capacity of a…community or society…exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure" (104). American Indians have been exposed to multiple hazards including disease, genocidal policies, implicit and explicit biases against, and erasure and have adapted to maintain the core of their communities.

According to Hofstede et al., culture is "the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others" (6). Hundreds of tribes have maintained this cultural distinction of their people group. In addition, urban American Indians have come together despite tribal differences to create a unique culture on its

own that distinguishes them from American Indians still living on the reservations. This is not to say that there is not still a strong connection between those urban American Indians and their counterparts on the reservations. However, in order to prevent homogenization into mainstream culture, they have grouped together many different tribes. Urban American Indians can suffer from a sense of isolation, so finding other American Indians who share most aspects of culture is important (Comenote). Small differences between tribal cultures are shrugged aside since binding together as American Indians is more important. Moving the boundaries from tribe to a broader label of American Indian helps maintain the community because a boundary is required to protect the members of the community (Vogl 34). A glimpse of this is seen even in this thesis, with the many different tribal affiliations represented by my interview subjects.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION FOR URBAN SCHOOLS

A common thread that is discovered when researching American Indian invisibility is the inaccurate image held by the majority white population. This image is reinforced by Hollywood productions, caricature team mascots, and other romanticized perceptions of Native Americans. These stereotypes are successful in spreading in part because of the absence of Native Americans in history and social studies curricula or the inadequate content of existing curricula. "A barrier to successfully addressing the societal needs of American Indians is that they are inadequately studied in America's educational systems. The absence of information about a people who are indigenous to this land ought to make educators curious" (Eubanks 4). As a career educator, Nikki (Tunica-Biloxi) expressed her frustration with the state of public education curricula: "One of the things that bothers me the most [as an educator] about the history that is taught in the United States is the very watered-down version of the story of Native Americans. The whole truth is not being told." Telling the truth about Native American history is a practical step that

schools can take to educate the non-Native population and combat the ignorance that often fuels the causes of invisibility.

There are three main avenues for changing the content of school lessons. The editing of textbooks is reliant upon textbook publishers to determine that the cost of a new edition is financially advantageous for their company. Formally changing a school's curriculum requires significant administrative hurdles of district and state requirements. The third way is for individual schools and teachers to adjust their lessons within the boundaries of established curriculum and textbooks.

Changing the established textbooks in use in schools today is a long, tedious process. Even with a substantial coalition advocating for changes and updates to textbooks, new editions can take several years to be published. While advocating for changes to the content of textbooks is a worthwhile endeavor, this is not the focus of this thesis for three reasons. One is simply the length of time as discussed above. Developing a textbook can take anywhere from three to five years, and even more if creating a new product from scratch (Kurtzleben). Several years of students would miss the updated and improved information in these textbooks. Another reason is the relative complexity of changing the content of a textbook. Advocating for textbook changes would be an extended effort best performed by a broad coalition of actors. This is best for national-level organizations rather than urban AICs who aim to use their resources to impact their local community of American Indians. Finally, the content of a textbook is not the end-all script for teachers. Not only does the teacher have flexibility in selecting reading sections and assignments from the textbooks, but many teachers will also opt to bring in additional material. This is even easier today with the myriad of resources easily available on the internet. Not only will changes to textbooks not require a change to the lessons of each individual classroom, but

conversely changes can, and do, occur in classrooms without updated textbooks. Changes to textbooks will reflect the status of the societal environment in which they are created. For all these reasons, textbook editions should be improved with regard to American Indian topics as a parallel effort to the partnership this thesis promotes.

Another possible option is for formal changes to be made to state-level curricula. Similar to textbook changes, adjusting formal curricula is a significant undertaking. Developing and changing curricula is a political act and debates over such changes "commonly develop under the umbrella of culture wars" (Krueger 300). The centralized process of changing curricula requires a great amount of cooperation between all stakeholders and because of the political nature, can reflect the divisive state of government. Districts and states have various requirements and trying to propose curricula changes is outside the scope of both this thesis and the focus of the urban AICs. In addition, the changes that are presented in this proposal are partly to provide contextualized content for history and social studies. It is not intended to support a single, nationwide curriculum. A single perspective of the history of American Indians and the experience of American Indians within the context of mainstream American culture is one of the contributing problems to invisibility. Learning more accurate and detailed information about specific tribes, preferably those whose ancestral lands are geographically closest to the school, is more beneficial to this issue than a broad lesson that combines all tribes into a single body. As with textbook changes, formal curriculum changes reflect cultural values and should be pursued in parallel. This cultural shift may even be influenced by current students learning a more accurate picture of American Indians through the third avenue for change: teacher-created curricula.

This third option allows for nuanced approaches to the local context of each school. Because this thesis is in the context of schools in urban areas with an AIC in the same city or region, broad changes to state curriculum or national level textbook editions are not the best fixes. Teacher-created curricula allow for teachers to expand and challenge textbook material and act "as a space to address problematic content" (Masta and Rosa 146). The partnership with subject matter experts at AICs would provide the resources to conduct that expansion and challenge. Connecting schools and teachers to AICs with the goal of changing one classroom or one school will provide the most immediate change and the most targeted solutions. Teachers are often constrained by standardized testing requirements, available resources, and shortsighted curricula (Krueger 295). However, a partnership with local AICs will help provide resources while mitigating the shortfalls of existing curricula.

This is not a perfect solution to the problem of urban American Indian invisibility for reasons acknowledged in this paper. The pinpointed delivery to specific schools and classrooms means no broad changes, at least initially. However, this is not meant as the only effort. As mentioned earlier, parallel efforts in formal statewide curricula and textbook changes are needed. Movements outside of K-12 education are also needed, addressing all manner of issues from mascots to movies and other social indicators of colonialism.

In the framework of teacher-created curricula, the truth of American Indian history and current existence can be brought to light in history and social studies classrooms. This can occur when teachers move away from reliance on textbooks that whitewash history and "leave out anything that might reflect badly upon our national character" (Loewen xxiii). Other than the simple omission of the topic, problematic representations of American Indians are present in many textbooks and lessons. These are both historical and current-day representations. One

example is a hyper-focus on famous Native Americans such as Geronimo or Crazy Horse and thus reinforcing a stereotype. In their proposal of an elementary and middle school Native American history curriculum, Helms et al state that this singular focus on Native American heroes prevents students from investigating "the diverse cultural and technological achievements of Native Americans in a meaningful way" (160). A closer study of American Indian culture, especially of specific tribes, will contrast with common stereotypes students see in their everyday lives, thus forcing a reconciliation with what mainstream society has communicated to them about American Indians and what is true about that history. This closer study can be brought by listening to the voices of the American Indians who reside in proximity to the students themselves. Historical stereotypes can be challenged as well as introducing students to current American Indian culture.

The importance of hearing from local Native voices is almost impossible to overstate. One point of contention with the partnership advocated in this thesis is that non-Natives should have the responsibility of educating themselves about the truth of American Indian history. As I discussed the role of American Indians in educating non-Natives with Ed Smith (Osage), he conveyed this sentiment: "it is not the job of American Indians, or any other people of color, to teach you. You learned wrong. Learn it right. That's on you." However, he did point out that he and other staff at the AIC that he works for make themselves available for questions or assistance to educators and churches in the city. A balance must be struck between placing the onus solely on American Indians to represent themselves and elevating and listening to Native voices telling their own history and presenting their own culture. Attempts at bettering curricula without featuring American Indian individuals will only succeed in reinforcing the colonial mindset that has led to inadequate and inaccurate textbooks and cultural portrayals.

This thesis proposes an informal partnership between urban schools and American Indian Centers. Many of these urban areas are not in proximity to reservations or tribal lands and the AIC is the sole local source of American Indian culture. Incorporating a place-based approach to curriculum regarding American Indians is not a new concept but is still not widely used across the country. Washington and Montana have each legislated curriculum reforms and each is explored here to provide examples of the substance of such curricula that can be incorporated, regardless of the proximity of reservations or sovereign tribal lands.

SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL

Washington state passed Senate Bill 5433 (SB 5433) in 2015, amending the previous bill originally passed in 2005, House Bill 1495 (HB 1495). The Since Time Immemorial (STI) bill requires a "tribally-developed curriculum be taught in all schools" ("Since Time Immemorial"). According to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), all 29 federally recognized tribes in the state have endorsed this curriculum. According to the text of SB 5433, there is a need to educate youth about "tribal history, culture, treaty rights, contemporary tribal and state government institutions and relations and the contribution of Indian nations to the state of Washington" (State of Washington). The bill elaborates that using curricula that cover the history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized tribe. This place-based approach is a key component as it contextualizes the material the students are learning to the tribes represented in their communities.

The 2005 bill was passed as an encouragement to school districts to incorporate tribal sovereignty curricula rather than a requirement. Upon passage of HB 1495, the OSPI formed an advisory council led by the Indian Education Director at the time, Denny Hurtado (Skokomish). The goal of the advisory council was to create a statewide "sovereignty curriculum" that would

"infuse the concept of tribal sovereignty into Washington state history and other social studies areas" (Edmo 45). It is important to note that the development of the curricula was led by an American Indian with much input from other tribal members. In addition, they echoed the main thrust of HB 1495 to partner with local tribes and not have a generalized approach to topics such as history, culture, and government.

The curriculum that was developed out of these efforts is based on these 5 essential questions ("Since Time Immemorial"):

1) How does physical geography affect the distribution, culture, and economic life of local tribes?

2) What is the legal status of tribes who negotiated or who did not negotiate settlement for compensation for the loss of their sovereign homelands?

3) What were the political, economic, and cultural forces consequential to the treaties that led to the movement of tribes from long established homelands to reservations?

4) What are ways in which Tribes respond to the threats and outside pressure to extinguish their cultures and independence?

5) What do local Tribes do to meet the challenges of reservation life; and as sovereign nations, what do local Tribes do to meet the economic and cultural needs of their Tribal communities?

When asked about the goals of STI that he was developing, Denny Hurtado (Skykomish) responded that one of the goals is "to educated non-Indians more about who we really are as a people, what our government is like, what treaties mean, and what it is like to be oppressed and deprived of our language, culture, and history for so many years" (Edmo 46). The importance of accurate education of the history of the tribes, taught by tribal leaders, was underscored as key to

improving future relations between mainstream U.S. culture and Native cultures by Russell

Brooks (Southern Cheyenne), executive director of Red Eagle Soaring Native Youth Theater:

"They (the students) need the ability to recognize and respect tribal nations and tribal sovereignty

on this land. Even with just a baseline understanding of tribes in that area and even just basic

knowledge and information." The increase in knowledge of local tribal history and cultures

would improve relations between non-Native and Native people. He went on to say that his

ultimate goal for initiatives like STI is "to have my son go to a school that people can just

appreciate and respect him for who he is" (Brooks).

There are challenges associated with the statewide implementation of this curriculum.

Only a handful of school districts adopted it when HB 1495 passed, which is one of the driving

factors behind SB 5433 elevating it from an encouragement to a requirement. Another is

connecting schools to local tribes. This challenge is addressed by the OSPI providing the

location and contact information for each of the 29 federally recognized tribes in the state.

Another challenge facing the state will be the accountability of school districts and evaluating the

effectiveness. Despite these challenges, implementing the mandate of SB 5433 will have

benefits. "Generations of youth have been robbed from learning that. And they are poorer for

it…it's not just the Native people who have suffered, it's also the greater non-Native population

that has suffered from not learning those things" (Brooks).

INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL

Montana passed a state law, the Indian Education For All (IEFA) Act, in 1999 to implement a

requirement of the state constitution. This requirement is the "recognition of the distinct and

unique cultural heritage of American Indians and a commitment in our educational goals to

preserve their cultural heritage. Every Montanan, whether Indian or non-Indian, should be

encouraged to learn about the distinct and unique heritage of American Indians in a culturally responsive manner" ("Indian Education in Montana"). Similar to SB 5433 in Washington state, the intent of the curriculum is for collaboration with local tribes to tailor the lessons.

One reason why Montana was on the leading edge of mandating American Indian curricula implementation is the relatively high Native population compared to other states in the country. American Indians make up 6.4% of the state's population and 11.8% of K-12 students. The latter is over 10 times the national average of American Indian students attending public schools (Carjuzaa and Hunts 93). Because it was the first state to legislate American Indian education, many proponents for other states and school districts to adopt similar measures have held it up as an example of a way forward. This includes Heather Miller (Wyandotte), former executive director of AIC Chicago, who told me that she tries to take the core components and apply them as she attempted to make inroads with Chicago Public Schools. While Washington's STI is based around the 5 essential questions, IEFA aims to promote the 7 essential understandings ("Indian Education in Montana"):

1) There is great diversity among the twelve sovereign tribes of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each tribe has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.

2) Just as there is great diversity among tribal nations, there is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations, and people. There is no generic American Indian.

3) The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs.

Additionally, each tribe has its own oral histories, which are as valid as written histories. These histories predate the "discovery" of North America.

4) Though there have been tribal peoples living successfully on the North American lands for millennia, reservations are lands that have been reserved by or for tribes for their exclusive use as permanent homelands. Some were created through treaties, while others were created by statutes and executive orders. The principle that land should be acquired from tribes only through their consent with treaties involved three assumptions: I. Both parties to treaties were sovereign powers; II. Indian tribes had some form of transferable title to the land; III. Acquisition of Indian lands was solely a government matter not to be left to individual colonists or states.

5) There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have affected Indian people and continue to shape who they are today. Many of these policies conflicted with one another. Much of Indian history can be related through several major federal policy periods:

- Colonization/Colonial Period, 1492-1800s

- Treaty-Making and Removal Period, 1778-1871

- Reservation Period – Allotment and Assimilation, 1887-1934

- Tribal Reorganization Period, 1934-1953

- Termination and Relocation Period, 1953-1968

- Self-Determination Period, 1975-Present

6) History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and

revised. History told from American Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.

7) American Indian tribal nations are inherent sovereign nations, and they possess sovereign powers, separate and independent from the federal and state governments. However, under the American legal system, the extent and breadth of self-governing powers are not the same for each tribe.

These 7 understandings correlate with the effort to combat the invisibility of American Indians. If more students across the United States could learn from similar curricula centered around local tribes or AICs, much would be done to further a more educated and equitable society.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Curriculum changes similar to the legislated mandates in Washington and Montana can be more informally implemented in urban areas with an AIC. Denny Hurtado (Skokomish) has this piece of advice for teachers and schools incorporating these new curricula: "They have to do it in conjunction and collaboration with the tribes, the elders, the tribal government–that's a must" (Edmo 47). The target subjects are history and social studies and can be implemented in K-12 classes.

Combatting historical ignorance can help combat racism and the misunderstanding of American Indian people and cultures. As a Montana teacher stated, "silence means that one is knowingly letting myths and misconceptions perpetuate…support[ing] 'conferred dominance'" (qtd. in Carjuzaa and Hunts 97). While many teachers may be uncomfortable with the non-whitewashed version of American Indian history, that is exactly why it should be taught. Open dialogue and understanding of the past are necessary for a more widely educated population and empathy for and understanding of American Indians. This is not re-writing history but rather

exhibiting the "practice of culturally responsive pedagogy" (Carjuzaa and Hunts 97). American Indian history is U.S. history and is fundamental to understanding the past and present of the United States.

Social studies will help students understand current-day American Indians and their respective cultures. Among other things, it will help non-Native students learn the distribution of American Indians apart from reservations and how those groups maintain their cultural identity amidst the mainstream cultures of the cities they inhabit. Providing contextualized perspectives of American Indian individuals will give the students a more critical ear for issues surrounding American Indians in present-day America. One example of this that was already discussed in this thesis is the debates over mascots. A student approaching this complex issue understanding that American Indian's are not homogenous and hold differing perspectives will be better equipped to analyze arguments and make reasoned conclusions. Without experiencing the American Indian perspective, or even being taught that it exists, the student will hold a simple, but common, understanding of the complex issues relating to American Indians.

FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS

There are many areas in the relationship between white Americans and American Indians that need reconciliation. Developing relationships between members of the urban American Indian community and local school districts can help humanize each group to the other. As Lederach observes when discussing reconciliation, noticing the humanity of others is a large step to loving them (48). This could be summed up in the golden rule: to treat others as you would want to be treated. The reconciliation between groups is a journey and will not be obtained easily only through education reform. However, education can be the catalyst to more of the non-Native

population choosing to change their viewpoint on issues faced by American Indians, taking the first step on the journey (Salter McNeil 60).

As I have contended that ignorance and misconceptions have created space for stereotypes of American Indians to dominate, the changes to school curricula will help address these underlying issues. Educating youth is only one benefit of such changes: the partnerships between schools and AICs can help reduce prejudice as proposed by contact theory. Intergroup contact, in this case between the urban American Indian population and school personnel, can have positive effects if characterized by "equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support by social and institutional authorities" (Everett). Intentionality is required by all sides of this proposal for these conditions to be met, but all are possible. The reduction in prejudice as a result of contact is a parallel benefit to learning accurate information in the classroom.

Cultural brokers will be critical to a sustained and healthy partnership. We can draw on the experience of Fadiman in her research among the Hmong in the Central Valley of California. She required more than a translator when interacting with the Hmong, she needed someone to bring her into the community as opposed to around it (Fadiman 95). The staff of the local AIC can act as cultural brokers for the teachers and staff at the schools. Culture brokers can have many roles, but the most relevant to this context is as a cultural guide and as a catalyst for change ("Bridging the Cultural Divide" 3-4). They can provide insights into their culture to the teachers to alleviate potential misunderstandings if the teachers were to rely only on their own research. The culture brokers can also serve as the catalyst of change within the schools as they change the curricula. Perhaps work with one teacher or one school will spark changes to the rest of the district's other classrooms. In addition, the collaboration between these two groups through a

culture broker can reduce the tendency of outsiders, in this case the teaching staff, to prescribe actions and impose the solutions they think will work best. Instead, it allows for "Searchers" to carry the day and promote the belief that "only insiders have enough knowledge to find solutions, and that most solutions must be homegrown" (Easterly 6). In other words, American Indians must be the source of information and changes to curricula to have sustained improvement in the understanding of their culture among non-Natives.

The partnership between teachers and the AIC community will take intentionality for both groups. As an end goal, "the ideal is for the two cultures…to enter into a productive and mutually invigorating dialogue, with neither side dominating or winning out, but both replenishing one another" (Conquergood 228). Teachers and schools must be willing to listen and defer to the AIC representatives and the AIC would be better served to avoid trying to judge or allow anger at historical events to alienate the teachers. A restorative approach is needed that allows for mistakes of the past to be brought to the conversation and discussed honestly (Kuenkel 75). Teachers, especially non-Native's, may have feelings of shame and guilt. With the help of resources provided by the AIC or other Native sources, the teachers can come to the understanding that ignoring these topics to avoid feelings of guilt or shame will only continue the cycle of ignorance of American Indians in mainstream U.S. culture.

CONCLUSION

Reversing the effects of generations of attempted genocide, forced assimilation, erasure, and stereotyping on a people group is by no means a simple task and correcting and updating the education of the non-Native population is not the only front this battle should be fought on. Education is not a panacea for social problems. This reformation of school curricula should be implemented in parallel with changes to other policies. Immediate change should also not be

expected, but the improvement for future generations should be a guiding principle. Speaking of structural change, Moe-Lobeda points out that "much of what we strive to realize in society will not be fully realized in our lifetimes" (232). This sentiment is echoed by all those I spoke with who referenced the desire to make things better for future generations. Educating the future leaders and policymakers will have positive impacts for relationships by increasing empathy and understanding of other cultures. Making American Indians visible in society and government will not only reduce the disparities but also will benefit the culture as a whole by incorporating an indigenous perspective.

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