

MEANING BETWEEN THE WORDS

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## ABSTRACT

### MEANING BETWEEN THE WORDS

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A sample of sixteen homicides occurring in Humboldt County, California was used to compare the *Times-Standard's* treatment of homicides in 1982, 1995, and 2009. The sample examined eight homicide cases involving a Native American victim or suspect and eight cases which did not involve a Native American victim or suspect. Through the use of the qualitative research method, ethnographic content analysis, three protocols were developed for the process of analyzing the sample. Protocol I found articles without Native American Identifier (NAI) had more pictures than articles with NAI. Protocol II focused on use of kill words in the articles. The word killer was most frequently applied to articles without NAI. Protocol III looked at descriptions of victims and suspects through the lens of victimized, eulogized, criticized, authorized, and criminalized language in the *Times-Standard*. Victims without NAI were more frequently eulogized and less likely to be criticized or criminalized. Victims with NAI were more frequently criticized, authorized, or criminalized for their deaths. Suspects with and without NAI were equally criminalized and criticized. When a homicide involved a victim with NAI and a suspect without, it was more common for the suspect to be authorized for their

actions, than when the victim and suspect did not have NAI. Suspects with NAI were less likely to be victimized compared to suspects without NAI.

*Key words:* Native American, Humboldt County, homicide, media, ethnographic content analysis

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Research Purpose.....	3
Research Statement.....	5
Research Questions.....	6
Research Assumptions.....	6
Research Significance.....	7
REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	8
Purpose & Rationale.....	8
Previous Media Studies .....	8
Purview of Indigenous-Federal Government Relationship .....	11
Purview of Court Rulings .....	13
Local Tribes along the North Coast of California .....	15
The <i>Times-Standard</i> .....	20
Conceptual Framework.....	20
METHOD .....	23
Research Design .....	24
Data Collection Methods .....	25

Defining the Research Sample.....	29
Data Coding .....	30
Data Analysis .....	30
Validity .....	34
Reliability.....	34
RESULTS .....	36
Section of Articles .....	36
Protocol I.....	36
Protocol II .....	39
Protocol III.....	42
Articles Including Native American Identifiers.....	42
Articles without Native American Identifiers.....	53
DISCUSSION.....	66
Homicide Reporting Themes in Humboldt County .....	66
Comparison of Homicide Reporting.....	69
Usage of Kill Words within Newspaper Articles .....	78
Further Areas of Study.....	79
Project Limitations.....	80
CONCLUSION.....	81
REFERENCES .....	83
APPENDIX A: Homicide Articles and Inclusion of a Native American Identifier.....	83
APPENDIX B: Clippings Used in Sample from the Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.....	100

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Protocol III Operationalized Definitions .....	33
Table 2: Types of Pictures Contained in Articles .....	39
Table 3: Use of Kill Words within Articles .....	42
Table 4: Portrayal of Victims and Suspects.....	66

## INTRODUCTION

The 2010 United States Census Bureau recognized that 5.2 million people, or 1.7% of the total population in the United States, self-identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native (AIAN); 3.4 million, or 65%, indicated a tribal affiliation (Perry, 2012, October). Indian Health Services reports that AIAN born in 2013 will live to be roughly 73.6 to 77.7 years old, which is 4.1 years shorter than all other racial populations in the United States (“Indian health disparities,” 2013, January). The five leading causes of death of Indigenous populations are heart disease, malignant neoplasm, unintentional injuries, diabetes mellitus, and cerebrovascular disease (“IHS fact sheet,” 2011).

Additionally, Indigenous peoples’ death rates in the following areas are disproportionately higher than other American populations: alcoholism 514%, tuberculosis 500%, diabetes 177%, unintentional injuries 140%, homicide 92%, and suicide 82% (“IHS fact sheet,” 2011). In a study from 2004-2008, Native Americans were found to be 17.5% more likely to be identified than any other ethnic group as having diabetes (Barnes, Adams, & Powell-Griner, 2010). The Center for Disease Control, Minority Health Surveillance-REACH US 2009 reported that 46.2 % men and 45.5% women were obese when surveying 28 Native communities in 17 states (2009).

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that from 2005-2009 AIAN males experienced the highest suicide rates, with 27.61 suicides per 100,000. In comparison, non-Hispanic white males’ suicide rates were 25.96 suicides per 100,000 (CDC, 2013). AIAN females also experienced the highest level of suicides among ethnic

groups, with 7.87 per 100,000 (CDC, 2013). This rate can be juxtaposed to non-Hispanic white females, who had 6.71 suicides per 100,000 in the same reporting period, 2005-2009 (CDC, 2013).

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has identified gaps with frequently cited violent crime statistics, noting that data is limited and the samples are not truly representative of violent crimes occurring in Indian country, reservations, tribal communities, and trust land (2013). The 2010 Tribal Law and Order Act was passed to resolve the information gap, with increased reporting from Native American tribes to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), (NIJ, 2013). As a result, the BJS reported from 2008-2010 Native Americans were involved in 72,000 violent crimes: murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (Perry, 2012). Murder and non-negligent homicides accounted for 3% or 444 crimes (Perry, 2012).

The BJS found in previous studies that AINA populations experienced more than two times the rate of violent crimes than other populations from 1992-2001, with 101 violent crimes per 1,000 (Perry, 2004). “Just over 13% of all American Indian murder victims were in California, which also accounted for 14% of the American Indian population nationwide” (Perry, 2004, p. 13). The National Violence Against Women Survey found that 34% of AINA women will be raped in their lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; “National Congress of American Indians,” 2013, February 28). The CDC conducted the 2005 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey, reporting that 39% of AINA women will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetimes (CDC, 2008, February 8; “National Congress of American Indians,” 2013, February 28).

## Research Purpose

In the United States, Indigenous people have experienced the lasting effects of historical trauma. The plummeting decrease in Native American population is just one example. There is no documented census data for the Indigenous population living in the continental United States prior to European contact in 1492 (Waldman, 2008). Many scholars estimate that the Indigenous population may have been approximately 750,000 (Waldman, 2008). What is clear is that the Indigenous population dramatically decreased to fewer than 250,000 between 1890 and 1910 (Waldman, 2008). It is estimated that in 1846, there were 100,000 Native Americans living in California (Heizer, 1993). From 1847-1870, a timeframe which parallels the California Gold Rush, the California Indian population was reduced to 50,000 (Heizer, 1993). Acts of genocide, land theft, rape, removal and relocation, forced cultural assimilation through boarding schools and spiritual conversions were colonizing practices which tore apart the fabric of Indigenous culture, family, and community (Poupart, 2009; Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998).

California passed the *Act for Government and Protection of Indians* on April 19, 1850, which along with its subsequent amendments in 1855 and 1860, sanctioned White settlers to indenture local Native Americans removed from their land (Johnston-Dodds, 2007). The law permitted the Justice of Peace to grant settlers' requests for indentured Indian children from the Justice of Peace (Raphael & Freehouse, 2007; Johnston-Dodds, 2002; Sandos, 2000). It also established the auctioning of "criminalized" Native

Americans unable to repay fines owed to White settlers (Raphael & Freehouse, 2007; Johnston-Dodds, 2002; Sandos, 2000). In Humboldt County, California, records show that Native Americans were bought and sold from 1860-1863 (Norton, 1979). California encouraged the establishment of volunteer militias, setting aside \$1.5 million to repay those who hunted and killed Indigenous peoples (Trafzer & Hyer, 1999).

Humboldt County, located on the California North Coast, was the site of at least 56 massacres taking place in the region between 1850-1864 (Raphael & House, 2007). The Indian Island Massacre in Humboldt Bay is just one example of settlers' treatment of Native Americans in Humboldt County. On February 25, 1860, approximately 150 Wiyot women and children were obliterated in the dead of night on Indian Island and two other Wiyot villages (Raphael & House, 2007; Kowinski, 2004, February 28). This massacre epitomized the racial violence which White settlers inflicted upon the original inhabitants of the Humboldt region; no one was ever held responsible or punished for the Indian Island Massacre (Raphael & House, 2007; Norton, 1979). During these years, the *Humboldt Times* newspaper reported, "If they murder a white man without cause, kill ten Indians for it" (as cited in Raphael & House, 2007, p. 163); and, "We are truly glad that we are at last rid of these troublesome diggers" (as cited in Raphael & House, 2007, p. 170).

Several employees of the *Humboldt Times* have been documented for their deleterious involvement with Humboldt County Indigenous peoples. Walter Van Dyke was the editor of the *Humboldt Times* in 1858 and served on a committee to recruit settlers as "Indian Volunteers" for the formation of a Eureka based militia (Norton,

1979). Austin Wiley, a former publisher of the *Humboldt Times* and who later became California's Superintendent of Indian Affairs, was listed in 1860 as having an indentured Indian child for 17 years (Raphael & House, 2007; Norton, 1979). The child, Smokey, was eight years old at the start of his indenture (Raphael & House, 2007; Norton, 1979).

The *Humboldt Times*, which began publishing on September 2, 1854, continues to do so, as the *Times-Standard* ("Northwestern California newspapers", n.d.). Amid a history immersed with explicit racism toward Indigenous peoples in the 1800s, the *Times-Standard* remains the primary print source of news and information throughout Humboldt County. As the area's oldest running newspaper, it is the most cohesive public platform for revealing the community's opinions and reactions.

#### Research Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore the *Times-Standard's* homicide news reporting of Native American and non-Native American peoples along the North Coast published between 1980 and 2009 through the qualitative research method, ethnographic content analysis (ECA). Contemporary homicides represent a community issue that impacts everyone, especially in small, close-knit communities. No known previous studies have been conducted locally on this topic and the examination of newsprint may offer insight into explicit or implicit themes. This research uses ECA to explore how numerous Native American tribes and their members in Humboldt County have been identified against the backdrop of federal re-recognition which began in the 1970s. As the

most consistent traditional news source, the *Times-Standard's* approach toward news saliency and homicide reporting opens up a discourse on criminality and victimization.

#### Research Questions

1. What are the themes found in homicide reporting in Humboldt County?
2. When comparing Native American and non-Native American homicide reporting what differences, if any, emerge?
3. What is the association and proximity of the words murderer, slayer, killer, and shooter in relation to the alleged perpetrator and victim in various parts of the paper, including the headlines?

#### Research Assumptions

This research study is based upon several assumptions:

1. The *Times-Standard's* continuous presence since 1854 in Humboldt County has contextualized the public's understanding and perception of their community.
2. All published content contained in a newspaper article, regardless of the source for direct quotes or cited opinions, remains the responsibility of the *Times-Standard* who elected to print and publish the material.
3. Federal recognition and termination of local Tribes and Rancherias may affect how a person's tribal membership or affiliation has been reported in the news.
4. News coverage of homicides within Humboldt County may vary and lack consistency.

5. A study which spans thirty years may produce more generalizable data related to homicide news reporting.

### Research Significance

Initially, as the concept for this research project was developing, discussions with Native American and non-Native American journalists, librarians, researchers, community developers and North Coast community members suggested that the *Times-Standard's* news coverage of local Native American communities contained subtle differences from non-Native American communities.

The research sample intentionally spanned a 30 year time period (1980-2009) to decrease the likelihood that this study would reflect the writing style or biases of a handful of homicide news reporters. Likewise, if an article sampling of only one or two years were selected, it is conceivable that only a few homicides might have taken place. This would have created a very limited sample, making the results less generalizable. Lastly, in a close-knit, rural community, a small sample focus might be disrespectful to family members and greater community, who may have ties or connections to the involved parties.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Purpose & Rationale

A literature review of previous media studies and content based analysis provides insight into particular strengths and gaps on the topics of data sampling, categorical organization, and insight for future research. Facilitating a framework for this study includes having a basic knowledge of the tribes living within Humboldt County as well as federal and state policies which have impacted their communities.

### Previous Media Studies

The first newspaper content analysis is attributed to John G. Speed who studied gossip and scandal in four Sunday issues of New York newspapers, *Times*, *Tribune*, *Sun*, & *World* on April 17, 1881 and April 16, 1893 (Sumpter, 2001). While no definitions were provided, his categories included editorial, religious, scientific, political, literary, gossip, scandals, sporting, fiction, historical, music/drama, crimes, and art (Sumpter 2001). Through use of quantitative measures, he found that the newspapers had almost tripled in length, with an increase in gossip and scandal related topics (Sumpter, 2001). One limitation to the study was that he had previously been the editor of *World* in 1893 (Sumpter, 2001). Content based analysis has since been refined and turned into a focused study.

Riffe, Lacey, & Aust completed a study regarding American newspaper content analysis (1993). Their 1993 published findings studied the minimum number of constructed weeks needed to estimate the average number of local news stories per day (Riffe et al., 1993). In addition, the study compared the effectiveness of a “constructed week” created from simple random sampling versus consecutive day sampling (Riffe et al., 1993). The term “constructed week” refers to creating a sample week, whereby a week is generated through combining random days of the week from a single month into a constructed, seven-day period. For example, one Monday in the month would be selected to represent day one of the constructed week. Then a Tuesday from within the month would be selected to represent day two of the week. This pattern would continue until all seven days were built and represented to make a constructed week (Riffe et al., 1993). Use of consecutive days can also be utilized to establish a sample size of one week (Riffe et al., 1993). It was determined that two constructed weeks is a reliable sample size for a year’s worth of newspapers (Riffe et al., 1993). Creating constructed weeks was deemed more reliable than a sample week comprised of seven consecutive days (Riffe et al., 1993).

Subsequently Riffe, Robinson, & Lacy examined two weekly newspapers to determine the number of randomly selected weekly issues needed to represent a year’s content (1995). The study questioned if stratified sampling based upon a month or quarter provided an efficient means to represent the year’s issues rather than a simple random sample (Riffe et al., 1995). This study established that when studying newspapers published weekly, picking fourteen random issues was preferred over selecting twelve

issues, one from each month (Riffe et al., 1995). Articles which are concentrated within a certain time period are less likely to be representative of the whole newspaper over time. This study's methodology will address data selection through the stratified approach of selecting homicide articles one year per decade, resulting in three years studied. With the possibility of numerous articles across many months or even years later which pertained to a homicide event, the results were more generalizable and avoided coincidental causality.

Few studies have examined the newspaper portrayal of Native Americans involved in crime (Freng, 2007). Studies on criminal news reporting which examined crime deviance and crime saliency were more prevalent (Pritchard & Hughes, 1997; Chermak, 1998; Chermak & Chapman, 2007). Pritchard & Hughes found that certain homicides may be more likely to be spotlighted when a white person is either a suspect or victim, the suspect is a male, and the victim is a child, woman, or elderly person (1997). Homicides which fell within these parameters were often seen as newsworthy (Pritchard & Hughes, 1997). Charmack's works further asserted that the number of victims increased a newspaper's coverage of the crime (1998, 2007). Charmack & Chapman observed that the local readership may be aware of the demographic regions within their community and may inherently know or guess the ethnicity of the individuals involved in the news (Freng, 2007). This could be a prevalent and intentional information gap common to newspaper reporting and may explain why Freng found little reference to race or ethnicity linked to crime suspects in two South Dakota newspapers (2007).

A meta-analysis of literature related to media bias offers further perspective. Researchers generally assumed that the media is slanted and that patterns of media bias could be found (Freng, 2007; Gortner & Pennebaker, 2003; Fasold, Yamada, Robinson, & Barish, 1990; Covert & Wasburn, 2007). However, the overarching hypothesis that the newspaper coverage contained a strong bias was deemed exaggerated or not significantly present. (Freng, 2007; Fasold et al., 1990; Covert & Wasburn, 2007). This consistent finding appeared to be surprising to the researchers.

One observable gap within the literature is garnering the reader's response of the newspaper articles and *their* perception of media bias or stereotyping. While the literature indicates little to no quantifiable bias within the newspapers, perhaps lexicon use or language planning does effect the reader's response or attitudes. Additionally, no single methodology was used in selecting news media for analysis. Thus, there was room for creativity and flexibility in the development of this project's methods.

#### Purview of Indigenous-Federal Government Relationship

Appreciating the contemporary relationship between Native American tribes and the United States goes back farther than the signing of the United States Constitution. European philosophies, the intention of treaties, and development of the term "sovereignty" have directly impacted how the United States navigated and later litigated the rights and privileges of Native Americans.

When Spain began to embark upon colonizing the New World, the Spanish "discovery" of these new lands did not give the Spanish immediate rights or title to the

land (Cohen, 2005). The Dominican theologian Francisco de Victoria gave lectures “On the Indians Lately Discovered” which posited that Europeans could not obtain land in the New World without the consent of the Indigenous people who lived there (Deloria & Lytle, 1983; Cohen, 2005). Additionally, a just war might only be enacted against an Indigenous tribe if the Spaniards were not permitted to travel through the lands, share the gospel, trade, or defend self (Cohen, 2005). Cohen states:

Several Victorian principles, however, continued to dominate this discourse: (1) that Indian peoples had both property rights and the power of a sovereign in their land; (2) that Indian lands could only be acquired with tribal consent or after a just war against them; and (3) that acquisition of Indian lands was solely a governmental matter, not to be left to individual colonists. (Cohen, 2005, p. 14)

Initially, Spain did use treaties when establishing small settlements in the New World, since settlers often needed protection from Native American tribes. Treaties contributed to legitimacy in regards to the settlers’ relationships with the Native Americans, where land and rights might be purchased (Deloria & Lytle, 1983). Victoria’s ideology for the treatment of Indigenous peoples continued with the practice of writing treaties “for defining both the legal and political relationship between the Indians and the European colonists” (Deloria & Lytle, 1983, p. 3). These principles shaped the way in which European governments, settlers, and colonists originally procured land and engaged with the local Indigenous population, who were recognized as sovereign governments.

The concept of “sovereignty” was articulated in Jean Bodin’s *The Six Books of Commonwealth* (1576), which discussed a ruler’s authority to make laws, declare war and

peace, and to establish state offices (O'Brien, 2008). Many consider the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), the document resolving the Thirty Year War in central Europe, to be the first modern treaty (Liverani, as cited in O'Brien, 2008; Wilson, 2009). The Treaty of Westphalia served as the primary model for sovereign states to interact with other states as equals (Liverani, as cited in O'Brien, 2008; Wilson, 2009). European countries applied the Treaty of Westphalia's core concepts as they began colonizing practices in other, non-European lands, treating them as sovereign nations.

The United States continued the British colonial practice of making treaties with the localized Indigenous people, beginning with the Treaty with the Delawares in 1778 (Campisis, 2008). Hence, every time a treaty was signed between the US government and a Native American tribe it was recognizing the tribe as being its own self-governing entity with whom negotiations could be made for a variety of political rationales, including creating alliances, defining boundaries, or ensuring peace (Leeds, 2008). The United States officially ended the practice of making treaties with tribal governments in 1871, at which point over 400 had been signed, and 367 treaties had been ratified with the Senate (Leeds, 2008; Friends Committee, 2013).

#### Purview of Court Rulings

A series of policies and litigation have forged a complex and sometimes contradictory framework regarding Native Americans, criminal jurisdiction, and major crimes. Certain Supreme Court rulings have constricted tribal sovereignty as in the case of *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831), where Chief Justice Marshall stated that tribes

were “domestic dependent nations....Their relation to the United States resembles that of a ward to his guardian” ( *30 U.S. 1, 5 Pet. 1831*, as cited in *Indian Tribes as Sovereign*, 1988, p. 106).

Criminal jurisdiction is defined as the power to prohibit certain behaviors within a territory, through criminal laws (Pevar, 1992). No Native American reservation has all three governments—tribal, state, and federal—simultaneously possessing criminal jurisdiction (Pevar, 1992). Three key acts, the General Crimes Act (1983), Major Crimes Act (1885), and PL-280 (1953) have created a foundation for the current operation of criminal jurisdiction. The General Crimes Act permitted the federal government to have criminal jurisdiction over all crimes in Indian country, except crimes committed by a Native American against another Native American or their property (Pevar, 1992).

The Major Crimes Act authorized federal jurisdiction over an original seven major crimes, which has since been amended to cover 15 crimes; this removed tribal jurisdiction over these crimes (Pevar, 1992; “Major crimes act,” 2011). Three rulings that formed and solidified the Major Crimes Act (18 U.S.C. §1153) were *Ex parte Crow Dog*, 109 U.S. 556 (1883); *Keeble v. United States*, 412 U.S. 205, 209-12 (1973); *United States v. Kagama*, 118 U.S. 375, 383 (1886), (Pevar, 1992; Deloria & Lytle, 1983; USAM 679, 1997). *Ex Parte Crow Dog (1883)*, ruled a tribal government should have jurisdiction over Native Americans who commit crimes within Indian Country, instead of in the federal court system (Deloria & Lytle, 1983). *United States v. Kagama, (1886)*, affirmed the Major Crimes Act and deemed it constitutional (Deloria & Lytle, 1983). The legal precedent was established that Native American tribes were wards of the United

States and as such they were dependent upon the protection of the United States government (Deloria & Lytle, 1983). The implication is the United States has a duty and obligation to be involved with Native American tribes to offer protection. *Keeble v. United States (1973)* concluded that Native Americans who were prosecuted for a crime falling under the Major Crimes Act may also be prosecuted for lesser offenses which were not part of the original charges (Deloria & Lytle, 1983; USAM 679, 1997).

Neither the General Crimes Act or the Major Crimes Act encompass the same amount of criminal jurisdiction power offered to mandated PL-280 states. PL-280 (1953) mandated that California, Oregon, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Alaska, and Nebraska have state level criminal jurisdiction over Indian country (Pevar, 2012). Any crime committed in Indian country is subject to the state jurisdiction and can be prosecuted in a state court (Pevar, 1992). A common byproduct for PL-280 states, such as California, is that high crime is prevalent on reservations. One reason is that where PL-280 is enforced “many states and counties have short-changed law enforcement and criminal justice for Indian country” (Goldberg, as cited in Pevar, 2012, p. 131). Counties with limited funds tend to be resistant to spending those resources to address crime on reservations (Pevar, 2012).

#### Local Tribes along the North Coast of California

The US Department of Interior, Indian Affairs, recognizes 566 Indigenous tribes nationally (2013, May 9). The US Department of Interior also cites that there are 1.9 million people who are AIAN in the United States (2012). Unlike some parts of the nation which have few or no recognized Native American tribes such as Kansas, which

lists three federally listed tribes, eight tribes are recognized within Humboldt County Reservation (“Federal Register,” 2013, May 6). Tribes in Humboldt County include: Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, Big Lagoon Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria, Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Wiyot Tribe, and Yurok Tribe of the Yurok Reservation (“Federal Register,” 2013, May 6). The US Census Bureau estimated that in 2011 Humboldt County’s population to be 134,761; 6% identified as AIAN, equating to 8,086 people (2012).

“Recognition” is a loaded word since it is a category established by the federal government, and does not necessarily reflect the political, historical, or cultural identities of the Native American population who has resided and managed the land long before the arrival of Columbus or the political formation of the United States. Congressional acts such as Resolution 108 (1953) arbitrarily “terminated” some tribes, determining that these tribes would no longer be offered federal benefits or services, in an active effort to assimilate Native Americans and relieve the federal government’s fiduciary obligations; this resulted in many tribes disbanding (Pevar, 1992). In California, the California Rancheria Act (1958) targeted and terminated 41 Native American tribes (US Department of Interior, Indian Affairs, 2013, May 8). Class action lawsuits starting in 1979 marked the beginning of Native American tribes reclaiming their rights, services, and recognition as tribes (Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, 2004). The BIA notes that 27 of the original California Rancherias have been reinstated, in addition to other California tribes who have since been recognized (US Department of Interior, Indian

Affairs, 2013, May 8). The time period of reinstatement of California tribes is significant and is reflected within this research sample. This study considered homicides from 1980-2009, taking into account that the *Times-Standard* might capture or ignore information related to the existence of Native American tribes.

The Hupa people have been uniquely positioned to be a federally recognized tribe because they were never fully forced off of their ancestral land. The 141 square mile reservation is located in the northeastern portion of Humboldt County and is the largest land based reservation in California (“Pacific Fisher on Hoopa Tribal Lands,” 2013). There are 3,139 enrolled tribal members (Hostler, 2013, January 17). The original treaty between the Hupa and the United States was signed in 1864, but was never ratified (Cramblit, 2003; Hoopa Valley Tribe, n.d.). The Hupa were further recognized as a tribe through the signing of the 1876 Executive Order and the 1909 Proclamation (Cramblit, 2003). The BIA’s involvement with the Hoopa Reservation ended in 1988, at which point the Hupa have celebrated their self-governance (Sanchez, 2009, August 18).

The Yurok Tribe has a current enrollment of over 5,700 people and is the largest tribe in California (Yurok Tribe, 2012, December; Rocha, 2010). Similar to the Hupa people, the Yurok continue to live along their original homelands, which is the lower 46 miles of Klamath River from Weitchpec, California to the mouth of the Klamath, where it meets the Pacific Ocean (Rocha, 2010). The Yurok Reservation also extends one mile outward on each side of the Klamath River (Rocha, 2010). Their reservation was established in 1855, but it was much too small (Yurok Tribe, 2006). Many Yurok moved to either the Smith River Reservation, prior to its closure in 1862, or to the Hoopa Valley

Reservation (Yurok Tribe, 2006). The Hoopa Yurok Settlement Act 1988 split the Hoopa and Yurok reservations, giving traditional Yuroks who had been relocated to the Hoopa Reservation during the 1800s the option of enrolling with the Yurok Tribe (“Yurok people,” 2012). The Yurok live primarily near the towns of Klamath and Requa, California, located in southern Del Norte County, or near the confluence of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers in Weitchpec, located in Humboldt County (Yurok Tribe, 2012, December).

The Wiyot have approximately 600 tribal members and historically have lived in the Humboldt Bay region (Kullmann, 2010, March 22). Currently, the Wiyot Reservation, located on Table Bluff, is 88 acres (Sloan, 2005, June). The Wiyot were originally given federal recognition as the Table Bluff Rancheria of Wiyot Indians in 1908; their tribe was terminated through the California Rancheria Act in 1961 (Wiyot Tribe, 2012). Following the *Table Bluff Indians vs. Lujan* litigation, the Wiyot people regained their federal status on September 21, 1981 (Wiyot Tribe, 2012; “List of federally recognized tribes,” 2010, December 15).

The Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria was federally recognized on June 11, 1984 and is comprised of peoples from Mattole and Bear Rivers, who were originally from the vicinity of Cape Mendocino, California, as well as Wiyot peoples (“List of federally recognized tribes,” 2010, December 10; “Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria,” n.d.). The Rancheria has approximately 400 members and approximately 191 acres (Angeloff, 2010, April 12).

The Blue Lake Rancheria was federally recognized on March 22, 1989 and has over 50 members (Blue Lake Rancheria, 2007). The Rancheria is located on 91 acres, near the town of Blue Lake, California, five miles east of Arcata, California (Blue Lake Rancheria, 2007). Tribal members come from a diverse background of Wiyot, Yurok, Tolowa, and Cherokee (Blue Lake Rancheria, 2007).

Big Lagoon Rancheria was originally recognized July 10, 1918 and currently has 24 members (“Big Lagoon Rancheria,” n.d.). The Big Lagoon Rancheria is comprised of Yurok and Tolowa people (“Big Lagoon Rancheria,” n.d.). The Rancheria is 30 miles north of Eureka, alongside Big Lagoon (“Big Lagoon Rancheria,” n.d.). Big Lagoon Rancheria has approximately 20 acres of land (Humboldt Local Agency Formation Commission, 2008, September).

Cher-Ae-Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria was established in 1906 as an act of Congress to obtain land for the “homeless Indians” (Trinidad-Rancheria, 2012; Hostler, 2010). The Rancheria consists of 82 acres on three separate parcels; its tribal office is located southeast of the town of Trinidad, California, which is the ancestral territory of the Yurok (Trinidad-Rancheria, 2012; Hostler, 2010). The current membership of 199 people who are primarily Yurok, but there are also ancestral ties to the Wiyot, Tolowa, Chetco, Karuk, and Hupa (Trinidad-Rancheria, 2012; Hostler, 2010).

The Karuk Tribe of California was federally recognized January 15, 1979 and has over 3,500 enrolled members (“List of federally recognized tribes,” 2010, December 10; “Karuk Tribal Court,” 2013). Their lands, approximately 800 acres, are located in both

Humboldt and Siskiyou Counties, along the middle of the Klamath River (“Karuk Tribal Court,” 2013). Just the north eastern tip of Humboldt County is considered part of the Karuk reservation.

### *The Times-Standard*

The *Times-Standard* is the primary news source for Humboldt County with a readership circulation of 23,000 (“*Times-Standard*,” n.d.). It is the oldest newspaper in Humboldt County (“Northwestern california newspapers”, n.d.; “*Times-Standard*,” n.d.). Originally known as the *Humboldt Times*, the newspaper began publishing on September 2, 1854 (“Northwestern California newspapers”, n.d; “*Times-Standard*,” n.d.). The *Humboldt Times* merged with another newspaper, the Humboldt Standard, in 1967, to form what is now known as the *Times-Standard* (“Northwestern california newspapers”, n.d). The *Times-Standard* was family owned until 1967 when it was sold to Brush-Moore Newspapers and then to Thompson Newspapers (“*Times-Standard*,” n.d.). In 1996, the ownership transitioned again to MediaNews Corporation, who currently maintains the newspaper (“Northwestern california newspapers”, n.d). Based upon this long historical presence, the *Times-Standard* was chosen as the source for obtaining newspaper articles.

### Conceptual Framework

Two theoretical frameworks, historical trauma and labeling theory, have utility for the interpretation of the research presented in the study. Historical trauma is a relatively new framework which was originally developed to describe the long term communal

effects of loss amongst Native Americans (SAMHSA's Gains Center, n.d.). Historical trauma has also been applied to people of color, immigrants, or families experiencing intergenerational poverty (SAMHSA's Gains Center, n.d.). Historical trauma is defined as "the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma" (Brave Heart et al., 2011, p. 283). There are identified connections between historical trauma and a person's "lifetime traumatic events," unresolved and prolonged grief, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and depression, often occurring at the same time as substance abuse (Brave Heart et al., 2011, p. 284).

Evans-Campbell discusses historical trauma as "both a description of trauma responses among oppressed peoples and a causal explanation for them" (2008, p. 320). Boarding schools, loss of land, relocation, as well as forced assimilation of language and religious practices incongruent with the Indigenous culture were causes associated with historical trauma in Native American communities (Evans-Campbell, 2008). A systems level framework can be utilized with historical trauma, from the individual (anxiety, grief, PTSD), family (impaired communication and parenting stress), and community (alcoholism, physical illness, internalized racism, loss of culture and values), to identify seemingly unrelated stress from previous generations which is manifest in present behaviors (Evans-Campbell, 2008).

Numerous articles included in this sample pertain to Native American communities, who were the direct recipients of colonizing practices, genocide, and systemic oppression, all within recent history. The direct descendants of Native American

people and early White settlers continue to live side-by-side in Humboldt County. It is probable that the Native American communities in Humboldt County may experience historical trauma based upon their collective histories of exposure to traumatic events. Historical trauma underscores the importance of examining the nature of homicide reporting within the *Times-Standard* in relation to Native and non-Native American peoples within Humboldt County.

Labeling theory is the “interpretation of symbols and individuals’ concepts of self based upon their interactions with society” (Parker, 2011, p. 9). Labeling theory posits that a person’s role is a “product of self”; the person will also reflect the society with which the person interacts (Stryker, 2001, p. 227). The greater attachment a person has to an identity, the more likely a person’s behavior choices will match that identity (Stryker, 2001). Erikson points out that the community determines what is social deviance and exercises its ability to strengthen group boundaries when norms are violated (1962).

If media presents violent acts as negative, sensationalized stories concentrated in a particular geographic location, the individuals within those regions may embrace, disregard, or perpetuate this identity of violence. Likewise, an article’s word choice may establish the baseline “moral value continuum” of how acceptable or irreproachable a crime is perceived to be.

## METHOD

### Introduction to Ethnographic Content Analysis

Quantitative methods employ the development of precise findings and measurements via surveys, scales, and other instruments to create generalizable results through the examination of causal relationships between variables (Rubin & Babbie, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative methods focus on a depth of understanding, sometimes to study a new phenomenon, where flexibility can be helpful (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The significant difference between quantitative and qualitative methodology is that qualitative research answers the question, “What?” (Wertz, Charmaz, McMullen, Josselson, Anderson, & McSpadden, 2011). A qualitative approach is inductive and may generate new concepts (Sells, Smith, & Sprenkle, 1995). Qualitative content based analysis is limited at best, within the greater body of deductive, quantitative approaches, to content based analysis. Elo & Kyngäs assert that while content analysis is typically attributed to quantitative methods, qualitative approaches are also applicable, particularly when there is little knowledge on the subject matter or the information is disjointed (2007).

Ethnography refers to qualitative research which studies the social or culture of another, through the perspective of the insider, rather than the researcher’s point of view (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Altheide’s development of ethnographic content analysis (ECA) is a qualitative approach to content analysis, using researcher reflexivity as part of the research process (1987). A wide range of studies have begun to use ECA including

children's picture books reflecting African American culture (Nephew, 2009), family therapy researchers (Sells et al., 1995), media representation of a sports celebrity (McGannon, Hoffmann, Metz, & Schinke, 2012), and anti-gambling documents (Bernhard, Futrell, & Harper, 2010). ECA presents an exciting means to "locate, identify, and thematically analyze text" (Bernhard et al., 2010, p. 17). ECA categorizes and allows for comparison of the categories to elicit new understandings; this data is then coded (Altheide, 1996).

This study will work well with ECA due to its reflexive approach with content analysis. Reflexivity acknowledges the researcher's positionality and background effect findings and their interpretations; it posits that this should be addressed within the research (Malterud, 2001; Wertz, et al., 2011). A reflexive approach to ECA includes "moving between data collection, analysis, and reconceptualization" to increase understanding (Altheide, 1987, p. 73). As a White woman, who has lived along the North Coast since the 1980s, analysis of the *Times-Standard* brings with it personal contextualization of the homicides and its impact upon the local community. Working with the data will offer flexible interpretation toward making meaning.

### Research Design

The study's design is built around Altheide's ECA work and similar studies which have utilized this approach (Nephew, 2009; McGannon et al., 2012; Bernhard et al., 2010). Altheide's development of the six steps to ECA create a flexible framework for

studying media over a length of time to examine themes, discourse, or word use (2000, 2004). Altheide states in the following steps:

1. Pursue a specific problem to be investigated
2. Become familiar with the process and context of the information source, e.g., ethnographic studies of newspapers or television stations, etc. Explore possible sources (perhaps documents) of information
3. Become familiar with several (6-10) examples of relevant documents, noting particularly the format, and selecting a unit of analysis, e.g., each article (this may change)
4. List several items or categories (variables) to guide data collection and drafting a protocol (data collection sheet)
5. Test the protocol by collecting data from several documents
6. Revise the protocol and selecting several additional cases to further refine the protocol. (Altheide, 2000, p. 291-2)

#### Data Collection Method

The primary source of data came from the Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection located at Humboldt State University Library's Humboldt Room, and were labeled "Crime and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983" and "Crime and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+". The pamphlet files represented the baseline for homicide reporting. These archived articles were clipped, dated, and filed under the direction of Humboldt State University librarians. See Appendix B for the listing of articles used in the sample obtained from the Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection.

The research began through the identification of the problem and analysis source, which was how homicide is reported in the *Times-Standard*. One homicide year from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s was represented in the data selection process, creating a total of three years studied. Articles were categorically sorted into an Excel database to organize

articles into categories: homicide event date, victims, suspects, homicide location, evidence of a Native American Identifier (NAI), article headline, date of publishing, and author. NAI, is operationally defined as information garnered from a variety of sources including explicit article identification, a match with the Local Indigenous Names Database (LIND), or victim/suspect residing on or near reservation lands. When triangulated the information was indicative that the person likely had a connection to a Native American tribe.

A second Excel database, known as the LIND, was created to assist with the triangulating process. The librarians from the Humboldt Room at Humboldt State University Library collected newspaper clippings for pamphlet files labeled “Indians—Biographies; A-G”, “Indians—Biographies; H-M”, and “Indians—Biographies; N-Z” which are the published obituaries of local Native American people from the Humboldt County region. Additionally, the librarians had compiled newspaper clippings into other pamphlet files such as: “Hoopa”, “Hoopa Valley Reservation; 1990s”, “Hoopa Valley Reservation; 2000s”, “Hupa Indians; 1970’s-80’s”, “Hupa Indians; 1990s”, “Hupa Indians; 2000’s”, and “Yurok”. The culling of the above mentioned pamphlet resulted in a list of 487 last names which were affiliated with local Native Americans from the community.

A significant roadblock toward locating a sample from the 2000s was that the librarians reduced the number of newspaper clippings which were placed into the “Crime and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+” pamphlet. This was due to the advancement of internet databanks, which began in the early part of the 2000s. It was determined that use

of NewsBank would be utilized, since it began to archive articles from the *Times-Standard* articles beginning September 15, 2001 (“Humboldt county news online,” (n.d.). The term “Homicide” was inputted into NewsBank, which populated 465 articles. From this number, 337 articles were cataloged in the same fashion as the “Crime and Criminals—Homicide” pamphlets. Excluded articles were editorials, shooting victims who did not die, and articles which did not pertain to Humboldt County homicides.

Despite these efforts to extend the sample into the 2000s, homicide articles written in the 2000s excluded identifying information which might have affiliated someone as being Native American. This resulted in only one homicide with NAI included from the 2000s. A homicide without NAI, occurring days prior and was matched to the homicide with NAI. While NewsBank had the text for these articles, the articles were retrieved from microfilm, so that any corresponding pictures could be included in the study.

Although some last names of the victims or suspects could be matched when placed through the LIND, there was not enough information within the article to definitively say that a particular victim or suspect had Native American ties, without making gross assumptions. This is because many local Native Americans assumed European last names when soldiers, settlers, and miners came into the area, intermarrying and/or raping the Native American women (Norton, 1979). With additional time, through resources such as the California Census Rolls (1885-1930), one could have investigated if there was Native American ancestry of those involved parties associated with the

homicides; however, time constraints inhibited discursive study (Watson, 1993; United States, 1930; United States, 1933).

Once all articles were inventoried, the year from each decade containing the largest cluster of homicides with NAI was selected. For comparison purposes, every homicide with NAI was matched to a homicide without those qualifiers which had occurred on or near the same homicide event date. The rural nature of Humboldt County resulted in matching homicides with NAI to homicides without NAI which sometimes happened months later, and in two cases occurring in the following calendar year. For example, from the eight homicides in 1983, only one was observed to have NAI; yet, of the sixteen homicides in 1982 four were identified as having NAI. Therefore, the year 1982 would be selected due to its larger sample size and would contain eight total homicides within the sample: four with NAI and four without. Several community members reviewed the listed homicides and affirmed that the homicides chosen for this study were appropriately identified between those with and without NAI.

The original goal of this research was to select two years of homicide reporting from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, resulting in six years of studied data. Each decade would have been divided into years ending in the number 0-4 and 5-9. Due to time constraints, only one year with the greatest number of homicides containing NAI was utilized, which created a more limited sample.

## Defining the Research Sample

The homicides selected were based upon the year of occurrence. For example, if the death took place on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1983, subsequent articles published in January of 1984 would also be included. This meant that each homicide event could be represented with a constellation of newspaper articles, some which might expand far beyond the actual homicide year. Editorials and letters to the editor were omitted, as this study focused on the information put forth directly from the *Times-Standard* and their treatment of homicide news reporting. The term Native American Identifier (NAI) was operationally defined as a person who appeared to have Native American identification through a combination of information such as explicit identification as Native American, the person's last name matched in the LIND, or the victim/suspect residing on or near a Rancheria or reservation. Eight homicides from the years 1982, 1995, and 2009 were identified as containing NAIs. These homicides were matched to eight non-NAI homicides, with two non-NAI homicides occurring in the subsequent years, 1983 and 1996, due to a limitation of having sufficient non-NAI homicides in 1982 and 1995 respectively. This resulted in a total of 68 articles, with 69 headlines. All of the homicides in the study were referenced based upon the victim's last name. For example, the "Smith case" would indicate that Smith was the homicide victim.

## Data Coding

After identifying the sample, articles were photocopied from the pamphlet files and then given a code number, to increase ease of the observations for the protocol sheets. Articles were numbered chronologically within their subset, following the pattern of beginning with articles with NAI from the decade, followed with the articles without NAI from the decade, moving from the 1980s through the 2000s.

## Data Analysis

The coded articles were analyzed through use of three flexible ECA protocol sheets, allowing for the development and creation of new categories in the process to investigating this study's research questions. Protocol I noted the type and number of pictures within the sample. Pictures were categorized as pertaining to the victims, suspects, crime scene, or other. Protocol II examined the use of kill words within the homicide articles. The "kill words" were defined as use of the terms murderer, slayer, killer, and shooter.

Protocol III evolved after reading the articles multiple times and observing how some articles portrayed the victims and suspects in a variety of ways. One case in particular reported that the victim and suspect were both perceived to be victims. This observation led to the development of Protocol III, to observe how the victim or suspect could be placed within either role. Additional categories were created with the same intention to identify if the victims and suspects were portrayed in alternative capacities.

Protocol III categories were victimized, eulogized, criticized, authorized, and criminalized. Refer to Table 1 for the operationalized definitions and examples for how a sample might be represented for either the victim or suspect respectively.

Table 1. *Protocol III operationalized definitions*

Category	Definition	Article Examples	
		Victim	Suspect
Victimized	Person is murdered	“body of a man” <i>(“Apparent homicide,” 2009, September 12, para. 1).</i>	
	Use of personalized information & descriptions	“his mother, who had been baking cookies” <i>(Parker, 1996, April 27, para. 10).</i>	“religious man” <i>(Kay, as cited in Parker, 1995, June 17, para. 7).</i>
	Person is portrayed a sympathetic manner	“teenager gunned down...shot to death” <i>(Edmiston, 1996, December 17, para. 1, 3).</i>	“emotionally and physically incapable” <i>(Bragg, as cited in Parker, 1996, February 21, para. 6).</i>
Eulogized	Praise and honor for the homicide victim	“never knew a stranger” <i>(Widdoes, as cited in Gibbs, 1982, June 17, para. 29).</i>	
Criticized	Blame OR fault for the homicide placed on the person	“Sherriff’s department had called the death a suicide” <i>(Homblad, 982, October 9, para. 3).</i>	“Was it necessary...law enforcement to shoot an unarmed suspect?” <i>(Johnoson, as cited in Holmblad, July 29, 1982, para. 12).</i>
Authorized	Blameless killing of another person	“might have deserved what happened to him” <i>(Edmiston, 1996, July 11, para. 5).</i>	“acted in reasonable self defense” <i>(DePaoli, as cited in Gibbs, 1982, September 30, para. 1).</i>

Table 1. *Protocol III operationalized definitions*

Category	Definition	Article Examples	
		Victim	Suspect
Criminalized	To treat OR portray the person as a criminal	“carrying two weapons” <i>(“No charges,” 1982, May 8, para. 7).</i>	“the ultimate crime deserves the ultimate punishment” <i>(Farmer, as cited in Gibbs, 1983, April 6, para. 9).</i>
	To associate the person with other criminal activities	“used drugs minutes before the killing” <i>(Edmiston, 1996, June 6, para. 7).</i>	“vehicle theft, impersonating another person” <i>(“Vehicle of interest,” 2009, September 15, para. 1).</i>
	But does NOT include homicide convictions		“two counts of first-degree murder ...sentenced to life” <i>(Durant, 2005, January 14, para. 3).</i>

## Validity

Validity refers to a study accurately measuring what it intended to measure (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Smith posits that validity within qualitative research is a study in which “the research has accurately represented the phenomena or reality under consideration” (Smith, 2004, p. 957). Meaning making was positioned within the researcher’s reflexive context, thereby providing a more honest appraisal of the findings. A consideration for this study was to maintain concise records which delineated how meaning was created from the sample.

Triangulation was very important in the process of obtaining the sample and to determine which cases contained NAI. This was especially important, since there were several articles, which on the surface appeared to not contain NAI. However, these homicide articles were pulled because a last name in either of the homicides could be matched within the LIND. It did not seem likely, given the articles’ informational context, that the homicides were affiliated with a person who had NAI; yet, it was grounds for abstaining from use.

## Reliability

Reliability is the repeatability of the findings, whereby others would be able to obtain similar results. Ethnographic methods increase reliability through increasing the study’s length of time from a several months to years (Fetterman, 2004). Use of ECA encourages the study of documents over a length of time, developing the same sense of

reliability as use of an ethnographic approach (Altheide, 1987, 2004; Altheide et al., 2008). Smith shares that:

Some people, such as Jerome Kirk and Marc Millar (1986), argue that reliability in the sense of repeatability of observations still has an important epistemic role to play in qualitative inquiry. They contend that for a study to be judged good or valid, the observations made in that study must be stable over time, and that different methods, such as interviews and observations, should yield similar results. (Smith, 2004, p.957)

The thirty year time frame provided the staging ground for stabilized findings, whereby similar findings were repeated in various articles across the three decades. Repeated reading of the newspaper clippings and evaluation against the operational definitions as determined in Table 1, assisted with this study's reliability and to confirm findings. With only the researcher and no other rater involved with this study, the findings remained consistent. Had there been additional raters assisted with this study, then inter-rater reliability practices would have been implemented to assure that all involved would have obtained similar findings with the three protocol sheets.

## RESULTS

### Selection of Articles

After completing the article selection, following the stated methods, sixteen homicide cases represented thirty years of newspaper reporting from the designated years: 1982, 1995, & 2009. Not all of the articles were equal in their size or scope of details reported. However, they met the criteria for the study. In two instances, homicides without NAI from 1983 and 1996 were used as there were not enough homicides without NAI which could be matched to homicides occurring in 1982 and 1995.

### Protocol I

Protocol I noted the type and number of pictures which were represented within the sample. The pictures were categorically broken down into victim, suspect, crime scene and other. Refer to the Table 2 for results. Pictures were used in roughly 40% of the sample. However, the pictures were not evenly dispersed between articles with and without NAI. There were only six pictures associated with NAI articles, compared to the 21 without NAI. In only one instance was a Native American homicide victim provided with a picture, compared to the seven pictures of victims without NAI. One suspect with NAI was depicted in two pictures, while suspects without NAI were in eight pictures. There were no pictures of the crime scene in articles with NAI; yet, there were four crime

scene pictures associated without NAI. Three pictures, all related to a homicide with NAI, were categorized as other. These pictures depicted a smashed police car and protesters rallying against a police shooting.

Table 2: *Types of pictures contained in articles*

	Victim	Suspect	Crime Scene	Other
Articles: NAI	1	2	0	3
Articles: No NAI	7	8	4	2
Total	8	10	4	5

## Protocol II

Protocol II examined the sample for kill words: killer, murderer, slayer, and shooter. The sample only contained the word killer, which was repeated in seven instances, in six articles. One article with NAI had the term incorporated. The other five articles without NAI used the word killer. Terms such as murderer, slayer and shooter did not appear within the sample. Refer to Table 3 for results.

The term killer was written into two headline captions, “Hearing opens for accused Loleta killer” (Gibbs, 1982, July 21), and “Slain woman’s son suing accused killer” (Parker, 1996, April 4). Killer was also used in a subtitle, “Suspected killer can’t get counsel” (Parker, 1995, August 10). The caption below two pictures which also used the term, “girlfriend of accused killer...shields defendant from photographer” (Gibbs, 1982, July 21), and “Victim of more than one killer?” (Parker, 1996, February 14). In two instances, individuals used the term in relation to defending the alleged suspect. For example, several friends of an alleged suspect’s believed there were other individuals who were “the real killers” (Gibbs, 1983, April 6, para. 15). A defense attorney refuted the Sheriff’s Department’s quick assessment that the alleged suspect “was the killer” (Parker, 1996, February 21, para. 17).

Only one reference of the term killer had a connection to the victim, “Victim of more than one killer?” (Parker, 1996, February 14). In four instances, killer was found in headlines or under one picture, it was used as a direct reference to the accused suspect. In two articles, supporters of the alleged suspect used the term to assert that someone else

was responsible or that the Sheriff Department had moved to quickly too identify a suspect in a case.

Table 3: *Use of kill words within articles*

	Killer	Murderer	Slayer	Shooter
Articles: NAI	1	0	0	0
Articles: No NAI	6	0	0	0
Total	7	0	0	0

### Protocol III

Protocol III examined the context with how victims and suspects were viewed in terms of victimized, eulogized, criticized, authorized, and criminalized language. The operational definitions for the terms were provided and can be referenced in Table 1. In this section, the homicides will be presented as case studies, with examples which show victims and suspects who have been victimized, eulogized, criticized, authorized, and criminalized.

#### Articles Including Native American Identifiers

##### Darrel McCovey Case: May 12, 1982

Sixteen-year-old Darrel Lyle McCovey was shot on May 12, 1982 near the Orleans Porch, described as a local gathering place (“Starnes to be tried,” 1982, June 9). Allegedly, Fred F. Starnes used an “illegal 9mm Uzi” with a ten inch barrel to shoot McCovey (“Starnes to be tried,” 1982, June 9, para. 8). While the three articles related to McCovey did not contain explicit identifying information that McCovey was Native American, McCovey’s last name was triangulated in the LIND. Starnes’ last name did not populate in the LIND. Orleans is approximately 25 miles away from Hoopa and is located within Karuk ancestral territory.

McCovey was identified as the victim through the statement, “Starnes shot McCovey for no reason while McCovey and a group of his friends were passing time on the porch” (“Starnes to be tried,” 1982, June 6, para. 7). The suspect was criminalized

through his possession of an illegally altered firearm and possession of marijuana for sale (“Starnes to be tried,” 1982, June 6).

Richard Taylor Case: June 26, 1982

One article represented the case of Richard Oscar Taylor, who was shot to death while allegedly attempting to rob a couple in their travel trailer at Aikins Creek Campground (“Hoopa youth killed,” 1982, June 28). Taylor, 19, was described as “wearing a mask and was armed with a shotgun...and demanded” that the travel trailer’s occupants, Wilsey Eugene Mitchell and Marquitta Mitchell, allow him into the trailer (“Hoopa youth killed,” 1982, June 28, para. 3). When Wilsey Mitchell opened the travel trailer door, Taylor fired a shot into the travel trailer, at which point Wilsey Mitchell “returned fire with a rifle,” killing Taylor (“Hoopa youth killed,” 1982, June 28, para. 4). The single article stated that the Mitchells were from Los Alamitos, California and their names were not matched in the LIND. Taylor was not expressly identified as Native American. However, he was described as “an armed Hoopa youth” and his last name did appear in the LIND (“Hoopa youth killed, 1982, June 28, para. 1).

Taylor was minimally victimized when Captain James Sintic of the Humboldt County Sheriff’s Department reported that Taylor was “shot dead” (“Hoopa youth killed,” 1982, June 28, para. 1). As the victim, Taylor’s death was authorized since he was attempting to rob a couple and had been “wearing a mask and was armed with a shotgun” (Sintic, as cited in “Hoopa youth killed, 1982, June 28, para. 3). He was further criminalized when Captain Sintic stated that “robbery was the apparent motive” (“Hoopa youth killed,” 1982, June 28, para. 5). The Mitchell’s were viewed as victims, based upon

the report that “Taylor fired one shotgun round into the trailer” (Sintic, as cited in “Hoopa youth killed”, 1982, June 28, para. 4); however, Wilsey Mitchell was criminalized when it was reported that he “returned fire with a rifle, killing Taylor” (Sintic, as cited in “Hoopa youth killed,” 1982, June 28, para. 4). Neither Taylor nor Wilsey Mitchell were criticized in the homicide, nor was Taylor eulogized.

Virgil Payne Case: July 25, 1982

On July 25, 1982 Deputy Sheriffs, Dan Bessette and Tim McCollister, shot Virgil Payne after Payne reportedly took McCollister’s gun in a struggle with the Deputy Sheriffs (Blackwell, 1982, August 1). McCollister took Bessette’s revolver and shot Payne three times, who was pronounced dead at Hoopa Medical Center (“Deputy kills,” 1982, July 26). Payne was identified as “black and Indian”, and it was suggested that the homicide had “racial overtones” (Holmblad, 1982, July 29, para. 4). There were five articles related to the Payne case.

The Payne case included victimized language with descriptions of his death and the injuries. “Payne did nothing to provoke the attack....Payne head also hit the steering wheel knocking out three teeth...[he] suffered a deep laceration over his right eye....bullets entered his body in the upper left chest, his left side, and lower right abdomen” (Gibbs, 1982, September 30, para. 6, 18, 28). Payne was eulogized from friends who commented, “That was completely out of Payne’s character...Payne was a non-violent person” (Blackwell, 1982, July 29, para. 8, 17). Criticism toward Payne’s death, appeared to also be part of his defense, “If Virgil did something out of character one time, he didn’t deserve to die” (M. McCovey, as cited in Blackwell, 1982, August 1,

para. 7). Many reports described the criminal activities which precipitated Payne's death: "Payne was driving a stolen car" (Holmblad, 1982, July 29, para. 5); Payne "tore the pants off the man who owned the pickup, trying to get to his keys" (Gibbs, 1982, September 30, para. 14); "Payne reportedly rammed the front of Bessette's patrol unit" (Holmblad, 1982, July 29, para. 5); "Payne grabbed McCollister's revolver and got it partially out of its holster" (Blackwell, 1982, August 1, para. 16).

The Deputy Sheriffs who were involved with the death of Payne were criticized, criminalized, and also authorized for their role. Criticism included statements such as, "Was it necessary for trained law enforcement officers to shoot an unarmed man?" (Johnson, as cited in Holmblad, 1982, July 29, para. 13); "Others questioned why the deputy would not have had his gun drawn while approaching a subject who had rammed his car" (Holmblad, 1982, July 29, para. 13).

Other criticism came from a community rally, protesting Payne's shooting. It was reported that people wore t-shirts stating, "Is justice blind in Humbolt [*sic*] County?" (Gibbs, 1982, September 23, para. 7). A lawsuit was filed on behalf of Payne's family. Phrases such as, "without justification or provocation" were used regarding McCollister and Bessette's actions (Gibbs, 1982, September 23, para. 15). Additionally, the lawsuit stated that Sheriff Cox "had knowledge of the violent propensities and racially discriminatory attitude of Bessette and McCollister" (Gibbs, 1982, September 23, para. 16).

Deputy Sheriffs Bessette and McCollister were criminalized through the statement "McCollister got Bessette's gun and shot Payne twice" (Blackwell, 1982,

August 1, para. 17). Bessette and McCollister were authorized for their actions with the report that there had been “a violent struggle” (Renner, as cited in “Deputy kills,” 1982, July 26, para. 1). Later District Attorney DePaoli reported after an internal investigation on the Sheriff Department’s handling of the shooting and found that McCollister and Bessette “acted in reasonable self defense” Gibbs, 1982, September 30, para. 1). It was determined “that under the circumstances, there was no excessive force” had been used (Gibbs, 1982, September 30, para. 4). The Humboldt County Grand Jury concurred that it “did not find sufficient evidence or testimony to support any accusation that a crime had been committed” (Gibbs, 1982, October 1, para. 1).

#### Virgil Doolittle Case: August 29, 1982

Virgil Doolittle was a wheelchair bound, 29 year-old who was pushed to his death from the Weitchpec Bridge into the Klamath River on August 29, 1982 (“Hoopan arrested,” 1982, October 23, para. 1). Three articles were related to this case and named the Hoopa resident, Leo Martin, as the suspect (“Hoopan arrested,” 1982, October 13). Doolittle was identified as an Indian (Holmblad, 1982, October 9). Through use of the LIND, both last names Doolittle and Martin appeared.

Virgil Doolittle was primarily viewed as the victim, but in one instance was criminalized for being “extremely drunk....whose blood alcohol count was .29, almost three times the amount at which a person is presumed to be drunk” (Gibbs, 1982, April 17, para. 10). Doolittle was portrayed as a victim through the persistent association of being “confined to a wheelchair” and pushed from a bridge into the river (Holmblad, 1982, October 9, para. 1). Community protest revealed the indirect criticism and

accusation from the Sheriff's Department that Doolittle was responsible for his own death, "Some members of the Hoopa community charged that the Sheriff's department had called the death a suicide" (Homblad, 1982, October 9, para. 3). Another article affirmed that the Deputy Attorney planned to bring a witness to the murder trial who would state Doolittle chose to jump from the bridge and was not pushed, which is a criticism toward Doolittle for his own death (Gibbs, 1983, April 7). Martin, the alleged suspect, was criminalized through a report that police picked him up on a parole hold (Gibbs, 1983, April 17). During the homicide trial, the prosecutor stated that "Doolittle was pushed off the Wetchepc Bridge by Leo Martin" (Gibbs, 1983, April 17, para. 1).

Dawone McKinnon Case: February, 22, 1995

Dawone Martin "Tiger" McKinnon was gunned down near a trailer park on February 22, 1995 (Edmiston, 1996, December 17). The single *Times-Standard* article, written almost two years after his passing on December 17, 1996, indicated that no arrests had been made in the case (Edmiston, 1996, December 17). The night of Dawone McKinnon's murder, police had picked McKinnon up after he and an accomplice, Rachel Paula Saxon, had been firing a gun into an occupied building (Edmiston, 1996, December 17). Police returned Dawone McKinnon to his family and arrested Saxon. Around 1 am, the 17 year-old was murdered near Jackson Trailer Park in Hoopa. While the article does not state that Dawone McKinnon was Native American, the article cites that McKinnon's family had asked Hoopa Valley Tribal leaders for help with solving the case (Edmiston, 1996, December 17). Additionally, Hoopa Valley Tribal Council offered a \$10,000 reward for information related to Dawone McKinnon's murder. These connections imply

that Dawone McKinnon had Native American affiliation. The LIND positively identified the name McKinnon.

McKinnon was portrayed as the victim with victimized language such as “teenager gunned down....shot to death” (Edmiston, 1996, December 17, para. 1, 3). He was also criminalized when described as, “killed within hours of being picked up by police for firing into an occupied dwelling” (Edmiston, 1996, December 17, para. 12). No language was attributed to the suspect, since no suspect was known.

#### Rachel and Isaac Saxon Case: June 21, 1995

Five months later, in a reportedly separate homicide, 30 year old Rachel Paula Saxon and her 11 year-old son, Isaac Lyle Saxon were shot and killed at their home, on Bald Hills Road overlooking the Hoopa Reservation (Durant, 2002, May 7). Saxon’s younger, seven year-old son, was unharmed and spent the night with his deceased brother and mother before “flagging down a car the next morning and getting a ride to his aunt’s house in Hoopa” (Parker, 1996, April 27, para. 11). Four articles related to the case span six and a half years from the homicide, indicating that there were a total of four suspects. The first suspect, Jon Daryl Matilton, was immediately arrested, but after two hung juries, was not convicted (Durant, 2002, May 7). Samuel Derick Pratt, was later convicted of first-degree murder in 2003 (Durant, 2005, January 14). Dana Owen Chisum, took a plea agreement for voluntary manslaughter (Durant, 2005, January 14). Loren Mark McKinnon was reported to have been involved with the homicide, but the article reported that there was not enough evidence to prove his involvement (Durant, 2005, January 14). The articles designated that the victims and suspects all came from

Hoopa. When the names, Saxon, Matilton, Pratt, Chisum, and McKinnon were put into the LIND, the names Saxon, Pratt, and McKinnon were found. Matilton and Chisum did not appear within the LIND.

The Saxon double murder contained victimizing details regarding the Saxons such as “Isaac was shot first when he went outside to get water. His mother, who had been baking cookies, was shot as she tried to load a rifle” (Parker, 1996, April 27, para. 10). The Humboldt County Sheriff’s Department stated that the Saxons “were shot to death by a sniper with a high-powered rifle in their home” (Durant, 2002, May 7, para. 9). None of the articles eulogized, criticized, authorized, or criminalized the Saxons.

Reports regarding the trials of the four alleged suspects included criminalizing statements. Regarding Matilton’s mistrials, the text stated he “denied committing the slayings but provided a detective with details such as Rachel Saxon was baking cookies and Isaac had gone to get water” (Parker, 1996, April 27, para. 20). In reference to Matilton, Rachel Saxon’s younger son, Antone, had “told investigators he saw Uncle Jon outside with a long gun” (Parker, 1996, April 27, para. 12). Dana Chisum, Loren McKinnon, and Samuel Pratt were on parole for “non-violent offenses” (Durant, 2002, May 7, para. 4). In regards to Loren McKinnon, Assistant District Attorney Cardoza stated that “there was enough evidence to show probable cause that...McKinnon...was also involved in the killing but not enough evidence prove it beyond a reasonable doubt (Durant, 2005, January 14, para. 15).

John Swain Case: August 3, 1995

On August 3, 1995 John Mack Swain was sitting in his car outside the residence where his ex-girlfriend, Alexis Carlene Pratt, was staying with her current boyfriend (Edmiston, 1996, July 11). Alexis Pratt was convicted of second degree murder for shooting Swain at close range while he sat in his vehicle (Edmiston, 1996, July 11). The sample had three articles pertaining to court proceedings, which revealed that Swain had “severely beaten her two months before” (Edmiston, 1996, June 6, para. 5). 30 year-old Swain was identified as being a Crescent City resident. The last name Swain was cross referenced and matched in the LIND. 25 year old Alexis Pratt was identified as being a member of the Hoopa Tribe and her last name was referenced within the LIND.

Swain was victimized in his death through depictions such as, “He was slumped in the front seat of his car....a beer can in one hand and the cover of the car’s interior light in the other” (Cordoza, as cited in Edmiston, 1996, June 6, para. 6). During the trial, Swain’s brother, Joe Swain, was quoted as saying, “The way I see it she executed my brother” (Edmiston, 1996, July 11, para. 5). Joe Swain provided the only remark which could be possibly viewed in the capacity of eulogizing Swain, “Her lawyer can go on and on about how bad my brother was. He didn’t know my brother” (Edmiston, 1996, July 11, para. 6). Swain’s death was indirectly authorized in an article from the murder trial where Swain’s brother was critical of the “repeated insinuations that John Swain might have deserved what happened to him” (Edmiston, 1996, July 11, para. 5). Swain’s actions were criminalized through the report that he had “severely beaten her nearly two months

before the killing....Swain had used drugs minutes before the killing” (Edmiston, 1996, June 6, para. 6, 8).

The three articles described Alexis Pratt in a positive light, despite her second degree murder conviction of Swain. Alexis Pratt was victimized during the court proceedings, when described as “extremely cheerful. She chatted with bailiffs, turned and grinned at friends in the audience and patted the shoulder of the weeping burglary suspect who sat next to her” (Parker, 1995, August 10, para. 11-12). Later, when the jury’s findings were read to the court an article recounts:

Pratt gasped and leaned forward, when the clerk read the jury’s finding of not guilty to a charge of first-degree murder. One of two relatives in the audience whispered “Yes”. But Pratt cried quietly when the second-degree verdict was read. One jury member also cried. (Edmiston, 1996, June 6, para. 4-5)

It was implied that Pratt was a victim of environment when, “Defense attorney Gray referred to Hoopa’s crime rate and Pratt’s upbringing in a lengthy presentencing statement. He called Hoopa a violent community” (Edmiston, 1996, July 11, para. 14). In the final article pertaining to the Swain case, Pratt was also placed in the role of a victim when her sentence was reduced “citing mitigating factors such as Pratt’s addiction to methamphetamine” (Edmiston, 1996, July 11, para. 3).

Although Alexis Pratt had been convicted of second degree murder, her actions were authorized when her attorney stated “Pratt feared Swain was about to attack her and fired in self-defense....The guy beat the daylight out of her. He tracked her down....She didn’t go after him. He went after her” (Gray, as cited in Edmiston, 1996, June 6, para. 8, 11). Pratt was criminalized with reports that she had been using methamphetamine prior

to Swain's death and that the killing was "premeditated and an act of revenge" (Cordoza, as cited in Edmiston, 1996, June 6, para. 9).

#### Nicholas Montoya Case: September 2009

Nicholas Adam Montoya, reportedly from Bakersfield, had been staying in Hoopa for several weeks when his body was discovered on September 10, 2009 ("Apparent Hoopa homicide," 2009, September 16). Investigators made a connection between Montoya's murder and a grey Nissan Frontier pickup truck, which a Sheriff's deputy recognized and pulled over in Eureka ("Vehicle of interest," 2009, September 15). The driver, 23 year-old Rodney Allen Donahue Jr., was arrested in connection with Montoya's death ("Vehicle of interest," 2009, September 15). The four articles indicated that Montoya was from Hoopa. Montoya's last name did not appear within the LIND; Donahue's last name did.

The articles related to Montoya placed him in the role of the victim with the statement, "Montoya's corpse", which incidentally was the only noted time that a homicide victim was described as a corpse ("Apparent Hoopa homicide," 2009, September 16, para. 7). Montoya's homicide was not eulogized, criticized, authorized, or criminalized.

Donahue, the alleged suspect in the Montoya case, was criminalized through the long list of other criminal charges which occurred in an unrelated matter, prior to his arrest for Montoya's death. The charges included "ofvehicle [*sic*] theft, impersonating another person, giving false identification to a peace officer, and driving on a suspended license" ("Vehicle of interest," 2009, September 15, para. 1). The four articles pertaining

to the Montoya homicide did not victimize, eulogize, criticize, or authorize Donahue for his actions.

#### Articles without Native American Identifiers

##### Robert Richter Case: April 20, 1982

In an alleged family feud, Robert A. Richter arrived at his brother's home near the Van Duzen River Bridge, carrying two guns with him on April 20, 1982. A fight broke out between 31 year-old Robert Richter and his brother William Paul Richter, in the presence of their father and another brother ("No charges," 1982, May 8). William Richter shot Robert Richter in the head ("No charges," 1982, May 8). The District Attorney ruled that the incident was justifiable homicide, and no charges were filed ("No charges," 1982, May 8). The sample contained three articles related to the Richter case. The last name Richter did not appear in the LIND, nor was there any identifying information to indicate that the case involved a Native American.

Robert Richter could be seen as a victim through the sentence, "The slaying of Robert A. Richter, fatally shot outside the home of his brother" ("No charges," 1982, May 8, para. 2). Robert Richter was not eulogized, criticized, or authorized as the victim. However, Robert Richter was criminalized, "The victim apparently had gone to the residence carrying two firearms, and there he encountered his brother" ("Feud," 1982, April 22, para. 3).

William Richter was criminalized in the description of the death, "A fight broke out, Robert Richter was shot in the head, and he died" ("No charges," 1982, May 8, para.

7). William Richter was neither victimized nor criticized. He was authorized for his actions through statements such as, “no one has been arrested in connection with the incident” (“Feud,” 1982, April 22, para. 6). Another article reported that District Attorney DePaoli determined that, “The slaying...has been ruled a ‘justifiable homicide’ ” (“Feud,” 1982, April 22, para. 6).

#### James and Rebecca Jensen Case: June 13, 1982

A friend went to check on the James and Rebecca Jensen, an elderly couple living in Loleta, California and noticed that the home’s windows were broken. This led to discovering the Jensens’ bodies and contacting authorities (Nowak, 1982, June 16). Humboldt County Sherriffs quickly made a connection with the Jensens’ homicide and Keith Sanford Hitchings. The night before the discovery of the Jensens on June 13, 1982, the Sheriff Department had picked up Hitchings after reports that Hitchings was intoxicated and entering homes in the Loleta area (Gibbs, 1982, June 17). The seven linked the then 23 year-old Hitchings as the alleged murderer of the Jensens.

Rebecca Jensen was reported to have been born near Loleta and James Jensen was originally from Ferndale, California (Gibbs, 1982, June 17). Hitchings was reported to have been from Eureka (Gibbs, 1982, June 17). Neither the Jensens’ or Hitchings’ last name were matched in the LIND.

The Jensens were portrayed as victims with language such as “the grisliest murders ever in Humboldt County...bloody, battered bodies were found in their home” (Gibbs, 1982, June 17, para. 1, 4). Other notable details included, “Every room in the house had been thoroughly ransacked, with photos torn from the walls, all the windows

broken and furniture overturned” (Gibbs, 1982, June 17, para. 5). The same article also stated, “Even experienced peace officers have said the murder scene was the most horrible sight they have seen” (Gibbs, 1982, June 17, para. 6).

The Jensens were eulogized at length in two newspaper articles. Descriptions included, “He and his wife were “well liked” ” (“Elderly Loleta couple,” 1982, June 15, para. 8). The Jensens were describes as “just wonderful people—everybody knew them. They were lovely people. There’s no other way to describe them” (Whiting, as cited in Gibbs, 1982, June 17, para. 24-25). Their deaths were not criticized, authorized, or criminalized.

In a few articles related to the Jensen case, Hitchings was placed in the role of the victim. During the trial, “Most of those present at the hearing were friends and relatives of Hitchings. At one point, a large group of them formed a human blockade to prevent a Times-Standard photographer from taking Hitchings’ picture” (Gibbs, 1982, July 21, para. 49-50). Still later, an article related to the initial murder trial verdict included the phrase, the “young Eureka man’s fate” (Gibbs, 1983, April 6, para. 3). The same article reported that “friends of Hitchings have picketed the courthouse, claiming that evidence pointing to Hitchings’ innocence were not presented at his trial. The pickets also espoused the theory that someone else actually killed the Jensens” (Gibbs, 1983, April 6, para. 13). Hitchings was later described by former Defense Attorney Kay as “a religious man, “you’d have come to your house and baby sit your kids” ” (Parker, 1995, June 17, para. 7).

Hitchings was not criticized or authorized for allegedly murdering the Jensens, but numerous of articles criminalized Hitchings. This included statements from Officer Whiting who originally picked Hitchings up on a public intoxication charge and reportedly described Hitchings as ““agitated” his hair was “mussed,” his shirt and blue jeans were torn and he had several scratches and cuts that Hitchings said he got by going over a barbed wire fence” (Gibbs, 1982, July 21, para. 31). District Attorney Farmer’s view, regarding Hitchings, was that “the ultimate crime deserves ultimate punishment” (Farmer, as cited in Gibbs, 1983, April 6, para. 10). Later, former Prosecutor Mock commented that, “It was like the devil jumped out of the ground and rode on Keith Hitchings’ back for a period of time” (Parker, 1995, June 17, para. 8).

#### John Doe Case: October 1982

*John Doe* was found on October 22, 1982 in a wooded area in Eureka near Fort Humboldt (Regan, 1982, October 23). The article cited that *John Doe*’s camping possessions and long hair were evidence that he was a traveler (Regan, 1982, October 23). It was believed that *John Doe* had died several days prior from strangulation (Regan, 1982, October 23). The single article in the sample did not name a suspect. Police were planning to seek out *John Doe*’s traveling companions for questioning (Regan, 1982, October 23). With no identification, *John Doe*’s last name could not be ran through the LIND. He was described as being “a white male” (Regan, 1982, October 23, para. 2).

*John Doe* was victimized through reports that he “died of strangulation” (Parker, as cited in Regan, 1982, October 23, para. 10). *John Doe* was not eulogized, criticized,

authorized, or criminalized. With no known suspect, the article did not victimize, criticize, authorize, or criminalize the person responsible for *John Doe's* demise.

David Adcock Case: June 17, 1983

On June 17, 1983 David Larry Adcock and his girlfriend, Helen Marie Buckley left a party with their friends around 2 am “in good spirits” (“Eureka shot,” 1983, June 18, para. 5). Sometime shortly afterward in their apartment, Buckley allegedly shot Adcock one time in the chest. (“Eureka shot,” 1983, June 18). The short article stated that Buckley was from Sacramento, California (“Eureka shot,” 1983, June 18). Neither Adcock or Buckley’s last name appeared in the LIND.

Adcock was reported to have “died of massive internal bleeding caused by a gunshot wound to the heart” (Simpa, as cited in “Eureka shot,” 1983, June 18, para. 4). Adcock was not eulogized, criticized, authorized, or criminalized. Little was said regarding the shooting of Adcock and the arrest of Buckley. Buckley was reported to have been “arrested without incident after officers arrived at the shooting scene” (“Eureka shot,” 1983, June 18, para. 3). Buckley was not victimized, criticized, or authorized for her actions.

Mark Sheive Case: May 8, 1995

Mark David Sheive and Patrick Joseph McKay, were driving Sheive’s car in the early morning hours when a group of teens threw beer bottle hitting Sheive’s car (Parker, 1995, May 9). Sheive and McKay turned around and confronted the four teen boys (Parker, 1995, May 9). Allen Ray Adams II left the group of allegedly intoxicated teens and found a metal baseball bat from a nearby home. Adams came up behind Sheive and

hit him on the back of the head, causing enough head trauma that Shieve died 24 hours later, on May 8, 1995 (Parker, 1995, May 9). McKay was hit twice, in the head and upper torso; he escaped with minor injuries (Parker, 1995, May 9). Although Adams was 17 at the time of the incident, he was tried and convicted as an adult (Edmiston, 1996, December 10). The five articles indicated that Sheive was originally from San Diego, California (Parker, 1995, May 11). While no exact place of origin was provided for Adams, he was enrolled at a continuation high school in Eureka (Smith, 1995, May 11). No information was provided regarding where McKay was from. None of the last names related to this case were matched to the LIND.

Shieve was viewed as a victim with phrases such as “a genuine tragedy” (Lewis, as cited in Parker, 1995, May 8, para. 6); “vicious attack” (Smith, 1995, May 11, para. 1); “Mark’s whole family are victims. It’s an unending line of victims in a thing like this” (Allen Adams, as cited in Edmiston, 1996, May 31, para. 18). Detective Turner shared, “It’s very understandable...The natural reaction is to get out of your car and confront the person who did this” (Turner, as cited in Smith, 1995, May 11, para. 8). Sheive was repeatedly recognized as a Humboldt State University student, preparing to graduate on May 20, 1995. He was eulogized with descriptions such as “the forest was his sanctuary” and he “believed in saving the environment and helping animals” (Lisa Sheive, as cited in Parker, 1995, May 11, para. 13, 17). Shieve’s mother described him as being “impassioned by children and had such a gentle way with them” (Ellen Sheive, as cited in Edmiston, 1996, December 10, para. 9).

During the homicide trial, Adams was viewed as a victim who “sobbed loudly...turned to the victim’s family and apologized before collapsing on the floor (Edmiston, 1996, May 31, para. 2). Other quotes included, “But in the end, both families were being referred to as victims” (Edmiston, 1996, May 31, para. 10). Defense Attorney Flowers argued Adams “hit the two men because he perceived them as a threat to his friends” (Edmiston, 1996, December 10, para. 10). The direct quote from Adams himself is poignant depiction of Adams as a victim:

I never thought you could hit someone and have them die. I never hit him to kill him. I was just protecting my friends....I didn’t see them talking it out. I didn’t see it being settled....I’m just sorry, sorry for your family...Sorry that I hurt your family and if I could I would take it back. (Adams, as cited in Edmiston, 1996, December 10, para. 13, 15)

Adams was criminalized through statements including, “He went back and hid the bat behind his back and then hit them...they said it looked like he was trying to hit a grand slam” (Parker, 1995, May 9, para. 15). Adams recounted in court that reportedly he was “intoxicated after drinking eight to 12 beers in about an hour” (Edmiston, 1996, December 10, para. 12). Criticism came toward Adams from community member, “The guy who hit him over the head made a mistake” (Meece, as cited in Smith, 1995, May 11, para. 18); criticism also came from the prosecution who “called the crime cold and calculated” (Edmiston, 1996, May 31, para. 8).

#### Lonna Angelel Case: December 17, 1995

Lonna Rae Angelel was last seen by her son on December 17, 1995 (Smith, 1995, December 21). She was separated from her husband and planning to obtain a marriage annulment (Parker, 1996, January 20). The day of her disappearance, she was packing up

her belongings to move out completely from the property that she shared with her husband Lawrence Allen Angelel (Parker, 1996, February 21). After two searches of the Angelel home and hotline calls from community members, investigators found Lonna Angelel under 6-8 feet of brush, less than approximately two miles from the home (Parker, 1996, February 14). Lawrence Angelel was named the primary suspect and tried for murder.

The Angelel case represented the largest article set within the sample, with 18 articles. This disproportionate number within the sample may have been due to the fact that Angelel was a professor at Humboldt State University, and a Humboldt State University librarian gathered the clippings. The articles indicated that the Angelels lived in Fieldbrook, California; Lonna was originally from Day Island in Tacoma, Washington (Smith, 1996, February 25). There was no match of the last name Angelel in the LIND.

Lonna Angelel was described as a “human angel” and having a “huge heart...pure, calm, honest, and very loving” (Nyberg, as cited in Smith, 1995, December 21, para. 8, 9). This was victimized language rather than eulogized language because at the time of the article’s publishing it was still believed that Lonna Angelel was a missing person. As the news story progressed from a missing person’s case, to a homicide case, to a murder trial, Lonna Angelel was portrayed as a victim through phrases such as, “human blood was found in the back of her abandoned pickup truck” (Parker, 1996, February 14, para. 18); “Her body was found Feb. 10 under a mound of brush” (Parker, February 29, para. 3); and “badly decomposed body” (Parker, 1996, February 22, para. 5).

Lonna Angelel was eulogized in several articles. In some of them, there was confusion regarding her involvement with the Catholic church. At times, the married woman was identified as “a Carmelite nun” (Smith, 1995, December 21, para. 5); “a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel” (Parker, 1996, February 14, para. 4); “a secular Carmelite of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel” (Parker, 1996, February 21, para. 15). An article reporting on Lonna Angelel’s funeral described a picture of Lonna Angelel “wearing a religious crested apron with a large smile, a crown of flowers and a large crucifix around her neck” (Smith, 1996, February 25, para. 6). This was a symbolic depiction of a “saintly” image which friends had previously described in previous articles. Lonna Angelel was not referred in any manner which criticized, authorized, or criminalized.

In all articles related to the Lonna Angelel case, Lawrence Angelel maintained his innocence. Originally, he had hired a private lawyer, Bill Bragg, who always presented to the newspapers a rationale explaining why Lawrence Angelel could not have been involved with Lonna Angelel’s murder, thus creating an image of Lawrence Angelel as a victim.

Anyone who knows my client knows he would be incapable of such an act, both emotionally and physically....Larry Angelel is seriously disabled from diabetes. Both of his legs have been amputated and he uses artificial limbs. He simply could not have physically preformed this homicide. (Bragg, as cited in Parker, 1996, February 17, para. 2, 5-6)

Lawrence Angelel’s employment as a Humboldt State University physical education professor who taught swimming and water safety was also emphasized (Parker, 1996, February 21). There was also an in-depth article, where a friend of Lawrence

Angelel, shared a previous conversation which he had with Lawrence Angelel. The friend recalled that “all of a sudden he realized he was a suspect...He was very upset. He said ‘I can’t believe it’. He was shocked. He was distraught” (Garibaldi, as cited in Parker, 1996, March 1, para. 5).

Lawrence Angelel was criminalized through comments prior to being named a suspect “his property has been searched at least twice and sheriff’s detectives say the investigation has become ‘very focused’” (Detectives, as cited in Parker, 1996, February 17, para. 4). Similar references to searching Angelel’s property occurred six other times. Deputy District Attorney Cordoza commented that Lawrence Angelel was “more than capable of committing the homicide...There was physical evidence at his home which links to the killing...And there was physical evidence in the vehicles involved” (Parker, 1996, February 21, para. 7, 10). In a wrongful death lawsuit which Lonna’s son Michael Angelel filed, it stated:

I believe that he was experiencing great difficulty with the divorce, that he was expressing a great deal of anger, frustration and hostility, and that he was verbally very abusive toward Lonna Angelel right up to the day before her disappearance. (Michael Angelel, as cited in Parker, 1996, April 4, para. 3)

Lawrence Angelel was not criticized or authorized as the alleged suspect.

#### Esam El-Sayed Case: April 12, 1996

On April 12, 1996, a friend of Esam S. El-Sayed arrived at El-Sayed’s house, to assist with packing up El-Sayed’s belongings, since El-Sayed was in the process of moving (Relyea, 1996, April 13). Instead El-Sayed’s friend found El-Sayed shot to death in a backroom (Relyea, 1996, April 13). Dennis Leon Romero, was located within days

of the homicide and booked on suspicion of murdering the 30 year-old El-Sayed (Relyea, 1996, April 15). This case amounted to only two articles within the sample. El-Sayed was reported to have been from Humboldt Hill and Romero was from Eureka (Relyea, 1996, April 15). Neither last name could be matched to the LIND.

The El-Sayed case showed victimization of El-Sayed through a family member's loss, "Sheriff Dennis Lewis comforted the dead man's mother on Friday" (Relyea, 1996, April 13, para. 10). He was eulogized from a neighbor reported, "I got a long with him great. I never had any problems with him...I hardly ever knew when he was home and when he wasn't" (Goggin, as cited in Relyea, 1996, April 13, para. 22). The same article also added a potentially criminalizing aspect as well, "the victim had come into contact with law enforcement officials in the past, but the sheriff didn't know the nature of the problem" (Lewis, as cited in Relyea, 1996, April 15, para. 12). The suspect in the El-Sayed case, Romero, was not victimized, criticized, authorized, nor criminalized at the time of his arrest.

#### William Lundy Case: September 2009

No one was aware that 59 year-old William John Lundy had been murdered in fifth wheel travel trailer in Trinidad sometime between September 3 and September 5, 2009 (White, 2009, September 9). The realization that Lundy had been murdered was made after the Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP) had arrested a man for felony evasion (White, 2009, September 9). The KHP's suspicions were aroused since the car which the unnamed suspect was driving had California license plates and was registered in Lundy's name (White, 2009, September 9). The KHP contacted the Humboldt County Sheriff's

Office and requested that a welfare check on Lundy be performed (White, 2009, September 9). At this time, Lundy was discovered as have died from a gunshot wound (White, 2009, September 9). There were three articles related to this case. The LIND did not match with Lundy's last name; the unnamed suspect was unable to be matched through the LIND.

An article related to Lundy's death portrayed him as a victim through paraphrased quotes from a friend who commented upon "Lundy's violent death" and that he was "living 'hand-to-mouth' without much money" (Cormack, as cited in White, 2009, September 13, para. 6, 9). Lundy was also eulogized and reported to have been a "sweetheart" and described as "a little rough around the edges but also a man who wrote poetry and painted" (Cormack, as cited in White, 2009, September 13, para. 4, 16). No comment criminalized Lundy or authorized his death.

The unnamed male suspect in the Lundy case was criminalized through the reports such that "The Kansas Highway Patrol arrested a man for felony evasion in Ellsworth County on Saturday. He was driving a green Buick LeSabre....KHP determined the circumstances were suspicious" (Godsey, as cited in White, 2009, September 9, para. 8). The suspect was criticized when Lundy's friend commented, "He paid \$600 for that Buick...it wasn't worth getting shot for" (Cormack, as cited in White, 2009, September 13, para. 13). The suspect was not portrayed as a victim or authorized in his alleged connection to the Lundy homicide.

Table 4: *Portrayal of victims and suspects*

	Victimized	Eulogized	Criticized	Authorized	Criminalized
Victim: NAI	23	3	8	2	12
Suspect: NAI	5	0	4	6	15
<i>Subtotal</i>	28	3	12	8	27
Victim: non-NAI	40	0	0	0	3
Suspect: non-NAI	18	14	3	2	26
<i>Subtotal</i>	58	14	3	2	29
Total	86	17	15	10	56

## DISCUSSION

### Homicide Reporting Themes in Humboldt County

Research Question 1: What are the themes found in homicide reporting in Humboldt County?

An examination of the themes within the *Times-Standard* evolved through the creation of flexible categories as encouraged with the research method ECA, which was previously described in the Method section. Protocol III contained five categories (victimized, eulogized, criticized, authorized, and criminalized) to examine the depiction of the victims and suspects. The operationalized definitions can be referenced in Table 1.

Emerging themes showed that the initial report of the homicide might be a short article, which may or may not have been able to identify the victims or suspects. For example, the Lundy case did not name a suspect. The Taylor case had one brief article. As more information was garnered during the investigation process, the articles would grow in detail and length. At this point, the victim might be given extra attention and eulogized. Additionally, the victim or suspect might be criticized for their actions which precipitated or allegedly caused the death. Upon the arrest and report of the suspect's trial, the suspect might be painted in either a positive or negative light. This may result in the victimization or criminalization of the suspect.

The sample varied with the number of articles which each homicide contained. This may have been based upon the librarian's interest and choice to clip the article out of

the newspaper for the pamphlet file collection. Thus, some homicides had more data because there were more articles to examine, while other homicides were incomplete. Conversely, some homicides may have received little coverage in the *Times-Standard* and may not have been reported on heavily and the articles in the sample may have been incomplete. Some of the “shock value” of the homicide may have generated greater volume or depth of news reporting. Additionally, a homicide may not have been reported on if little information was released from authorities or if the investigation was not pursued. Since the sample was largely pre-determined through the pamphlet files, any number of reasons may explain how a particular homicide was represented within this study.

Homicides which contained three or more articles had enough content to gain insight into how the homicide, through its victims and suspects, was represented. Not only was victimized and criminalized content included in those articles, but other information was embedded that eulogized, criticized, or authorized the actions, behaviors, and character of the victims or suspects. The spectrum from victims eulogized in their deaths to suspects authorized in their killing, with criticized victims and suspects in between, captured poignant information with how homicides were portrayed, with no one single formulaic method for news reporting. Articles showed suspects who were also portrayed as victims, for a wide variety of reasons including their upbringing, youth, and presumed innocence was particularly enlightening in regards to the *Times-Standard's* treatment of homicides. It was through this lens that one can begin to make comparisons between the treatment of homicide reporting between those which had NAI and those

which did not. These differences are examined below as part of the discussion in Research Question 2.

An interesting trend within the articles was the amount of description related to the crime scene and the victim's cause of death. Homicides which contained three or more articles were generally more graphic in the 1980s than in any other decade represented in the study. It was also easier to identify if someone was recognized with NAI as well, since the articles might state that the person was "Indian." In the 2000s, it was virtually impossible to ascertain if someone might be Native American or not, because NAI could not be triangulated between the LIND and with the article's content. This is the reason why only one homicide containing NAI was selected from the 2000s.

While it is positive that the language within the most modern articles did not designate race, as in reference to person's ethnicity or culture, it is also concerning if a victim or suspect becomes invisible because of their ethnicity or cultural background. This might cause a homicide to go underreported or to be treated in a different manner. If the reporting of a homicide discriminately highlights aspects to certain cases implicitly based upon specific ethnic or cultural backgrounds, it could conceivably be possible that differences between homicides which include NAI may "go under the radar" and not receive the same amount of attention and notice as a similar homicide which did not have NAI.

## Comparison of Homicide Reporting

Research Question 2: When comparing Native American and non-Native American homicide reporting what differences, if any, emerge?

Eight homicides with NAI were matched to eight homicides without NAI. The methodology for homicide selection was fully described in the Method section. The purpose of matching articles with and without NAI was intended for comparison.

Protocol I examined the type and number of pictures within the sample, where noted differences between the two subgroups was observed. There were a higher number of articles with pictures which did not have NAI. For example, there was no picture of Payne as a victim, just of the damaged police car and of his friends protesting. This is a striking difference from the Angelel case, which showed which showed Lonna Angelel in four pictures, which emphasized and reminded the readership that she was a victim.

With only one victim with NAI depicted within the sample, Dawone McKinnon, it is curious. There could be many explanations for this discrepancy, including that additional articles were written on homicides with NAI, but not included in the Humboldt Room pamphlet files. It may have been that a picture was not readily available to be included with the articles or that the newspaper consciously opted not to include a picture. It is interesting to note that most of the pictures with a NAI were from the 1990s. With only one article to represent the 2000s, there is not enough data to make many assertions. It can only be noted that within each of the three decades articles without NAI were represented with pictures more frequently than articles with NAI.

Articles with NAI unexpectedly came from the same geographic region. This was an unfortunate consequence of the methodology utilized to select the sample and with the difficulty with ascertaining if someone was connected to the Native American population. The implemented methodology selected the year with the greatest number of homicides with NAI in a particular decade. There were several homicides involving the Blue Lake Rancheria and the Wiyot Tribe which were excluded solely through the selection process. The NAI served as a means to demonstrate that persons involved in the articles had been matched through the process of triangulation as possibly being Native American. The triangulation included direct statements that someone belonged to a Native American tribe, living on or near a Native American reservation, and/or having their last name be matched within the LIND.

The fact that the Hoopa Reservation has been a reservation since the 1800s and is located upon the Hupa's original land, and may have created a cultural continuity and community presence which may be stronger than other Native American tribes in Humboldt County. This may have caused an the image that those who live in Hoopa are "violent Indians" or that they deserve the type of violence which they have been exposed to, without the same type of empathy that someone, non-Native American, in Eureka might experience.

There were subtle differences between homicide article with and without NAI. The sample contained a variety of articles which reported on a smattering of homicide investigations to criminal trials and sentencing. This resulted in an uneven representation of articles which may have skewed the sample's findings. These differences are

indicative that there are discrepancies with how homicides are reported between the two subgroups.

Homicide victims with and without NAI portrayed the victims in a victimized role. Some of the articles were short and included two or fewer articles related to the homicide (Taylor, *John Doe*, Adcock, El-Sayed). In these cases, the articles were reporting on the initial crime homicide investigation. The homicide victims, *John Doe*, Adcock, and El-Sayed were victimized and if there was a known suspect, the suspect was minimally criminalized. Taylor, who was attempting to rob a couple in a RV campground, was criminalized for his actions and the homicide was viewed as authorized, when he was shot. El-Sayed was provided with a small eulogy, and was the only one in this initial group to have one. El-Sayed was also criminalized through reference to having had encounters with law enforcement in the past.

Although categorized as a homicide without NAI, since El-Sayed's last name did not appear in the LIND, he may not have been Caucasian. As potentially a non-Caucasian, it may still have been a racial differential which permitted El-Sayed's murder to include criminalized information on the victim. Homicide cases with two or fewer articles tended to have less eulogized, criticized, or authorized content within them, which made making comparisons between the above mentioned homicides was difficult to do.

Two homicides which included NAI were eulogized, compared to the four of NAI victims without NAI who were eulogized. The Swain case included a line where Swain's brother defended Swain's character in court. This did not fall within the standard

eulogizing manner among the article sample and appeared to be an outlier. The standard capacity included an entire article or a large part of a column devoted to the character and life of the homicide victim. The Jensen, Shieve, Angelel, and Lundy cases each offered this type of space and time to eulogize the victim.

The single NAI victim which offered a true eulogy was the Payne case, which included greater detail about the type of person who Payne was, his employment, and level of involvement within the community. Based upon the controversy surrounding his death, one can infer that the *Times-Standard* either eulogized Payne due to pressure from the community or from a genuine interest in the story. This assertion is based upon the observation that Payne, as the victim, was also criticized and criminalized, representing the only other homicide besides Swain, to fall within all four categories (victimized, eulogized, criticized, and criminalized). There was no homicide victim without NAI which could be described across the four categories.

NAI victims contained text which criticized, authorized, and criminalized their deaths. The Taylor and Swain cases each had an article which authorized their deaths. There were no articles for victims without NAI which criticized or authorized the victim's death. This discrepancy shows that there was a difference within the sample between the homicide reporting which contained articles with NAI and those that did not. Victims in NAI articles were provided with a subtext that their deaths were the result of their wrong doing. Perhaps the victim had made mistakes but no such text accompanied the articles without.

This may be a result of the type of crimes surrounding the homicide, such as Payne was involved in an attempted robbery, stealing a car, and ramming a police car prior to his death. Or in the case of Swain, who had chosen to drive and park outside of the house where Pratt was staying, after he had severely beaten her two months prior. However, the vast majority of articles without NAI did not include criminalized behaviors related to the victim. The one exception was with the El-Sayed case, which may have been a person who was not Caucasian. Without running a criminal background check upon the victims represented within the sample, the knowledge of the victim's criminal activities was based solely on the information contained in the articles. This may mean that either all of the victims were not involved in criminal activities prior to their deaths, that criminal activity was not reported in the articles, or criminal activity has been ignored.

Ignoring criminal activity may be a valid assumption. In the case of Rachel Saxon who along with her son Isaac, were victims in a double homicide, Saxon's previous arrest for shooting into an occupied building with Dwaone McKinnon was not referenced. In the three articles pertaining to Saxon's death, she was not criminalized with information related to her past run-in with the law, although the information clearly existed. Having antidotal insight that Saxon's past was not brought up in reports of her death may be indicative that other victims may be invisible who had a criminalized background which was omitted.

Homicide victims without NAI received significant eulogized newspaper coverage were Jensen, Shieve, Angelel, and Lundy. It seems that the *Times-Standard*

paid more attention to these homicides and included the human side to the homicide victims, which was not equally given to victims with NAI. While the victim's connection to the community may be a reason why a eulogy was included, this logic does not fully stand, since Lundy had reportedly lived in Trinidad for only nine months (White, 2009, September 9). If one postulates that the severity or shock value of the crime dictates if a victim is eulogized or not, then there were several horrific homicides which had NAI which were not eulogized, as in the case of Doolittle, Saxon, and Taylor. This seems to be indicative that there is a gap between who might be "deserving" and "undeserving" of a formal eulogy in the *Times-Standard*.

When examining suspects within the sample, one might expect that the suspects would be viewed as villains who should be punished. One might also expect that the *Times-Standard* and the general public would demand justice when a murder occurred. The sample showed that suspects with and without NAI were equally criminalized. This is what one would expect, and this finding was not surprising. The criminalized category was the most generalizable and captured the actions of suspects and their alleged roles in the crimes.

Only three cases utilized authorized language that the suspect's actions were justified between those with and without NAI: Sheriff Deputies, presumably Caucasian, in the Payne case; Mitchell shooting Taylor in the midst of a robbery attempt; William Richter who shot Robert Richter in self-defense. The treatment within the cases placed more emphasis on the officers being justified with Payne's death. However, there was no over representation of one subgroup over the other. Each case offered explanation and

rationale that “self-defense” was at play for the suspect. Two cases were presumably Caucasian people shooting a Native American.

NAI suspects had four cases which criticized the suspect, compared to the three cases without NAI. This was a fairly even representation between the two categories. Similar treatment of criticized suspects is indicative that the manner of homicide reporting was equal between the two groups.

The most telling area of discrepancy between articles with NAI and those without was in the category of victimization. This category elicited readership sympathy and offered the alternative perspective that the murder should not be blamed or held fully responsible for their alleged actions which ended the life of another. Treatment of suspects in this category show how quickly a suspect is deemed guilty or if alternative perspectives regarding the homicide event are allowed to be entertained. The equity of nuanced understanding toward a suspect’s alleged actions reveal if ethnic privilege underscored the published *Times-Standard* articles.

The results indicated that only one suspect with NAI was offered victimized characteristics compared to three suspects without NAI. Not only were three suspects given victimized characteristics in the Jensen, Shieve, and Angelel cases, but the amount of published article space was greater. Their presumed innocence or humanity was spotlighted in the midst of a tragedy. The Swain case also victimized the suspect, Pratt, a survivor of domestic violence. Within the sample, it is indicative that a suspect’s circumstances which precipitated the homicide were more likely to be articulated if the homicide suspect did not have NAI.

On the other hand, suspects with NAI were authorized for their actions. Which in the case of Taylor and Payne were likely non-Native American suspects who shot and killed Native American victims. Additionally, the majority of the cases with NAI had an identified suspect who was quickly charged for the crime. This made cases such as Saxon, Doolittle, Montoya, and McCovey appear to be more “cut and dry,” with little presumed innocence of the alleged suspect.

One can surmise that suspects with NAI were viewed as punishable for their crimes to the fullest extent, since a personal side to the alleged suspect was not shown. Their actions were less permissible or acceptable in comparison to suspects involved in cases without NAI. A reason for the difference may be that there were fewer total articles with NAI which may have meant that the *Times-Standard* had published additional articles which were not part of this sample. It seemed that the suspects who lacked NAI were viewed as more human, in the midst of their crime, or that they might be innocent from their alleged crimes. The more extensive coverage of articles without NAI offered additional opportunity for the personality and possible motivation of the suspects to be explored. Potentially, the suspects without NAI were better known in the community and had a greater base of family and friend support at their homicide trials. In the case of the Jensen, Shieve, and Angelel homicide trials the *Times-Standard* noted many supporters for the suspects which may have resulted in revealing a human side to those suspects.

Another possibility for some of the noted discrepancies between the homicides which contained the Native and non-Native American articles may be due to how law enforcement conducted their investigations. If law enforcement was not closely

investigating a homicide case, because it was far away from centralized resources in the larger towns, it could possibly mean that the *Times-Standard* may have had little to report on. One wonders what the *Times-Standard's* reaction would be if a homicide occurred in Eureka or McKinleyville, California, and it appeared that the authorities were not investigating the homicide closely.

Subtle differences between homicide reporting of victims and suspects with NAI compared to victims and suspects without NAI, perpetuates an image that Native Americans in Humboldt County deserve or are to blame for the violent acts which have taken place. Defense Attorney Gray rationalized that Hoopa was a violent community as part of Alexis Pratt's defense (Edmiston, 1996, July 11). This epitomizes the image or belief that there are "civilized" and "uncivilized" areas in Humboldt County with the later occurring on or near reservation boundaries. This creates the construction of a narrative which has its roots in the 1800's perspective of "taming the savage Indian." If the local *Times-Standard* readership has been presented with fewer opportunities to see the human side of Native Americans involved in homicides, and is presented with only negative images it can be argued that stereotypes have been perpetuated toward the local Indigenous population. The absence or less frequent negative commentary toward homicide cases without NAI suggests a disparity which should be addressed.

### Usage of “Kill Words” within Newspaper Articles

Research Question 3: What is the association and proximity of the words murderer, slayer, killer, and shooter in relation to the alleged perpetrator and victim in various parts of the paper, including the headlines?

Surprisingly, kill words were kept to a minimum. The term killer was used in seven instances. There was only one homicide article with NAI using the term. When the term was embedded into the text, it was used as a way to shift and deflect blame away from the alleged suspect. In one case, friends shielded the alleged suspect in this way, implying that someone else was responsible for the crime.

The *Times-Standard* placed the term killer at the top of two headlines and one sub-headline, thus sensationalizing the homicide. When in the headline, the *Times-Standard* was careful to include modifiers such as “accused” and “suspected” immediately before use of the word killer. This appeared to be a means to peak the readership’s attention, without actually stating that the suspect *was* the killer.

Only two pictures contained the word killer under the caption. One picture was in reference to the suspect. The other caption was below the picture of the victim, begging the question that the victim may have died at the hand of several killers. This was the only instance where the victim was linked to the word killer. The technique of placing the term killer below the picture of a victim can be seen as a powerful means to evoke readership sympathy. It is interesting to note that there was only one instance of a victim being connected to the term killer.

Killer was most often linked to homicides without NAI. With such limited representation, it does suggest that the *Times-Standard* follows some type of policy to limit use of emotive kill word language that could sway the reader to a particular bias. This is a positive observation. However, the omission of the word killer from most articles that included a NAI still speaks of a subtle inequity between the two types of articles. Could it be that the emotion associated with a murder was heightened when it was not connected with NAI and thus was tagged with the term killer? Questions regarding the *Times-Standard's* use of kill words is difficult to do, since a much larger sample would be needed in order to fully understand the patterns noted in this current study.

#### Further Areas of Study

Suggestions for future research might include:

1. Extending the study to include homicides from 2010 and beyond.
2. Enlarge the scope of the study, through use of microfilm, to seek and obtain all articles related to the homicides which were included in this study.
3. Compare the nature of homicide reporting in Humboldt County to homicide reporting to other counties in Northern California or to counties in other states.
4. Compare homicide reporting in the *Times-Standard* to smaller newspapers which also have reported on homicides occurring in Humboldt County.
5. Examine the nature of other crimes such as robbery or money laundering, in comparison of articles with and without NAI in the *Times-Standard*.

## Project Limitations

One obvious limitation to this study is the sample itself. Use of newspaper clippings came from the discretion of the librarian who clipped and stored the documents. It is possible that many clippings may have been left out of the pamphlet files, which in turn limited the study's sample and findings. Furthermore, with the advent of electronic databases, the librarians clipped fewer articles in the mid-1990s and subsequent decades. This factor may cause for richer findings from the 1980s and a smaller sample in the 1990s and 2000s. Originally, this study intended to use homicides for five year increments instead of the ten year increments. The modification of using a single homicide year (1982, 1995, & 2009) was a limitation based on time factors. A more comprehensive sample could have been implemented had there been more time.

## CONCLUSION

The nature of homicide reporting within the *Times-Standard* is a topic which deserves further study and analysis. The findings within this current study indicate that within the sample of 68 articles, news coverage between articles with and without NAI contained subtle differences. There were collectively fewer pictures included in the articles without NAI, and only one picture of a homicide victim included. Kill word language related to the alleged suspect was limited to the term killer and occurred primarily with homicides without NAI.

While no generalized assertions should be made beyond the scope of the articles represented with the study's sample, articles without NAI were more frequently eulogized in homicides; the suspects were more likely to be portrayed as victims during various points of the newspaper reporting. Victims without NAI were less likely to be criticized for their deaths and the suspects were more likely to be authorized in their actions. Articles with NAI were more likely to criminalize the victims. Eulogized language pertaining to the victims was infrequent or missing. Homicide victims might also be criticized for causing their own deaths. When a homicide involved a victim with NAI and a suspect without, it was more common for the suspect to be authorized for their actions, than when both the victim and suspect did not have NAI.

The ways of determining who might have Native American heritage or affiliation varied based upon the decade. In the 1980s, the use of identifying ethnicities was the most direct. In the 2000s, it was almost impossible to glean this type of information from

the articles, which was why there was only one homicide represented from that decade. One can argue that it is both a positive and a negative that Native Americans could not be differentiated or “picked out” during the 2000s. It suggests that the *Times-Standard* is treating homicides in an equal manner, no matter one’s ethnicity. On the other hand, it may make Native Americans invisible and the circumstances of their lives, as statistically represented in the literature review, also go unseen.

This study suggests that further analysis and research might be able to offer additional insight into this complex topic. The continuity of news coverage from the *Times-Standard* provides an interesting staging ground for further analysis. Unequal treatment within modern day newspaper reporting echoes the colonial practices of for the mid 1800s, where explicit racism was published and celebrated in Northern California. Highlighting this topic may plant seeds for improved approaches to the reporting of homicides, which is truly equal.

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## APPENDIX A

## Homicide Articles and Inclusion of a Native American Identifier

Article Title	Date	Author	Homicide Victim	Native American Identifier
Orleans youth killed	5/14/1982	None Cited	McCovey	Yes
Starnes to be tried for second degree murder	6/9/1982	None Cited	McCovey	Yes
DePaoli is cleared in Starnes case	8/3/1982	None Cited	McCovey	Yes
Hoopa youth killed in apparent robbery attempt	6/28/1982	None Cited	Taylor	Yes
Deputy kills Blue Lake man after struggle	7/26/1982	None Cited	Payne	Yes
Friends question Payne's death	7/29/1982	Heidi H. Holmblad	Payne	Yes
Shooting controversy rages	8/1/1982	Sam Blackwell	Payne	Yes
NAACP files suit in Payne case	9/23/1982	Cheryl Gibbs	Payne	Yes
DA: Payne shooting justifiable	9/30/1982	Cheryl Gibbs	Payne	Yes
Grand jury says no crime committed in Payne shooting	10/1/1982	Cheryl Gibbs	Payne	Yes
Murder charge issued in Virgil Doolittle case	10/9/1982	Heidi H. Holmblad	Doolittle	Yes

Article Title	Date	Author	Homicide Victim	Native American Identifier
Hoopan arrested in killing	10/13/1982	None Cited	Doolittle	Yes
Weitchpec murder trial opens	4/17/1983	Cheryl Gibbs	Doolittle	Yes
Man killed near Fortuna	4/21/1982	None Cited	Richter	No
Feud may have led to killing	4/22/1982	None Cited	Richter	No
No charges filed in Fortuna shooting	5/8/1982	None Cited	Richter	No
Elderly Loleta couple murdered	6/15/1982	None Cited	Jensen	No
Suspect nabbed in Loleta killings	6/16/1982	Sue Nowak	Jensen	No
Earlier arrest led to slaying suspect's capture	6/19/1982	Cheryl Gibbs	Jensen	No
Hearing opens for accused Loleta killer	7/21/1982	None Cited	Jensen	No
Hitchings guilty of murder	3/19/1983	Cheryl Gibbs	Jensen	No
Hitchings sentenced to death	4/6/1983	Cheryl Gibbs	Jensen	No
New trial in 1982 slayings	6/17/1995	Rhonda Parker	Jensen	No
Body of homicide victim found	10/23/1982	Bill Regan	John Doe	No

Article Title	Date	Author	Homicide Victim	Native American Identifier
Eurekan shot, killed, murder charge filed	6/18/1983	None Cited	Adcock	No
FBI asked to help in Hoopa case	12/17/1996	Rosemary Edmiston	McKinnon	Yes
Man held for double homicide	6/22/1995	Scott T. Smith	Saxon	Yes
Mistrial declared in Hoopa double-slaying	4/27/1996	Rhonda Parker	Saxon	Yes
Three charged in 1995 double murder	5/7/2002	Chris Durant	Saxon	Yes
Defendant in 1995 Hoopa killing takes plea agreement	1/14/2005	Chris Durant	Saxon	Yes
Homicide load racks lawyer aid	8/10/1995	Rhonda Parker	Swain	Yes
Hoopa woman convicted in slaying	6/6/1996	Rosemary Edmiston	Swain	Yes
Life term in Hoopa killing	7/11/1996	Rosemary Edmiston	Swain	Yes
Teen row puts man in hospital	5/8/1995	Rhonda Parker	Sheive	No
Man dies from blow of ball bat	5/9/1995	Rhonda Parker	Sheive	No
Grief mounts over ball bat attack *	5/11/1995	None Cited	Sheive	No
Victim's admirers to hold party just as he would want	5/11/1995	Rhonda Parker	Sheive	No

Article Title	Date	Author	Homicide Victim	Native American Identifier
Violent death stirs plans for healing service next week	5/11/1995	Scott T. Smith	Sheive	No
Jury finds teen guilty of murder	5/31/1995	Rosemary Edmiston	Sheive	No
Youth gets 32 ½ years for clubbing	12/10/1996	Rosemary Edmiston	Sheive	No
Search continues for nun	12/21/1995	Scott T. Smith	Angelel	No
Fieldbrook: Dogs fail to find woman	1/9/1996	None Cited	Angelel	No
Missing woman case moves ahead, slowly	1/20/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Body is found in pile of brush	2/14/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Husband 'incapable' of slaying	2/17/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Husband arrested in slaying	2/21/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
HSU peers stunned by news of professor's murder charge	2/21/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Sullen professor in court to hear charge of murder	2/22/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Friends mourn slain woman	2/25/1996	Scott T. Smith	Angelel	No

Article Title	Date	Author	Homicide Victim	Native American Identifier
Husband pleads innocent	2/29/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Husband 'shocked' at being suspect	3/1/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Public's help asked in murder case	3/8/1996	None Cited	Angelel	No
Delay granted in professor's murder trial	3/14/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Hearing set for accused professor	4/4/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Slain woman's son suing accused killer	4/4/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Teacher waives hearing	6/28/1996	Rhonda Parker	Angelel	No
Accused HSU professor can't afford own defense	7/11/1996	Rosemary Edmiston	Angelel	No
Delay sought in HSU suspect's trial	8/1/1996	None Cited	Angelel	No
December date set for trial start	8/3/1996	Rosemary Edmiston	Angelel	No
Professor's job file may be used in trial of wife's homicide	n.d.	None Cited	Angelel	No
Eureka man killed by gunshot	4/13/1996	Kie Relyea	El-Sayed	No

Article Title	Date	Author	Homicide Victim	Native American Identifier
Arrest made in shooting	4/15/1996	Kie Relyea	El-Sayed	No
'Serene' spot near Trinidad the site of suspicious death	9/7/2009	None Cited	Lundy	No
Man found in Trinidad RV park Identified	9/9/2009	Allison White	Lundy	No
Trinidad man remembered by friends as a 'sweetheart'	9/13/2009	Allison White	Lundy	No
Apparent homicide victim found in Hoopa on Thursday	9/12/2009	None Cited	Montoya	Yes
Vehicle of interest found in Hoopa homicide case; one man arrested	9/15/2009	None Cited	Montoya	Yes
Apparent Hoopa homicide victim ID'd	9/16/2009	None Cited	Montoya	Yes
Sheriff: Gunshot killed Hoopa homicide victim	9/17/2009	None Cited	Montoya	Yes

\*Headline above two separate articles with their own headlines and authors, written on 5/11/1995

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## APPENDIX B

## Clippings Used in Sample from the Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library

- Blackwell, S. (1982, August 1). Shooting controversy rages. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Delay sought in HSU suspect's trial. (1996, August 1). [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- DePaoli is cleared in Starnes case. (1982, August 3). [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Deputy kills Blue Lake man after struggle. (1982, July 26). [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Durant, C. (2005, January 14). Defendant in 1995 Hoopa killing takes plea agreement. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Edmiston, R. (1995, May 31). Jury finds teen guilty of murder. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Edmiston, R. (1996, August 3). December date set for trial start. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Edmiston, R. (1996, December 10). Youth gets 32 ½ years for clubbing. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Edmiston, R. (1996, December 17). FBI asked to help in Hoopa case. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.

- Edmiston, R. (1996, July 11). Accused HSU professor can't afford own defense. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Edmiston, R. (1996, July 11). Life term in Hoopa killing. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Edmiston, R. (1996, June 6). Hoopa woman convicted in slaying. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Elderly Loleta couple murdered. (1982, June 15). [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Eurekan shot, killed, murder charge filed. (1982, June 18). [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Feud may have led to killing. (1982, April 22). [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Fieldbrook: Dogs fail to find woman. (1996, January 9). [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1990+," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Gibbs, C. (1982, June 19). Earlier arrest led to slaying suspect's capture. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
- Gibbs, C. (1982, October 1). Grand jury says no crime committed in Payne shooting. [*Clipping from Times-Standard*]. "Crimes and Criminals—Homicide; 1980-1983," Humboldt County Pamphlet Collection, Humboldt State University Library.
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\*Headline above two separate articles with their own headlines and authors, written on 5/11/1995