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More Than Repatriation
Native American Student Narratives of Intergenerational Trauma

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

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by

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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my husband, Philippe Rosenthal, who supported me and encouraged me to pursue my dreams. To my children, Jacquelyn, Philippe, Dominique, Sarah, and Roseanne, who supported me and cheered me on throughout my academic journey.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

More Than Repatriation
Native American Student Narratives of Intergenerational Trauma

by

Roseanne Carmen Tomelty-Rosenthal

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Anthropology
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Dr. Yolanda Moses, Chairperson

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) was enacted in the United States in 1990 to protect the rights of the descendants of Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives to their ancestors' human remains and sacred and cultural items (25 U.S.C; 43 CFR Part 10). Although enacted to protect and ensure that ancestors and cultural remains would be returned to their Native communities for proper burial, this policy was often contested in the judicial system, such as in the case of the Kennewick Man, where Native communities were in litigation against the Army Corps of Engineers for over a decade (Bruning, 2006). A further complication of NAGPRA is its exclusive application to those Native Tribes that are federally recognized, which often delegitimizes claims from descendants of the tribes who are not federally recognized (Kelsey et al., 2011).

Universities, museums, and other agencies have fought Native communities for the ownership of their Ancestors and cultural items, protecting unrestrained access and use in scientific evaluation and exhibition (Echo-Hawk, 1986). This right dispute over

Ancestors and cultural belongings is not restricted to the United States Indigenous populations. Rather, this has been and continues to be an issue for Indigenous peoples globally (Lambert-Pennington, 2007).

The cycle of finding Ancestors and returning them to their final resting place, performing burial ceremony after ceremony, and at times fighting for the rights to their ancestral remains and cultural items may exacerbate intergenerational trauma already experienced (Colwell-Chanthaphonh, 2012). This pattern not only impacts Indigenous mental health but also physical health writ large, manifesting epigenetically, with the impact passing down through generations (Youssef et al., 2018).

The academy, specifically, anthropology departments may play a crucial role in perpetuating intergenerational trauma experienced by Native American students by the display and housing of sacred cultural items and ancestral remains (ARCS, 2022). To understand the complex relationship between institutional policies and the mental wellness of Native American students, this study focuses on the implications of routine exposure to these items on university and Tribal community college students. The intent was to highlight narratives of Native American university and Tribal community college students toward revealing the psychological intricacies experienced within the academic environment (Bradford, 2021). Soliciting these narratives gives these students an opportunity to voice their experiences and concerns, by which recommendations for improving future institutional policy and procedures may be derived. The desired impacts were to contribute to beneficial change by developing faculty and staff workshops,

improving awareness of potential impacts on student health, and cultivate a culturally-focused mental health program that can be replicated locally, nationally, and ultimately globally, that addresses the needs of all Indigenous students.

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Preface

Introduction

Who I am as a Native American scholar:

I write and dedicate this dissertation to you, Maria Herrera, my great-grandmother, and to your son, Felipe Portillo, my grandfather, for your bravery, all the painful experiences you endured, and the sacrifices you made to make this moment possible for our family, our people, and for me.

It has been a long and difficult journey for your descendants, beginning with your son, Felipe, and his siblings. Our family has endured the loss of our language, our spirituality, our healing and medicine, our identity, yours and your father's true Indian name, and our culture.

My grandfather, Felipe, also known as Grandpo, passed down most of my generation's knowledge through oral histories. Unfortunately, a lot of our history has been erased through the Albuquerque Indian Boarding School of which you were an alumnus and the many government policies, that forced us into reservations, the relocation act that moved us off our ancestral lands, and the termination act that terminated treaties agreed to by the sovereign Native Nations and the United States government.

Both the (Relocation and Termination Acts), impacted us directly, embodying our intergenerational trauma. Grandpo told me of his memories of you and how you would not, as he put it, receive any guests but rather have your husband receive them. Grandpo

recalls that you would never turn around to talk to anyone when they entered your home. You were very quiet and never talked about your childhood.

Grandpo shared a story about your education. He believed that you had attended a college, but he did not know the name or location of the school. I thought it odd that a woman, a Native woman, would attend college during that era. I later learned that you attended an Indian boarding school. He said he knew little about your childhood aside from who his grandparents were, (your mother and father). He had limited knowledge of our family history. Grandpo retained some information about our traditional healing herbs and plants, seemingly the only residue that remained of our culture. So much about you and our ancestors was simply erased. It took going to college at my age to connect the dots and learn what you experienced throughout your life, hiding yours and your children's identities to flee from the violence, never speaking your language again, and the loss of your culture for all your descendants.

After your (Maria's) passing, my grandfather, his spouse, and six children were forced to move away from his childhood village, Tortugas, New Mexico. Tortugas is the Spanish word for "Turtles". The non-Native residents believed that this village was named Tortugas because the area was home to tortoises. But the real story told to me by my Grandpo was:

> *When the village was raided by Mexicano's (Mexican's), se llevaron tanto's (they took many) del los Indio's (of the Indian's) a ser rehenes (as hostages) tambien para ser siervos (also to be servants) in Mexico and on ranches (Rancherias) that they owned. But there were many Viejo's e Niños (Elders and small children) that couldn't walk too much because they were too slow. Like, a Tortuga. So, the Mexican's named the village Tortugas porque la gente (because the people) quién*

se quedó (the people who stayed behind and continued living there), se movió despacio (moved too slow).

Felipe Portillo (n.d.)

Because Grandpo could no longer support his family on his land, he had to move from his beloved village where his Ancestors are buried, where he performed his ceremonial Native dances, away from his land where he grew his traditional foods and cultivated his medicinal plants. While living in Tortugas, a couple of horses were the family's only means of transportation. One horse was specifically used by my mother (Michaela Nevarez Portillo) and her siblings as transportation to school. My mother shared a funny story with me about a time when she and her siblings were riding their horses to school. This entertaining bit of oral history was.

One morning we were on our way to school, all of us, me and my brothers were all in a line on the horse without a saddle. All of us sitting on the horse behind my eldest brother. As the horse galloped, one by one we started to slide off the horse until only my big brother who had the reins was left on the horse. We laughed and laughed about that day.

Michaela Nevarez Portillo (n. d.)

My mother fondly remembers those days of riding the horse to school, despite living in poverty. She would laugh and laugh while telling that story.

Although the journey to the school was comical, the experience in the classroom was not as pleasant for my mother. She had a school teacher who's policy was to hold all Native American children back for two years regardless of their progress. The teacher kept my mother in the second grade for a second year without any negotiation. At this

time, government agents visited the village. They promoted the idea that the families in Tortugas could have better opportunities, such as education, if they moved from their village to California. Education was the ticket out of poverty for the Native American. The offer also included better-paying jobs and modern housing. So, with a heavy heart, my Grandpo and grandma packed up their jalopy (an old broken down vehicle) and headed for Central California, to work the cotton and vegetable fields (or whatever was in season at the time).

This government offer to Native Americans to entice them to move to other locations in the country with the promise of better housing, education, and employment would later be known as the "Relocation Act of 1956." The government did a trial run in the 1930s and 1940s before enacting the policy in 1956 to see if the Native people would fall for the ruse. Many Native Americans did, for it seemed a better alternative than poverty, inadequate education, and starvation.

Unfortunately, the Relocation Act of 1956 was nowhere near the picture of opportunity that the government agents painted. This is where my family story becomes very dark, as recalled by my Grandma, Grandpo, and my mother. My uncles and aunt refuse to reflect on those times and would never discuss their experiences with their children, my generation. My mother recalls:

> *We barely arrived at our destination as our vehicle was not really competent to make the journey from New Mexico to California. Once we got to Central California, our family was assigned an A-line tent, the kind that the military used on the battlefield during WWI. There were no separate rooms, no kitchen, and no bathrooms. My mom would cook our meals over an open fire right outside our tent. There was a community bathroom that I was afraid to use. I can remember that it*

was so cold. My feet would be so cold and red. I think that's why I have such problems with my feet.

My siblings and I had to work the fields, along with our parents, learning on the job. I was eight when I started working the fields. I remember not drinking water while working because I didn't want to have to go pee and walk past all the working men to get to the outhouse.

During the summer, we worked from when the sun came up till the sun went down so that we had light while working the field. When the school year started, we would get up early and work the field until just before we needed to leave for school. When school was let out, we would run to the fields to help my mom and dad with the work so that we could bring more money into the family. The place we lived in looked much like the "Tent City" in Oklahoma. They were long hard days for a little girl of eight years old.

Michaela Nevarez Portillo (n.d.)

For my readers to comprehend my relationship to this research context, I will now relate my own experiences that led to its development.

I credit the University of California, Riverside, with educating me about what my family endured. Unfortunately, my Grandpo and mother did not understand or have knowledge about the government policies and procedures they experienced. I witnessed my family's response to these hegemonic policies, beginning with Maria's story.

For the first time in my education, I learned about Indian boarding schools and realized that Maria, my great-grandmother, was part of the United States government program to assimilate the "Indians." Imagine, learning about your family history and the experiences that your Ancestors suffered while taking a class at a university.

I shared what I learned with my cousin, the genealogist and Elder of the family, who had previously discovered Maria's records at the Albuquerque Indian Boarding

School. The feeling was overwhelming when I actually saw her name on the school census. From there, my cousin investigated further by following the family records and discovered much more information. We finally had evidence that we were authentically Native Americans, and we had proof that is so important in the current discourse about legitimate Native American identity.

As a Native American student at the University of California, Riverside, I began to gain knowledge not only of my people (tribe) but about other tribes as well. For the first time in a long time, I found a community with the local tribes and the diverse Native American students who frequented the Native American Student Program office.

We, Native American university students, congregated at the Native American Student Program office and shared many conversations about identity and what it means to be a part of the Native American community. I learned that what I thought was odd behavior, like the healing ways my family would practice, was actually commonplace in other Native communities. I was relieved to find I was not so different after all. I was just a Native American.

After making this connection, I immersed myself in my culture by interacting with the local tribes. I connected with people from my long-lost tribe, who helped me along my journey of reconnecting with my cultural identity. Knowing about oneself and culture is so important for physical and mental health. Not knowing who my people were and where I belonged gave me a constant feeling of being lost.

One day, one of my daughters confronted me, telling me that she and her cousins felt cheated by my cousins and me for not sharing our culture with them. She said she

was angry with me for not teaching them about our language, holistic healing, traditional foods, dances, ceremonies, and, most importantly, our culture. It was at this moment that this loss really hit me. I felt so saddened by the loss of our culture and the confusion my children felt. I responded, “I can’t give you what I don’t have.”

Knowing you are Native American but having no evidence of your identity is a feeling of not belonging anywhere. This lost feeling has elements of intergenerational trauma, in addition to the other residual trauma that our ancestors experienced. However, learning who we are, who our ancestors were, researching our culture to learn more about ourselves, and looking for an Apache language dictionary to reclaim our language, all helped the healing process begin.

I began to understand why school was such a dichotomy for Native Americans, especially those whose ancestors were alumni of Indian boarding schools. Taking the discourse of the academy further, there is the problematic relationship between Native peoples and the discipline of anthropology. The very discipline I had chosen for my career. Yet in the anthropology department at my university, I learned more about the best practices of housing and displaying sacred cultural items at the academy and museums globally.

Working in the medical field as a nurse in my previous career, I was surprised by my reaction to this issue of housing and display of our ancestry and lineage. Although my fellow Native American students and I had conversations about many Native American-centered topics, I never really asked them specifically about the feelings that I was experiencing as a Native American university student or as a college student in general.

This made me question if my college experience was the same as my fellow classmates. So, I sought to address the following questions:

1. Do the other university and Tribal community college students share the same perspective on NAGPRA and repatriation (the policy and act of returning our Ancestor's remains to their families/tribes)? When I learned about how universities housed Ancestors and the display of sacred items, I felt like I had been punched in the gut. Were my fellow students feeling the same way?
2. Does the discipline, for example, STEM versus Humanities, determine the student's perspective?
3. Do their perspectives mirror the perspectives of their families, Elders, and communities?
4. I had a good understanding of the best practices at medical schools broadly and their use of cadavers, but what if they were using Native Ancestors for teaching purposes? Does that make a difference?

I never considered these questions as a practicing nurse. As a Native graduate student at my university in the anthropology department, my perspective changed when facing this issue head-on. To my earlier mind, all remains used for educational purposes were donated to the academy by the deceased themselves prior to death. Learning that universities have shared ancestral remains between them and used our Ancestors as best practices to educate their students gave me a new perspective.

Chapter One

Overview of Dissertation Research

In preface, I shared my life's experience as a Native woman, as a nurse, and now a Native American Elder. After practicing as a nurse for twenty years, I returned to college in response to the dire state of the United States healthcare system. My role as a nurse case manager revealed how broken the nation's healthcare system was and how it failed those who needed its care. The event that motivated me to return to school was when, as a case manager for an Independent Physicians Association (IPA) group, systemic issues in health care services prohibited an adolescent patient who attempted suicide from getting necessary services and provisions.

Numerous obstacles prevented this young patient from getting needed mental health care. The first obstacle was pressure from the insurance company to discharge the patient out of the acute facility, a facility that was supposed to treat conditions that need immediate treatment, such as surgery, delivery of newborns, or infection control. The next obstacle was an overall lack of available mental health care practitioners nationally. The wait time for an appointment to see a mental health care provider was approximately six months. When unable to secure a mental health care provider to treat my patient and because my patient was under eighteen years of age, I contacted a pediatrician. The pediatrician reported discomfort prescribing psychotropic medication for this patient. However, according to the medical insurance policy, the hospital had to discharge the patient since the patient was no longer experiencing an acute issue. The long wait time to

see a mental health care provider for a suicidal patient was far too long for a patient who was not well enough to be sent home. I feared that without treatment, this young patient would follow through with the intended suicide. This experience prompted a larger question: How can the United States of America, have such a deficient healthcare delivery system? How can we let our patients down, especially children in need of medical care?

I decided to commit myself to addressing that question. With my forty years of experience in the medical profession, working at insurance companies, as a nurse, and as a medical administrator, I can contribute to finding solutions to some of these issues within the broken healthcare system through my research and activism.

While taking Native American studies courses at a prominent university in a university system as part of my degree, I learned that the Native American healthcare system known as (Indian Healthcare Service a division of the National Public Health Service) was even more deficient than the United States healthcare system described earlier. How was that even possible?

Indian healthcare began with the United States military sending Army physicians to Army posts throughout the United States to address issues of infectious diseases and provide general medical care to Army soldiers. In 1802, to contain the spread of infectious diseases suffered by the soldiers, the United States Army doctors responded by inoculating the Native American population who lived in and around military posts. The United States Army's primary purpose of inoculating the Native Americans was to contain infectious diseases and prevent further spread to the military soldiers.

Native American healthcare, initially overseen by the War Department in 1841 and later transferred to the Office of Indian Affairs in 1849, underwent a significant transformation in 1924 with the passage of the Snyder Act by the United States Congress. This pivotal legislation laid the foundation for a new federally sponsored Indian healthcare program (Rife, 2009).

The Indian Health Service is a government healthcare program developed as part of a treaty between the United States Government and the governments of the federally recognized tribes. This agreement was based on Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution of the United States of America, which promises health services to members of federally recognized tribes (ihs.gov). According to Trahant (2018), Indian Healthcare Services provides healthcare to 2.6 million federally recognized tribal members from 574 federally recognized tribes (ihs.com). The Indian Healthcare Services program was initially implemented in 1921 under the Department of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Warne et al., 2014). Under the Transfer Act of 1954, it was then transferred to the United States Department of Public Health, where it is still housed today.

Learning of the disparities in healthcare services between Native Americans and non-Native Americans inspired me to investigate the specific causes and events of the healthcare delivery system that caused these disparities. I was deep into my research on the deficient Indian healthcare system, with a particular focus on mental healthcare services for Natives in both tribal and urban communities, when I was made aware of an incident that redirected my research focus to look more specifically at mental health and trauma issues in a different but more targeted way.

My focus shifted to looking at issues involving the trauma Native American students experience from exposure to institutional environments in which there is little or no regard for how Ancestors and sacred objects in possession are handled. The triggering incident happened at a medium-sized public university's anthropology department, where I was a graduate student in medical anthropology. The event occurred in the 1970s, before most, if not all, of the current faculty, staff, and administration had tenure. An emeritus professor, who had long since left the department and had passed away, possessed Ancestor's and funerary cultural items. Contrary to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), these Ancestors and their belongings were not reported to either the National NAGPRA or the university's NAGPRA coordinator. I was made aware of the issue before the general announcement to the department out of respect for my status as a Native American graduate student, the only Native American graduate student in the anthropology department at the time.

The feelings that came over me were overwhelming in response to this news. I expressed to the bearer of the news that I didn't know how to feel and that I felt that I had been punched in the gut and couldn't breathe. I sat with the information for several days, trying to process it all. In response to my visceral reaction, I decided to change my research focus to more closely examine the impact of what I had experienced juxtaposed with what other Native American students are experiencing on university and college campuses. My research topic, "More Than Repatriation Native American Student Narratives of Intergenerational Trauma", was a direct outcome of my visceral reaction. I now had a personal experiential understanding of intergenerational trauma in an

academic setting. I aimed to research more specifically the impact of how governmental policies are implemented in academic settings and to what extent, if any, they are helping to perpetuate the trauma we, as Native American students, experience daily. University administrators and lawmakers believe that they are acting in our Native Americans' best interest by naming dorm buildings in the local tribal names, claiming they are trying to hire additional Native faculty. However, these assuaging efforts of hiring Native faculty only occur in the disciplines of history and ethnic studies, not the STEM fields. In spite of these placations, the academy fails to be transparent and inclusive about topics centered on Native American issues.

To be honest, I was a bit surprised by my response to the news of the NAGPRA issue in the anthropology department, because I felt so removed from my people and my culture all my life. I had never identified as being Native American, since I was not raised on a reservation and was not an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe. Although I felt disconnected, my visceral response told me that, at some level, there was still a profound connection to my Native American roots. My response also surprised me, given my nursing science background. Students in nursing programs must enroll in and participate in courses that include working with cadavers and animal remains to learn human anatomy. I was under the impression that the cadavers studied were donated with the permission of the deceased person, but I still felt uncomfortable working with animal remains.

I needed to explore this practice further to determine how it was done without the consent of the deceased people or their families' permission. I did not know the history

and origins of NAGPRA at the time. So, as a medical anthropologist, I researched the topic and attended conferences about NAGPRA and the repatriation of funerary and cultural items to Native people to learn more about it. I learned about how and why this policy was developed and enacted: to protect Native American people and their remains and cultural artifacts from continuing to be unjustly used for educational purposes without tribal or personal consent of both Native and non-Native peoples globally. As an anthropologist, I believed that this issue needed to be investigated further. My personal response to this event prompted me to change my dissertation to the previously mentioned topic. I wanted to explore if this issue was relevant to other Native American students at the university. Thus, I first needed to ascertain their willingness to participate in research versus their preference for this topic to remain unexplored. After all, there is already existing literature on the narratives of Native American Elders, tribal communities, and tribal NAGPRA coordinators (Cottrell, 2020). However, there is a dearth of research literature that focuses on the Native American university and college students who walk the halls of their campuses and their perspective on academic best practices.

I initiated my preliminary research by engaging in informal conversations with Native American students at the university's Native American Student Program office. The topics of discussion included identity and the feeling of invisibility as a Native American on campus, the impact of intergenerational trauma on our lives, the lack of education on Native American history in the educational system for both Natives and non-Natives, the general lack of resources for Native Americans, the lack of respect and

dignity, and the lack of opportunities to represent Native American issues on the university campus more broadly. Amidst this constellation of topics, I asked Native American students 1. if they felt that my research topic needed to be addressed and 2. if it would help Native American college students more broadly. They concurred that we needed to address this issue and give their voices a platform.

Building on my initial research, I expanded my sample of Native American college students to include those from various universities and college campuses across the United States. To achieve this, I approached students who participated in the National American Indian Science and Engineering Society meeting held at the Palm Springs Convention Center in October 2022. I sought their opinions on whether the housing of Ancestors and the display of cultural items had an impact on Native American students, and whether this was a topic that warranted attention. The Native American college students attending this conference responded favorably and said, “It’s about time our voices are heard.” Another student thanked me for addressing these issues in my research. With the support of my university’s Native American students and the broader Native American university and college student community, I initiated my research project.

Given the nuance of this study and the specific considerations of being culturally sensitive to Native American people, I changed the research language used throughout this dissertation to show respect for Native American peoples. For example, as the researcher, I remain the student in this project, and the participants will be known as the “knowledge keepers” who share their knowledge with me and are given the position of

equal partners and co-constructors in this research partnership. The term "Talking circle" is used in place of "focus groups," and "in-depth interviews" will be referred to as "conversations" or "dialogues." These changes remove the perception of one person being dominant or acting as an expert over another, such as the interviewer/researcher being the person with an academic status over those who do not. I will explain culturally specific items as we journey through this research and hopefully open up a model for the reader, the concept of doing research, collecting, and processing data in a manner that is different but equal and perhaps even superior at gaining new insights and perspectives to a different worldview (Smith, 2012). Below is the terminology key (Table #1).

Native American Term	Western Term	Description and Rationale
Ancestor	Ancestral remains	The Term Ancestors is used in place of Ancestral remains. In the holistic Native American culture, it is out of respect that a body or any part of a person is considered to be a whole person and not simply a bone.
In-Depth Conversation	Interviews	The term interview is considered a form of interrogation. In contrast, an in-depth conversation involves learning through talking with the participant.
Research Partners	Study Participants	The term study participants is replaced with research partners. Those who honor the researcher by sharing their knowledge are the experts on their life experiences and the oral histories that have been passed down from their Ancestors.
Talking Circle	Focus Group	A talking circle is a safe space where everyone is equal in the conversation. It is a holistic and therapeutic practice of sharing knowledge.

The cultural richness and nuance of this research is in understanding Native American students' knowledge and perspectives on intergenerational trauma (Saleem et al., 2019). My research will include the following questions

Research question 1. What are Native American university students' perspectives on the institutional use of ancestor remains for educational purposes? 2. Do the university students' perspectives on repatriation and using human remains for education differ according to their discipline? 3. Is there currently instructional recognition of intergenerational trauma experienced by Native American students and their families? Duran et al (1998) suggests that the identification of intergenerational trauma varies from person to person, and sometimes, connecting intergenerational trauma to responses to life's daily experiences and adverse health outcomes may be challenging.

I wanted to explore whether Native American students associate traumatic experiences with the academy, specifically, its practices of displaying or housing sacred cultural items and or ancestral remains. Is trauma so embedded epigenetically and biologically passed down through the generations (Lehrner et al., 2018; Connolly, 2011) that it is difficult to identify? Finally, does the academy unknowingly amplify and enhance their trauma experiences, specifically through repatriation policies and practices through culturally insensitive acculturation and curricular pedagogy? Or some combination of both? These institutional policies may potentially erase or challenge the cultural understandings that Native American students have learned about the historical significance of cultural and sacred practices (Grande, 2015).

Traditionally, Native American ways of sharing and documenting knowledge are not linear. Our belief is not that one thing, event, memory, or experience happens one thing after another in a lock-step way, but rather, all things happen and exist simultaneously. When we reference time, we speak of the "Seven Generations". This term refers to both the seven generations that came before us, our ancestors, and the seven generations into the future, our descendants (Nutton et al., 2015). These generations exist simultaneously. For example, what our ancestors experienced and did in the past is what we are now experiencing and suffering from. What we do and experience, will impact our future generations, potentially causing them to experience hardship. Native Americans live by the motto, "Live to be a good Ancestor," meaning what we do today will impact our future generations. Therefore, we must make our ancestors and our descendants proud of the life we live for them today. In the spirit of the "Seven Generations" ideology, I will honor the Ancestors who came before me and forge a path for the generations to follow through my research today.

Chapter two

Chapter two discusses the history of NAGPRA and why this policy was created. I review the different policies, such as the federal NAGPRA policy, the California NAGPRA policy, the University of California policy, and finally, the University of California, Riverside NAGPRA policy. Then, I describe how these policies impact the student college experience.

Chapter three

Chapter three discusses the theoretical frameworks used to relate my research to predetermined theories. Looking through the lens of grounded theory, allowed me to let the data determine the theory most suitable for generating its own theory, with the support of other theoretical frameworks like intergenerational trauma theory. Other theoretical frameworks such as Intergenerational Trauma Theory and Indigenous Theory, can help to unpack the information discovered in this study.

Chapter four

Chapter four reviews the methods used to collect and analyze the data. I describe the methods used to collect the data, such as using surveys, talking circles, and in-depth conversations to gather narratives of the university and community college students. In this chapter, I discuss why particular methods, such as grounded theory research methods and mixed methods, were chosen as the best for this study. I also will explain how the software selection collaborated together for the best analysis for this project using both grounded theory and mixed methods unpacking the components such as surveys, narratives, and literature.

Chapter five

In chapter five, I discuss the data. For example, information shared by research partners is further broken down by characteristics such as gender, age, college year, and tribal affiliation. I also review a sample of the survey questions, including open-ended questions, talking circle narratives, and in-depth conversations, to better understand the

specific population concerns and the topics discussed with the partners. To understand the impact broadly on the Native American students, I included narratives of the Native American Student Program staff, Native faculty, administrators, and the university's NAGPA coordinator.

Chapter six

Chapter six is the last chapter, where I explain the analysis process. I used coding to identify obvious themes within the narratives and less obvious themes or topics that were unexpected in the initial research design. In this chapter, I will explain then discuss the project's findings.

This chapter also includes recommendations and potential future directions. For example, I discuss the contribution genetic anthropology may contribute to the topic of intergenerational trauma and how we can help Native peoples start to heal from the trauma. Importantly, I propose college policy changes and resources needed to start the healing process based on the research findings. I make sense of themes encountered through the narratives. I lay out how the data collection methods, the data itself, the analysis process, the theories, and the contributors of intergenerational trauma perpetuated by best practices at the university, all intersect to give a clear view of the issue[s] Native American students experience daily on college campuses broadly.

Finally, I discuss how this information will be disseminated, such as at conferences, articles, and reports for lawmakers. One example is compiling the information into a handbook format for use by college administrators and anthropology

departments globally. These alternative methods of dissemination serve as reciprocity for the information that was graciously shared throughout this project.

Chapter Two

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

Introduction

> *"White bones are reburied, tribal bones are studied in racist institutions.*
>
> *...The tribal dead become the academic chattel, the aboriginal bone slaves to advance*
>
> *archaeological technicism and the political power of institutional science."*
>
> *-Gerald Vizenor (Ahishanabe)*[1]
>
> *Crossbloods, 1990*

This quote represents the reality that Native Americans and other Indigenous peoples have historically and currently face globally. More importantly, Native American students experience this issue daily because of their constant exposure to displayed cultural items as academic best practices, whereas the Native community deals with this issue only when an institution contacts them to discuss the repatriation of ancestors. Native American students walk the halls of colleges every day. They are exposed to funerary sacred cultural items, some recognized as belonging to their local tribal people, on display in the halls of colleges and universities in the United States and globally.

[1] Gerald Vizenor of the Anishanabe community, was a professor of American Indian Studies at the University of California, Berkely.

Therefore, it was interesting to learn that the preliminary data gathered through conversations with Native American students indicated that many university and college students knew little about the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

Initially, a number of Native American students declined the invitation to participate in the study, which was sent via a blast email to all students associated with the Native American Student Program, including current students and alumni of the university. They expressed to me that they lacked sufficient knowledge about the topic to contribute to the study. The email read as follows:

Dear All

I hope this email finds you all doing well.

I am writing this email in the hopes that my Native American community can help me.

I am a Native American PhD candidate at the University of California, Riverside, working on my dissertation. It focuses on how NAGPRA/Repatriation and intergenerational trauma intersect and their impact on past and present University students (IRB approval #IRB-HS-22-121).

The purpose of this study is to record the Native American student narratives and to demand transparency and a seat at the decision-making table on Native American-centered issues, including more resources on campus to address the Native American student's needs.

I need the help of current and past Native American undergraduates, current and past Native American graduate students, and Elder alumni.

I will need the help of participants for:

An online survey

Focus groups (talking circles).

Individual in-depth (conversations).

Participants will be compensated $20.00 for their time.

If you are interested in helping me or would like more information or know of an alumnus who would be interested, please email me at rrose012@ucr.edu

This lack of responses resulted in a second recruitment email that specifically asked for student volunteers to help with a study that discussed student experience issues, knowing that universities may house ancestral remains and display sacred funerary cultural items and how that may impact the student's perspective on intergenerational trauma. The second email was as follows:

Dear All

I hope this email finds you all doing well.

I am writing this email in the hopes that my Native American community can help me.

I am a Native American PhD candidate student at the University of California, Riverside, working on my dissertation that focuses on how the issues of NAGPRA/Repatriation and intergenerational trauma intersect and the impact it has on past and present University students (IRB approval #IRB-HS-22-121). The purpose of this study is to record Native American student narratives and to demand transparency and a seat at the decision-making table on Native American-centered issues, including more resources on campus to address the Native American student's needs.

I need the help of current and past Native American undergraduates, current and past Native American graduate students, and Elder alumni.

I will need the help of participants in both STEM and Non-STEM majors for:

Current undergrad focus groups (STEM and NON-STEM)

Current grad focus groups (STEM and Non-STEM)

Alum undergrad focus groups (STEM and Non-STEM)

Alum grad focus groups (talking circles) (STEM and Non-STEM)

Alum Elders (any discipline)

Individual in-depth conversations.

Participants will be compensated $20.00 for their time.

If you are interested in helping me and would like more information or know of an alumnus who would be interested, please email me at rrose012@ucr.edu

Thank you so much for your help.

Thirty university students responded positively to the second recruitment email, expressing a greater understanding of the study's topic through individual conversations. This preliminary data will be discussed further in the data section in Chapter 5. The student's response to the first email supports the lack of literature sources and information, which makes this research much more critical to the academy and leads to the following questions.

Questions to be considered:

What are the Native American university and community college students' perspectives of institutional usage of ancestor remains for educational purposes? Do the university students' perspectives on repatriation and using human remains for education differ according to their discipline? Additionally, given the preliminary data of the students' admitted lack of understanding of NAGPRA and repatriation, what is the level of knowledge and understanding of NAGPRA? Where are the students learning this information?

The gap this research fills is the college students' experience by recording their narratives and highlighting the impact academic best practices have on the Native American university and college student experience (Mackay, 2007; Willmott et al., n.d.). Most of the literature on repatriation, NAGPRA, and intergenerational trauma focuses on Native American Elders and Native American communities broadly, and their responses to housing and displaying Ancestors and their funerary items at various museums and educational institutions. The lack of sources and information makes this research vital to the Academy's understanding of the Native American student perspective. However, first, we must understand what NAGPRA is and why this policy was created.

A history of coveted Ancestral remains and funerary sacred cultural items.

NAGPRA is a policy enacted in the United States in 1990 to protect the rights of the descendants of Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives to their ancestors' human remains and sacred and cultural items (25 U.S.C.; bia.gov; ecfr.gov). This policy enacted by the United States Congress was meant to develop a systemic process for determining the rights of descendants to ancestral human remains and funerary items, sacred objects, or objects that may be affiliated with Native American Tribes (Department of the Interior, vol. 60, No 232, 1995). Although it was enacted to protect and ensure that Ancestors and cultural remains would be returned to their Native communities for proper burial, this policy is not without its flaws. The judicial system frequently contests it, as demonstrated in the case of Kennewick Man, an Ancestor.

In the case of Kennewick Man, Native American communities were in litigation against the Army Corps of Engineers for over a decade to prove that Kennewick Man was biologically related to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and other Native Americans. Students discovered the skeletal remains of Kennewick Man in 1996 while walking down the Columbia River in the state of Washington. Kennewick Man, the Ancestor, was believed to have died 9,000 years ago, evidenced by carbon dating during the Holocene period (a geographic period that began 11,700 years ago and continues to the current day) (Watkins, 2004; Larsen, 2022). Scientists contested that Kennewick Man had Caucasian features and, therefore, was not related to a Native American nation. According to the scientists, he could not be Indigenous to the area, based on the theory that the Native peoples were not originally from what is now known as North America during that period of time but had crossed the Bering Strait (Oliver, 2006; Christianson, 1988). However, there are conflicting theories. One involves Indigenous peoples inhabiting the Americas more than 80,000 years ago as evidenced by the excavations and dating of artifacts in what is now known as California, (Christianson, 1988), much earlier than initially thought. Ultimately, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation were required to prove their relationship to Kennewick Man through Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) testing.

DNA testing involves extraction from a biological sample such as blood, semen, or other cellular tissue. Then, the long strands of DNA are chemically cut into fragments and sorted by length. A radioactive probe is then added and binds with the specific DNA to create a pattern that varies from individual to individual. In anthropological research,

DNA traces human development and migration patterns and links descendants to their Ancestors (Beeler et al., 1988). The DNA testing of the Ancestor Kennewick Man resulted in a positive match, proving that the Ancestor Kennewick Man was most closely related to families of the Colville Native American reservation community. However, this decade of fighting in the court system to have their Ancestor repatriated to their community, resulted in a traumatic event for the tribe. It once again challenged their identity and the oral history of their origins. Although a weak policy, in 1998, NAGPRA assisted this federally recognized Native American Tribe in repatriating their Ancestor, Kennewick Man.

One of the challenges with the NAGPRA policy is that it does not apply to remains or sacred cultural items found prior to November 16, 1990. This means that Native American ancestral remains and funerary items already curated and housed by an institution may remain in the custody of the institution, disregarding the rights of the Tribal communities to their Ancestors (Seidemann, 2003).

The question of rights to Ancestors is not specific to the United States Indigenous populations. This has been and continues to be an issue for Indigenous peoples globally. The cycle of finding Ancestors and returning them to their final resting place, performing burial ceremony after ceremony, and at times fighting for the rights to their ancestral remains and cultural items exacerbates intergenerational trauma. This continuous cycle impacts not only Indigenous mental health but physical health writ large by manifesting epigenetically, where these conditions are passed down from one generation to subsequent generations (Prembrey, 2002).

Universities and other agencies have historically fought Native communities for the ownership of their Ancestors, such as Kennewick Man, and cultural items reserved for scientific evaluation and displayed in museums and colleges throughout the United States (Landau et al., 1996). For example, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. argued that it had the right to retain ancestral human remains prior to the NAGPRA policy being enacted (Billeck et al., 2010). Supporting these practices, the Museum association states, "In the search for knowledge, we seek answers in the Universe, our world, all living things, and in ourselves." In furtherance of this ideology, educational institutions and museums are vigorously searching for understanding most particularly about ourselves as human beings. "Much of what we have learned about human development and prehistoric cultures has been derived from burials" (Marshall et al., 1973). Additionally, the Caddo Nation reports that as of 2010, at least 130 museum facilities have human remains and funerary objects culturally affiliated with the Caddo (Pertulla et al., 2010).

Aside from news articles, there is a lack of literature on museums housing human remains, mainly Native American Ancestors, and their attempts to resolve and comply with NAGPRA. I found this to be concerning. However, there are several anecdotal stories by university scholars who report incidences of students at a university anthropology department eating lunch while a human skeleton lays on a table before them. Another scholar shared their knowledge of a university obtaining sacred cultural items taken from a California Tribe during a genocidal act through nefarious means. This behavior is completely unacceptable and disrespectful regardless of the ethnicity of the

deceased. Why is there a lack of literature on the practices of universities regarding NAGPRA compliance? Why is there no transparency?

Since the early 1900s, people in the United States have identified Native American burial sites as a repository of historical bio-resources to be used for "educational" purposes, yet non-Native cemeteries' are not to be disturbed (Simpson, 1994). It takes a court order to exhume non-Native human remains, but not for Native American human remains. The statement below explains why a court order is needed to exhume non-Native people.

In the legal case of Pettigrew vs. Pettigrew (Whaley et al., 2009), the law states:

> *When a man dies, public policy and regard for public health, as well as the universal sense of propriety, require that his body be decently cared for and disposed of. The duty devolves upon someone and must carry the right to perform with it.*

Why would one cemetery be considered a repository of natural, historical resources to be extracted for study while the other, equally rich in scientific data, be left untouched? This question is not simply answered.

Why is it that in forensic events such as homicide, where human remains have not been located, we hear the family begging to find their loved ones, and rightfully so, so that they can lay them to rest in a cemetery where the family can visit their deceased loved one? Why is the same respect not given to all human remains?

With my forensic background, I have observed the disparity when handling the human remains of loved ones as evidence. The founders of the anthropology discipline set the precedent for such attitudes nearly two centuries ago. I argue that academic

practices of housing Ancestors and displaying sacred cultural items, particularly within the anthropology subfields of archaeology and bioarchaeology, established these practices that continue to the present.

Archaeology and bioarchaeology are sub-fields of the anthropology discipline. They involve excavating and analyzing human remains for educational purposes (Carter et al., 2002). Archaeologists have long used these practices when excavating areas, looking for evidence of ancient or prehistoric people and ancient civilizations rooted within a colonial context. The ideology was that European scholars dominated and marginalized other people, viewing them as uneducated and devalued, such as the Mayans, Aztecs, and the ancient Egyptians who lived three thousand years ago. The dominant scholars believed they had the right to their possessions and human remains to do with as they pleased. In some cases, the dominants possessed a finder-keeper mentality. This was similarly applied to Indigenous communities before the implementation of NAGPRA in the United States (Lydon et al., 2016).

Sadly, NAGPRA does not exist in other parts of the world. Bioarcheologists are given the impression that they must be allowed to excavate and remove people to be studied in academic institutions in the absence of laws to protect human remains.

> *I did hear one of the comments from one of the BIOS: "Well, I don't work in North America." I find it hard to believe that it would be any different in any other Indigenous community. And even though it's not the best policy here, NAGPRA, they don't even have that over there. And so, honestly, how would that have to be globally?*
>
> *A NAGPRA Coordinator*

Anthropological scholars argue that human remains are critical for educating future archaeologists, bioarcheologists, forensic anthropologists, and medical examiners. Papini et al. (2007) state that bioarcheologists theorize that authentic human remains are needed versus replicas because of the differences in composition, such as weight, look, and feel, osteoporotic or osteopenic versus healthy bone, which replicas lack in presentation. Alves-Cardoso et al. (2006) argue that the use of 3-D models made by 3-D printers may address this issue. However, these models are copies of authentic human skeletons that have been donated for educational purposes. This is a cost-effective solution because one human skeleton can be copied many times, giving more schools and students access to plastic skeletal models. This option does not entirely solve the issue given that the initial model is an authentic human skeleton. Additionally, there is uncertainty whether Native Ancestors may still be used as the models for the 3-D replicas. In the article by Cardoso et al. (2006), the skeletal remains are donated by individuals who have agreed to donate their bodies for scientific research.

Origin of NAGPRA's laws and policies

On November 16, 1990, the United States Department of the Interior enacted the Native American Graves Protection Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) to safeguard the human rights of Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Alaskan Natives, ensuring the repatriation of their Ancestors and funerary cultural items. Congress estimated that in 1990, museums and federal agency collections housed between 100,000 and 200,00 retained. I argue, how, then, will NAGPRA help to repatriate the remaining Ancestors in

the custody of institutions globally? We must first understand the federal policy to understand the discourse on NAGPRA and repatriation both here and abroad.

The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 43, Part 10 – Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Regulations (updated as of 04/22/2022) states the following:

Subpart A – Introduction
10.1 Purpose, applicability, and information collection

> *(a) Purpose. These regulations carry out provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (Pub.L. 101-601; 25 U.S.C. 3001-3013;104 Stat. 3048-3058). These regulations develop a systematic process for determining the rights of lineal descendants and Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations to specific Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony with which they are affiliated.*

Complicating the issue further, NAGPRA only applies to federally recognized Native tribes (Seidemann, 2003). This distinction can often delegitimize a tribe's claim to repatriation. In the case where an un-federally recognized tribe is seeking repatriation of an Ancestor, a federally recognized tribe must act as a sponsor in receiving the ancestor and then, in turn, repatriate the Ancestor to the non-federally recognized tribe to be buried in the tribal tradition (Cottrell, 2020). Historically, universities and other agencies fought the Native communities for ownership of Ancestors, as in the case of Kennewick Man, and cultural items to be used for scientific evaluation and displayed in museums and colleges throughout the country (Starn, 2011).

Since the early 1900s, biological anthropologists, scientists, and laypeople in the United States have used clearly identified Native American burial sites as a repository of historical bio-resources to be used for “educational” purposes. Although California has

implemented its own NAGPRA policy, Cal NAGPRA, this policy serves in addition to and supports the federal NAGPRA policy. Cal NAGPRA goes beyond the federal regulations to enforce the NAGPRA in their state's educational system as described below for the University of California's ten-campus system.

Origin of California NAGPRA's laws and policies

California NAGPRA (Cal NAGPRA) adds to the federal NAGPRA policy the following:

AB-2836: Repatriation

> *AB 2836 (Gloria, 2018) requires the University of California to:*
>
> *Establish and support a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Implementation and Oversight Committee systemwide and at each campus;*
>
> *Adopt and implement specific policies and procedures to better implement the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act;*
>
> *Ensure that the campus committees implement the updated policies and procedures;*
>
> *Adopt procedures to support appeals and dispute resolution in cases where a tribe disagrees with a campus determination regarding repatriation or disposition of cultural items directly to the systemwide committee.*

"The bill also requires the implementation of a California State Auditor to conduct an audit commencing in the year 2019 and again in 2021 regarding the University of California's compliance with the federal and California acts and to report its findings to the Legislature and all other appropriate entities" (nahc.ca.gov). This bill

supports and extends the federal NAGPRA legislation with a more robust accountability for the state institutions. Also added by Assemblyman James Ramos is the section below:

AB-275: Native American cultural preservation

AB 275 (Ramos, 2020) requires the University of California to:

- *Designate one or more liaisons to engage in consultation with California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Commission;*

1. This means that each California institution requires the State of California law to designate at least one representative per institution to assist in repatriating Native American ancestral remains and any sacred cultural items.
2. *Appoint members to the UC NAGPRA Committees upon nomination by the Commission;*

3. *Appoint members to the UC NAGPRA Committees from each California institution upon nomination by the Commission.*

By California state law, the UCs are required to have committees that oversee NAGPRA. And the committees have to be composed of very specific individuals. Right? So, there needs to be three tribal representatives on the committee and three people from the UC, and there are specific requirements that those people also need to meet.

NAGPRA Coordinator

Continuing the addition by Assemblyman Ramos:

Implement systemwide policies by January 1, 2021, and implement campus policies within one year after the adoption of the systemwide policies;

3. University of California systemwide policies will be implemented by January 1, 2021, and individual campus policies specific to their campuses will be implemented within one year after adopting the systemwide policies.

- Adopt and implement specific updated policies and procedures to better implement the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act;

4. This policy requires institutions to implement updated policies and update and maintain them as the federal NAGPRA laws are updated.

- Adopt procedures to support appeals and dispute resolution when a tribe disagrees with a campus determination regarding the repatriation or disposition of human remains or cultural items directly to the U.C. Office of the President or a different oversight committee;

5. This item states that each University of California campus must adopt policies and procedures to support appeals and dispute resolution should a tribe disagree with a University of California campus that has decided regarding repatriation or disposition of human remains or cultural items directly to the U.C. Office of the President or a different oversight committee;

- *Complete preliminary inventories and summaries by January 1, 2022.*

6. This line item states that all University of California campuses must complete a preliminary inventory and a summary of the items in their care by January 1, 2022, and create a report to be sent to the University of California system NAGPRA committee, Cal NAGPRA, and federal NAGPRA agency.

It is important to note that each educational institution may have and often does implement its own NAGPRA policies specific to its campus, designed to support and maintain the federal NAGPRA standards.

Intergenerational Trauma

Focusing on intergenerational trauma, I wanted to explore the following questions: How do NAGPRA policies from educational institutions impact Native American students' college experience? What are institutions doing to help with everyday traumatic experiences? Unfortunately, one of the disconnects that I have found in the literature is the failure to recognize the relationship Native students may already have to the cultural items on display in higher education institutions. Relatedly, another is consideration of how these practices perpetuate intergenerational trauma of the Native American students. I was interested in researching how these policies and practices may

impact their success or failure to complete their academic programs and or their decision to continue on to graduate programs, particularly with the high rates of psychosocial issues that Native Americans generally experience (Bradford, 2021).

Native Americans experience higher rates of psychosocial issues than other ethnic groups, including but not limited to depression, poverty, domestic violence, and substance use. Looking through a lens of historical loss, also known as the intergenerational trauma lens, helps to identify social determinants of health that become embodied in Native peoples (Walters et al., 2011). Historical loss includes misidentification of individuals, conflicts over repatriation, and lack of appropriate and respectful care of cultural items and ancestral remains. Thus, it is imperative that university and college campuses with Native American student enrollment understand how traumatic historical events impact these students in present time.

American Indians experienced massive losses of lives, land, and culture from European contact and colonization, resulting in a long legacy of chronic trauma and unresolved grief across generations. For example, the creation of reservations by imprisoning many tribes and moving them to other areas of this country foreign to them impacted available resources, such as traditional diets and medicinal plants, further contributing to the loss of Native American lives (Trafzer et al., 2001).

This phenomenon, known as historical unresolved grief and or intergenerational trauma, contributes to the current social pathology of high rates of suicide, homicide, domestic violence, child abuse, alcoholism, and other social problems among American Indians found in current Native American communities (Brave Heart et al., 1998).

Intergenerational trauma, also known by other names such as historical trauma, generational trauma, and most importantly understood by Native American peoples as blood trauma, is a specific trauma that has historically been experienced by a group of people and passed down to their descendants. It is trauma that has been systematically perpetrated, generation after generation. This framework helps us understand intergenerational trauma's socioeconomic and psychological impact (Grant, H., 2008).

Origin of the Intergenerational Theory

The origin of intergenerational trauma can be traced back to events that happened shortly after European first contact in the 16th and 17th centuries. Literature recounts a General's report about employing wool blankets given to freezing Indians laced with the smallpox virus. Below is a conversation between two military leaders, General Jeffery Amherst and Col. Henry Bouquet, in June and July of the year 1763:

> *"Could it not be contrived to send the smallpox among those disaffected tribes of Indians? On this occasion, we must use every stratagem in our power to reduce them."*
>
> *General Jeffery Amherst, June 29, 1763*

> *"I will try to inoculate the Indians my means of blankets that may fall in their hands, taking care however not to get the disease myself."*
>
> *Col. Henry Bouquet, 13 July 1763*

"You will do well to try to inoculate the Indians be means of blankets, as well as to try every other method that can serve to extirpate this execrable race."

General Jeffery Amherst, 16 July 1763

This event wiped out 30 percent of the Indigenous population from the East to the West Coast throughout what is now known as North America. Native Americans were forced into designated areas, known as reservations (Trafzer et al., 2001), resulting in famine, illness, and death. To contain and maintain control of the Native Americans and their movements, the United States government rounded up members of the Native Nations, sometimes different nations together, resulting in the different nations competing for resources, leading to their demise (Thorton, 1987; Trafzer, 2012). Consuming unfamiliar foods caused digestive issues, and unavailable medicinal sources further contributed to severe illness and, ultimately, death (Dippel, 2010).

Initially, non-Natives created Indian reservations in specific areas that were sometimes relocated throughout history according to the need for resources to support non-Native communities. This westward expansion is depicted in the famous painting by the artist George Crofutt in 1873, of a woman carrying a book flying over people traveling to the West by wagon trains, horses, stagecoaches, and trains, thereby forcing Native Americans and Buffalo further and further back to the West Coast. The dogma embodied in the painting was termed "Manifest Destiny," searching for fertile prime land allocated to non-Natives. As a result, Native Americans were moved from area to area all across the United States (Duran et al., 1998) as in the story "Bury My Heart in Wounded

Knee" (Brown, 2001). This story depicts how Native Americans were made to walk long distances across the country to other areas designated for reservations for the Native Americans to remain under the control of the U.S. government army (Elliott, 1948).

Today, Indian reservations remain across the United States, where many Native Americans live in poverty (Sandefur, 1989). Meanwhile, other Native people have the opportunity of gaming, better known as casinos on their land, and now live more comfortably (Mezey, 1999). Gaming can be profitable and elevate the socioeconomic status of the tribe, but it has its cons. The cons as a result of gaming are Native Americans leaving designated reservations or ancestral lands, thereby sacrificing relationships with Elders and community, resulting in the loss of language, traditional diets, spiritual practices, and culture. Although Native tribal members are not required to stay on the reservations, relocating off of the reservation in some situations may result in the loss of their status as a federally recognized tribal member and the loss of ancestral land. Thus, the vacant ancestral land will be returned to the federal government since, per many treaties, the federal government owns the land, not the tribal members. Furthermore, the federal government may confiscate ancestral land if the descendants of tribal members' blood quantum falls below the percentage required per the treaty agreed to by the federal government and the tribe, which can vary from tribe to tribe (Day, 2020).

Blood quantum is the percentage of Native American blood a tribal member must have to qualify as a Native American (Mulholland, 2020). In my view, blood quantum is just another way to check pedigree in a manner no different than checking an animal's

pedigree. Unlike the one-drop rule (Sharfstein, 2006) that African Americans lived through, where one drop of African blood would classify the person as an African American, which limited access to such things as hotels, business entrances, restaurants, and many other places during the Jim Crow segregation era (Gill et al., 2018).

Native Americans had to prove their pedigree to claim their right to treaty contracts such as healthcare and reservation land allotment (Clark, 2004). Before current technology, the method used to gauge the blood quantum was to follow the Native Americans' lineage. Now, blood samples are used to determine blood quantum along with lineage records to determine legitimacy. I argue that this form of identity validity is considered a form of biopolitics, a theory discovered by Foucault. As part of his lectures at the College de France, Foucault (2004) described biopolitics as a government's power and control over those less powerful. Setting precedents over centuries, these practices have resulted in the loss of Native languages, spiritual practices, ancestral land, and cultural knowledge and practices, which has contributed significantly to intergenerational trauma (Schmidt, 2011).

Historical versus Intergenerational Trauma

Psychiatry.com, explains historical trauma as the psychological effects of forced relocation, assimilation, and other traumas inflicted on Indigenous peoples that persist today. The good news is that Indigenous peoples are confronting the trauma, learning their authentic histories, and reconnecting with Indigenous spiritual practices and culture

to assist the healing journey. Still, the continuing discrimination and ongoing trauma embodied in intergenerational trauma hinder that progress (Duran et al., 1995).

Intergenerational trauma is the unconscious grief from the historical trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples that is passed from generation to generation due to forced relocation, land dispossession, and loss of spiritual practices, language, and culture. If not addressed and identified accurately, depression, anxiety, PTSD, and substance use can be outward manifestations of intergenerational trauma and unresolved historical grief (Brave Heart Yellow Horse, 2000). The term “unresolved grief” is used to explain the social pathology of many social problems experienced by Native Americans today. Utilizing the abundance of literature on Jewish Holocaust survivors, Brave Heart et al. (1998) use a comparative study to gain an understanding of the transmission of trauma and explore Indigenous interventions. Kirmayer et al. (2014) argue that although Native American genocide is compared to the Holocaust, in the postcolonial context, Native Americans as victims continue to live alongside the perpetrators of their subjugation, which also impedes a healthy grieving process” (Colwell, 2019)

Native American trauma is not simply trauma experienced by the individual. Instead, cultural trauma is experienced by a whole population. Utilizing a population-based psychiatric epidemiological study, Jervis (2009) observed how cultural trauma or psychological wounding was expressed in the community's sociality and, ultimately, their worldview, specifically individual interactions with the community. As stated by a student,

Our communities since there's that big gap. Um, we're we're bridging that gap now. Um, with our kids and, you know, trying to bring the elders and the kids together and develop relationships. Um, but there's a lot of trauma that's happened in between those generations. And I know it's difficult. And then you get into family feuds and that sort of thing.

Community college student

Psychological wounding has been an essential discourse among American Indian and Alaska Native communities. These essential discourses focus on how historical trauma has impacted these communities, often resulting in multiple adverse health conditions. Psychological wounding associated with policies, such as Native American children forced into attending Indian Boarding Schools, shows how trauma has shaped the societal and biophysical outcomes of Native Americans (Walters et al., 2011).

One of the policies that has a significant impact on physical and mental health, socioeconomic status, and trust in and lack of motivation to seek higher education in the Native American population is the assimilation policy through Indian Boarding schools (Trafzer et al., 2006). The root cause of apprehension and mistrust of the educational system is the long history of maltreatment of Native American children and the recent discovery of Native American children's remains at these historical boarding schools. Where children were buried in boarding school cemeteries, sometimes in mass graves, whether due to homicide or natural causes. Confirmation of the mass graves of children has been unearthed at several boarding schools in Canada, including Kamloops in Ottawa, Brandon in Manitoba (Hamilton, 2021; nytimes.com), as well as boarding schools throughout the United States, including Carlisle in Pennsylvania.

Boarding schools

Religious churches operated many of the more than 523 government-funded Indian boarding schools. There were 20,000 Native American children in boarding schools by 1900. By 1925, the number of Native American children attending Indian boarding schools increased to 60,889. Some of the children were sent voluntarily by their families in hopes of a better life for their children, and others were forced by the Bureau of Indian Affairs agents (boardingschoolhealing.org). The main goal of Indian boarding schools was cultural genocide by way of assimilation, a project that proved to be successful.

In 1860, the Yakima Indian Reservation in Washington State established the first Indian boarding school in the United States (native partnership.org). Col. Richard Pratt, who founded Indian boarding schools, stated that the primary goal was to assimilate the Native American population through the prevention of Native American languages, spirituality, healing practices, and, ultimately, culture. Below is his statement.

> *"A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him and save the man."*
>
> *Col. Richard Pratt*

The common practice of cultural genocide by assimilation involved punishing children for speaking their Native language, practicing their spirituality, stripping them of their Native clothing, replacing their clothing with non-Native clothing, cutting and styling their hair in non-Native hairstyles (Trafzer et al., 2006). Cutting of the Native

children's hair was problematic because in some tribes the practice of cutting one's hair is a sacred practice reserved only for grieving the death of a loved one. Consequently, cutting the child's hair was a traumatic experience for the child, especially when the child was at the school alone without family and community and could not advocate for themselves.

Indian boarding schools were institutions known for housing Native American children suffering from diseases, who were left uncared for or lacked adequate care because of the shortage of trained medical staff. Ultimately, this resulted in the death of many children (Trafzer, 2009). At times, because of the shortage of trained medical staff, the sick children were cared for by older adolescent female students who lacked the education and medical training to care for the younger children. As a result, the adolescent students would also fall ill with the diseases while caring for the younger students. Keller (2002) explains that Indian boarding schools were not appropriately funded to employ nurses and doctors to care for the children, resulting in the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis, smallpox, and measles within the Indian boarding schools. Many children died at the schools or were sent back to their communities, where the diseases would run rampant throughout the communities, infecting and killing many community members, especially Elders.

Historically, there was a very diverse group of Native children attending these residential schools nationally who were buried at the schools in individual graves or as recently discovered, in mass graves, leading to one of the main concerns for Native peoples today. How the remains of the children are identified when buried in mass

graves, given the different Native American ethnicities at these schools and would the different tribes prefer to separate the individuals to be buried with their prospective tribal communities, or would the different tribal communities prefer to leave the children together, avoiding disturbing their resting place? The answers to these questions vary according to the tribe and their traditional burial processes.

Although these boarding schools were founded and managed in the 1800s, the trauma persists and is passed down from generation to generation. What is constant in this process are the oral histories of the children who experienced life removed from their tribal traditions in the Indian boarding school system throughout the United States and Canada. There is a lot to be learned about the trauma that the students experienced from the school's inception in the 1800s to the Indian boarding schools that exist today (Trafzer et al., 2012).

Conclusion

One issue not mentioned in the NAGPRA federal policy, Cal NAGPRA, or the University of California systemwide NAGPRA is mental wellness or resources offered by these agencies to help with the fallout of repatriating Ancestors. One might argue that this topic should be first and foremost addressed in association with NAGPRA laws, yet it is not. To address the first research question: “Do Native American students understand the depth of intergenerational trauma, and can they identify it?” Literature suggests that

the identification of intergenerational trauma varies from person to person, and sometimes, connecting intergenerational trauma to responses to life's daily experiences and adverse health outcomes may be challenging (Duran et al., 1998).

Literature addresses healing by repatriating Ancestors to their Native communities; although not explicitly focused on the Native American college student population, the same theories may help to understand this phenomenon broadly. I draw on this research and that of Colwell (2019) to shape my specific research project in higher education. Colwell's article critically analyzes why and how NAGPRA has led and does lead to conflict resolution and healing from its proponent's perspective. Colwell (2019) illustrates that Native American tribal NAGPRA representatives do not correlate repatriation with trauma healing. This response specifically explains that for Native American communities, it is expressed in five different themes, and that healing is only one component in a very complex socio-political process. First, to the Native American peoples, NAGPRA and repatriation remind them constantly of the injustices of the removal of the people from their ancestral lands. Second, repatriation heals the Ancestors who await their final resting place with their families and communities, not necessarily their living descendants. The third theme is that repatriation is needed for healing in a personal way to promote harmony, peace, and closure. The fourth theme is to repair fractured relationships with non-Native academics and institutions. The last concept Colwell discusses is justice to rectify the wrongs created by using Ancestors as educational objects. Additionally, Ataly (2019), in her article, explores how the repatriation of ancestors and cultural items, holistic health, story work, and embodied

practices bring healing and overall well-being to Native communities. Ataly (2019) implements story work methods in the form of comics to develop the narrative about repatriation utilizing Indigenous pedagogy. A Native American student best summed up how repatriation begins the healing process with the quote:

I think repatriation is about trying to rectify or come to terms with the genocidal past and the loss of the land through the surreptitious ways that land was lost. And I think that with every item that is returned there, you know, the idea or the piece of it is that there's healing with that when the item is returned.

Native American university student

Chapter Three

Theory

Coyote was once again fed up with running around all day in the hot sun for a few scrawny gophers and rabbits. Dirt up his nose, dirt in his eyes, and what for? Barely a mouthful. Coyote had tried getting food at the supermarket one time like the Human People do but got [the life] kicked out of him for that. So, once again, he went to his brother, Raven, to ask him for advice.

Coyote said, "Raven, there is got to be an easier way to get fed. I tried the supermarket -got beaten up. Tried to get money from welfare but came up against the Devil's Spawn in a K-Mart dress. Nothing's worked so far. You got any other ideas?"

"Well;' Raven said thoughtfully, "the White Humans seem pretty well fed, and they say that the key to success is a good education. Maybe you could go to school:'

"Hmmm;' Coyote mused, "Maybe I'll try it. Couldn't hurt:'

Well, Coyote went off to the city to the university because that's where Raven said adults go to school.

In a few days, Coyote was back.

"Well, my brother;' Raven inquired, "did you get your education?"

"Not exactly;' Coyote replied, "education is as hard to get as a welfare cheque. To get an education like the teachers at the university takes at least 10 years that a Coyote's entire lifetime, in the end, you don't get paid much anyways:'

"When I got to the university, they asked me what program I was in. I didn't know so they sent me to this guy who told me about the programs. I kind of liked the idea of biology if I learned more about gophers, maybe they'd be easier to catch. I liked the idea of engineering- maybe I could invent a great rabbit trap. But in the end I settled on Native Studies. Now that's something I can understand- I've known these guys for thousands of years, even been one when it suited me:'

"So, I went to my Introduction to Native Studies course, and can you believe it, the teacher was a white guy? Now how much sense does that make? I saw native people around town-any one of 'em has got to know more about native people than some white guY:'

"When I asked this guy what Indian told him the stuff he was saying, he said none-he read it in a book. Then I asked who the Indian was who wrote the book. And he said it wasn't an Indian, it was a white guy. Then I asked him what Indian the guy who wrote the book learned from and the teacher got mad and told me to sit down:'

The next day I went to my Indians of North America class. I was really looking forward to meeting all those Indians. And you know what? There was another white guy standing up there and not

an Indian in sight. I asked the teacher, "Are we going to visit all the Indians?" He said, No. So I asked him, "How are we going to learn about Indians then?" And he said, just like the other guy, from a book written by a white guy. So, I asked him if I could talk to this guy who wrote the book, and the teacher said, "No, he's dead:'

"By then, I was getting pretty confused about this education stuff but I went to my next class-Indian Religions. And guess what? When I went in, there wasn't another white guy standing up at the front of the room there was a white woman!"

"I sat down, and I asked her, 'Are we going to the sweatlodge?' 'No: 'Sundance?' 'No: 'Yuwipi?' 'No: 'Then how are we going to learn-no wait, I know-from a book written by a dead white guy! I'm starting to get the hang of this education business:'

"So, then I go to my Research Methods class thinking I've got it figured out. In this class, the teacher (you've got it-another white guy) said that our research must be ethical, that we must follow the guidelines set out by the university for research on human subjects. The rules are there, my teacher said, to protect the Indians from unscrupulous researchers. Who made these rules I asked-you guessed it, a bunch of white guys. They decided we need protecting and that they were the ones to decide how best to protect us from them. So I told my teacher that I wanted to interview my father. The teacher said, you've got to ask the ethics review committee for permission. What? I've got to ask a bunch of white guys for permission to talk to my own dad? That can't be right. I was confused all over again:'

"So, I sat down and thought about all this for a long time. Finally I figured it out. If white guys teach all the courses about Indians and they teach in the way white people think, then to find Indians teaching the way Indians think, all I had to do was give up Native Studies and join the White Studies program!"

Coyote Goes to School,
Heather Harris (First Nations, Cree Metis)[2]
(Harris, 2002)

This story may sound foreign and confusing to Western academics. Nevertheless, it makes perfect sense to most Native Americans. Western scholars may be asking how one makes sense of the Coyote story. One might question why Coyote is the main character seeking an education. Why is the Raven referred to as the Coyote's brother, and

[2] Heather Harris is a Cree Metis born in British Columbia. Harris is a professor of First Nations Studies at the University of Northern British Columbia.

how is this story relevant to theory? If reading this story is confusing, then now you can understand that many Native American students share the same experience when reading and interpreting Western theoretical concepts. Western theory can be foreign and confusing, and research is generally a problematic practice for many Native American and Indigenous students (Beaty et al., 1986). As Smith (2012) argues, "Research' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabulary." Why is the word "research" considered one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world?

Native Americans and Indigenous peoples worldwide have historically been and continue to be exploited as research subjects. Research conducted with Native American communities is complicated. As a Native American graduate student, I understand the complexity of applying theory to research that rejects Western academic methodologies and theories, because these approaches are foreign and cannot make sense of Native American epistemology (Denzin, 2010; Bradford, 2021; Kovach, 2009). Therefore, this study adopts a Native American perspective within an Indigenous framework, which employs Indigenous research methodologies and integrates both Western and Indigenous theories (Szasz, 1974). Thus, I argue that Native American students may find themselves performing as the Western academy demands using Western research methods instead of the more Indigenous methods, which may be more natural to Native Americans. A core example is language use that respects the Native American people who assist with research projects and share their knowledge with student researchers, teaching them the lessons needed to complete their degree.

To address issues explicitly experienced by this population and rooted in tribal epistemologies, I draw from three theories that best fit this dissertation research study (Knowles, 2015). The three main theories that I use are Indigenous theory (Szasz, 1974), Intergenerational trauma theory (Smith, 2005; Brave Heart et al., 1998), and Grounded theory (Charmaz et al., 2010). I utilize these theories to address the following question: Do the academic institutions of higher education know the impact of their policies and practices on their Native American college students? Especially around policies such as NAGPRA, are these impacts negative or positive? What is the academy doing about it?

My observations are that the academy is aware of its impact on Native American students, and the university does believe that they, as leaders, are addressing Native American student's concerns. The university's awareness of the impact is evident in the mere fact that Native American students writ large only make up a tiny fraction of the general student body. Even in geographical areas with the most identified Native Americans, the university actively tries to recruit higher numbers of these students with enticements. Despite California being one of the most Native American populated-states, Native American students make up less than 1% of the total student population of the University of California system and specifically the University of California, Riverside. According to the University of California, Riverside Institutional Research, statistically, Native Americans along with Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders each = 0.1%, Black/African American = 3.3%, International students = 8.9%, White students = 11.8 %, Asian students = 32.5, and Chicano/Latino = 37.1% (ir.ucr.edu). The low Native American student population rates in colleges (Schooler et al., 2014) often result in the

invisibility of Native American students nationally, resulting in a lack of resources because the low population does not justify the need. During a conversation with the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs at the university, he stated that he was aware of the low enrollment of Native American students and that the administration is implementing more outreach programs specifically focused on Native American community schools to increase enrollment numbers. However, the Native American Student Program has created and implemented outreach programs through community college recruitment fairs, such as the Native American high school student summer program. This program invites high school students from tribal communities across the United States to reside in the university dorms (as discussed with the director of the Native American Student Program). The summer program assigns a university student as their dorm assistant and mentor, guiding them through each day of the summer program. The summer program includes a medical school tour, writing workshops on writing college application essays, and completing and submitting a college application, all within a cultural environment.

One of the research issues I explored was significant and vital issues facing the Native American student: the disconnect between Western academic practices that clash with Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies (Huffman, 2013). I pulled on Indigenous theory to understand and identify the differences that instigate those clashes.

Indigenous Theory

Indigenous/ Native American Critical Race Theory is an interesting contrast as Native American theory rejects the Western structure of academia and its theories, and

the Western academy devalues Indigenous theory (Kelsey, 2008; Pulitano, 2003). As Maori Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2005) noted,

> The Western academy, which claims theory as thoroughly Western, has constructed all the rules by which the indigenous world has been theorized [as a result], indigenous voices have been overwhelmingly silenced. The act, let alone the art and science of theorizing our existence and realities, is something that only some indigenous people assume is possible. (p. 29)

Indigenous theory is difficult to pinpoint, unlike Foucault's Biopower (Foucault et al., 2008) (I will explain Biopower further in the next theory section), where it is definable and singular in structure. Indigenous/ Native American theory is a relational ideology. It takes on a holistic perspective and comprises many Indigenous characteristics such as Tribal epistemology, culturally contextual, an organic process, cultural epistemic foundations of an Indigenous worldview, focused on change, flexibility, and engagement with other theoretical positionings (meaning it is not an isolationist theory). Indigenous/Native American Theory "(it) is critical, workable for a variety of sites of struggle, user-friendly (people can understand what the theorist is talking about)" (Smith, 2005, p. 10; Kovach, 2010).

Indigenous epistemology is complex and multilayered. As stated, Indigenous theory is a lived theory (Kovach, 2009), meaning living within the culture, speaking the language, eating the traditional tribal foods, and having a relationship with the land and non-human family. With roots in civil rights discourse that questions the foundations of the judicial system and equality theories, this theory examines structural and systemic racism in issues focusing on people of color, gender, religious beliefs, as well as

everyone who is on the edges created by the dominant race. It examines race explicitly through a critical lens (Delgado et al.,2017). Although Delgado (2017) generally argues for people of color, the book has an evident gap between Native Americans and their positionality in the overarching conversation on critical race theory.

Indigenous ideology is multilayered and diverse, meaning that not all tribal (Native communities) epistemologies are the same (Pan-Indianism) which is a problematic concept for many non-Indigenous people to understand. Indigenous/Native American theory is knowledge acquired through lived experiences and shared with others through oral histories. The coyote story models Native American epistemology by teaching about the Coyote's experience in his journey in search of education. As a Native American graduate student, I find it challenging to understand Western theory. Therefore, I use a method that most English as a second language speakers use to fully understand Western concepts: writing in the format of Native American language. This method is reflected in the Coyote story, where it is written in a storytelling format to clarify the concept of theory within a Western context. Kovach (2010) explains that Tribal knowledge is very different from Western knowledge and goes on to state, “those who attempt to fit Tribal epistemologies into Western conceptual rubrics are destined to feel the squirm” (Kovach, 2010, pp. 31-32). Kovach’s discussion draws from the perspective of both Western academics and Indigenous scholars, as Indigenous theory deviates from the Western academy’s preferred framework. Indigenous theory is holistic, and Western theories are more direct and focused on a single ideology. Indigenous theory, being holistic, is best described as a relational theory where all things are related and

intertwined, environment, landscape, language, all non-human life, cosmology, culture, oral history, and epistemology, creating a wholeness to the theory. For Native Americans, any of the items listed before must exist with all the others, thereby creating a theory representative of the total lived experience that includes intergenerational trauma.

Historical /Intergenerational Trauma Theory

I draw from historical and intergenerational theory to address my next research question:

Do Native American college students understand intergenerational trauma and recognize that it has impacted them and their families?

My observation has been that many Native American students have heard the terms historical trauma, intergenerational trauma, or blood memory. However, many Native American students are unable to define intergenerational trauma but rather recognize it by its symptoms, such as alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, suicide, and the lack of mental wellness within Native communities broadly. These are manifestations of this trauma.

Native American students refer to Indian boarding schools as examples and causes of trauma. Native American college and university students credit intergenerational trauma as the cause of their current problems and issues, such as poor socioeconomic standing, political powerlessness, and lack of physical and mental well-being. Addressing the definition of intergenerational trauma, requires drawing from the literature that focuses on the topic of historical/intergenerational trauma broadly, as there

is little writing on the impact this specific trauma has on college and university students. Yellow Horse Brave Heart et al. (1998) state that suicide, homicide, domestic violence, child abuse, alcoholism, and other social problems are experienced at the highest rates in the Native American population, which aligns with Native American students' understanding of intergenerational trauma. Students exposed to this trauma before coming to the university, bring these experiences with them.

Brown-Rice (2013) argues, "The primary feature of historical trauma is that the trauma is transferred to subsequent generations through biological, psychological, environmental, and social means, resulting in an epigenetic response to the traumatic events experienced by their Ancestors. Vanessa Brierty explains how intergenerational trauma is compounded.

> Imagine there are five people from one family in a line. A grandmother (Generation One), her daughter (Generation Two), then Generation Two's daughter (Generation Three), Generation Three's daughter (Generation Four), then Generation Four's daughter (Generation Five), and they are all given five pounds of an item [corn]. The grandmother (Generation One) gives her five pounds of corn to her daughter (Generation Two), leaving her daughter to carry ten pounds of corn, and then that daughter (Generation Three) hands over her ten pounds of corn to her daughter (generation four), leaving her fifteen pounds to carry; subsequently, she, in turn, hands her fifteen pounds to her daughter (generation five) leaving her to carry twenty pounds and on to carry generation after generation until the corn gets too heavy to carry.
>
> *Vanessa Brierty, 2024 (Pueblo Laguna)*[3]

The principle of transferring the burden (the five pounds) to future generations presents the idea that external influences, such as loss of ancestral language, ceremonial

[3] Vanessa Brierty, Pueblo Laguna
California's 45th Director for Assemblymember James Ramos from the 40th district.

knowledge, Native healing, Native cosmology, tribal epistemology, ontology, the impact of Indian boarding schools, alcoholism, domestic violence, drug use, child abuse, poverty, lack of adequate healthcare, lack of resources (some tribes lack electricity), education (Ravotti, 2017). This inherited impact is further perpetuated by universities and colleges that house Ancestors and display sacred cultural items in the hallways that Native students pass by daily (Lehrner et al., 2018).

Lehrner and Yehuda (2018) argue that the definition of cultural trauma is when members of a cultural group of people feel that they have collectively experienced a horrendous event(s). The event leaves memorable marks on their consciousness, forever changes their memories, and alters their future identity fundamentally and irrevocably (Alexandar, 2004). Cultural trauma explains trauma experienced historically, but I argue that intergenerational trauma is not only horrific trauma experienced historically but continues to be experienced by every subsequent generation. To explain how dire Native American socioeconomic issues are, consider when the government issued quarantine orders on a remote reservation in Arizona at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Deputy sheriffs had to go door to door to alert the residents of the reservation about the quarantine and make them aware of the pandemic that was happening in the outside world. The Native residents of this reservation in Arizona lack internet service, cell phone service, and cable TV (private conversation with a resident of this tribal community, 2021). This situation is not in a third-world country. This lack of resources and living conditions that Native Americans experience, exists in the United States in a State adjacent to the State of California, where we could not imagine citizens living in

these conditions. The Native people who live on this reservation do not live off-grid by choice. They are living on the reservation because this is what the United States government is subjecting them to. Native residents, desiring to stay on their ancestral lands where their families have resided since the 19th century and where they buried their Ancestors and family members, bear the heavy cost of living under these conditions.

Living conditions described above perpetuate the trauma by passing the five pounds to future generations. Yet, there are still scholars and mental health professionals who argue that intergenerational trauma is illegitimate, categorizing intergenerational trauma as PTSD or major depression and dismissing its historical impact perpetuating traumatic experiences of today (Duran et al.,1998). Exacerbating the trauma further are accounts of First Nations women in Canada experiencing obstetric violence through Indigenous reproductive injustice, referred to as eugenics. As stated by Byrd (2011), "All who can be made 'Indian'… can be killed without being murdered" (Delgado, 2016). Indigenous reproductive injustice, specifically coerced sterilization, is a common practice in Canada. Between 2015 and 2019, over 100 women from six provinces and two territories reported that they were forced into sterilization procedures. Some participated consensually because they did not understand what they were agreeing to. Other women found themselves being falsely told that they were experiencing complications, were taken into surgery, and found that when they woke up from surgery, medical doctors had performed a hysterectomy (Ryan et al., 2021).

These practices of sterilizing Indigenous women are not unique to Canada and have a history in the United States as well. Hysterectomies were performed on young

girls in Indian boarding schools to the point where there was a loss of a generation in many Native American families (personal interview). The goal of these practices was to eliminate generations of Indigenous peoples and avoid following through with government agreements such as treaties providing healthcare, education, and land to future generations. Eugenics is a form of forced extinction of Indigenous peoples so that governments could conclude their obligation to the Indigenous peoples and reclaim the land. Yet, another example of Indigenous people experiencing ongoing trauma. Why is this important? These stories support the ideology of "Biopower/Biopolitics and Necropolitical theories" (Rabinow et al., 2006).

Despite the apparent lack of connection between forced sterilization and the use of Ancestors in universities and colleges, I contend that the removal of a woman's uterus without her consent (Million, 2022: Taylor, 2011) is similar to the removal of Ancestors from their resting places without consent from the Ancestors or their communities, aligning perfectly with the principles of biopower theory.

According to Foucault (2008), biopolitical power is power over life. Biopolitics focuses on the anatomo-politics of the human body (including how human remains are treated), where the power is owned by the dominants (those who possess the power), such as government, hospitals, and academia. These biopolitics result in systemic disparities experienced by those considered disposable by these institutions (Foucault et al., 2008; Rabinow et al., 2006). Rabinow and Rose (2006) explain that biopower is a bipolar diagram, with the first being the power over life and the second pole being one of the institutional regulatory controls. Rainbow and Rose (2006) refer to the polarity as "the

biopolitical power of the population, focusing on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanisms of life including birth, morbidity, mortality, longevity." A prime example is the mistreatment of human remains of Jewish victims of Nazi mass genocide, who had been laid to rest in unsanctified spaces. This indignity is no different than the practices some bioarcheologists are doing to the Native American people.

In comparison, necropolitical discourse has been associated with the genocide of groups such as African Americans, Jews during the Holocaust, and should include Native Americans. Using Foucault's biopower as a foundation, Mbembe (2020), a postcolonial theorist, focuses on modernity issues about how forensic anthropologists embody this theory through the excavations of mass graves, including in areas known to be Native American burial sites and insist that human remains are important in their contribution to science (Geller, 2021). Given the modernity aspects noted by Mbembe, intergenerational trauma cannot be dismissed as strictly a historical trauma. Instead, intergenerational trauma must be identified as an ongoing trauma experienced by Indigenous people globally, which includes medical maltreatment, exposure to the mistreatment of their deceased, and the complete disregard for the mental health impact on Indigenous university and college students.

Many non-Native scholars and mental health professionals may consider Intergenerational Trauma Theory as traumatic events that were experienced exclusively in the past and thus are met with skepticism. This lack of acknowledgment then leads to ineffective therapy (Brown-Rice, 2013). Native Americans would argue that intergenerational trauma is the trauma being experienced currently. My research focuses

on Native American Students currently on college campuses and concentrates on how Native students experience the knowledge Ancestors have and are being used as educational laboratory tools to teach archaeology and bioanthropology students at universities throughout the United States. What kind of trauma, if any, are they experiencing?

Furthermore, what are universities doing about it? In the search for an accurate definition, scholars and mental health providers have compared intergenerational trauma to PTSD and survivors of the Jewish Holocaust. Although intergenerational trauma shares some similar symptoms like depression, alcoholism, and drug addiction. Intergenerational trauma is unique to those who are descendants of people who experienced the initial trauma. In other words, I propose that the transmission of the initial trauma is passed biologically from generation to generation.

Fogelman (1988) and Maria Brave Heart et al. (1998) outline aspects of Jewish survivors' experiences relevant to Native Americans. These include the difficulty of mourning over a mass grave, the dynamics of collective grief, and the importance of community memorialization. Unfortunately, one of the disconnects is the failure to recognize the relationship Native Students may already have with the cultural items on display and feelings that their tribal items have been stolen from them and are treated disrespectfully. We must recognize institutional and intergenerational trauma through their and their family's experiences, mainly the problematic relationship with academic institutions in light of the historically horrendous treatment of children in Indian boarding schools.

Community memorialization is extremely important when repatriating. However, we must recognize that with the repatriation of Ancestors to their communities, additional trauma is experienced by the descendant tribes. The cyclical process of continually locating and repatriating Ancestors or parts of Ancestors to the tribes, then repatriating each additional Ancestor or part of Ancestors over and over again, is an example of the perpetuation of trauma. The descendants of the ancestors undergo the trauma of having to bury the Ancestors and perform a ceremony each time an ancestor is located and repatriated. Imagine the continued sorrow involved in these practices.

With my forensics background, I have witnessed the public's sorrow upon hearing about a dismembered, missing and murdered person whose partial remains are found. The family performs their ceremonial practices to bury their loved one, and then, after a few months, another part of their loved one is located. Now, the family has to bury that part of their loved one. Then, a time later, another part of their loved one is located, and this goes on and on until the whole person is buried in their entirety. I equate the experience of Indigenous people reburying their ancestors or parts of them to this imagined scenario. This is the experience many Indigenous people go through with each repatriation, each time an institution locates an Ancestor and repatriates them to their communities. Keep in mind that there is more to this issue than returning Ancestors to their communities. Like many other religions, there are protocols that need to be adhered to with each return. Failing to do so perpetuates trauma to Native Americans further through the feelings that community members experience when they are unable to care for their loved ones as promised and as instructed in their creation stories.

Creation stories are important to Native American peoples. They tell the tribes about their origins and are a guide for how to live holistically in this world, how to care for each other in life, and the ceremonial processes for those who have passed. These belief systems are no different from the Bible, Tora, or Koran and should be respected equally. Creation stories tell Indigenous people how to care for their deceased loved ones and remind them of their obligations. As stated in a personal interview with Dr. Clifford Trafzer, "The obligation to the Ancestors was sabotaged because the local counties, states, and Federal Government allowed the destruction of burials and the storage of remains that continues today." Along with sorrow, the Native community experiences guilt, and each reburial is accompanied by feelings of failure to their Ancestor or loved ones for not protecting them from their resting place being desecrated and being used by institutions for educational tools. These practices caused chaos in the Native communities because creation stories never addressed the issue of how to deal with the repatriation of Ancestors and sacred items that have been exhumed. This is not to say that repatriation should not happen. Rather, the trauma involved in the repatriation process is just something to be mindful of when discussing the idea that intergenerational trauma does not exist or is not a trauma that is experienced currently.

The academy, specifically the anthropology departments, may play a crucial role in perpetuating intergenerational trauma experienced by Native American students in the display and housing of sacred cultural items and ancestral remains (ARCS, 2022). To understand the complexity of the relationship between the mental wellness of Native American students and institutional policies, this study focuses on students and the

implications of routine exposure to these items on students. Many Native American students across college campuses suffer from the awareness that their people have and are still being treated as objects without feelings or the intellect to understand that these practices are unnecessary and traumatic. Preliminary, informal conversations with fellow Native American students suggest that conversations about the problematic practice of displaying cultural artifacts, the housing of Ancestors, and related topics currently happen in Indigenous student spaces. These informal conversations generated the following questions included in the online survey: What are the Native American university students' perspectives on institutions' use of ancestor remains for educational purposes? Do the university students' perspectives on repatriation and using human remains for education differ according to their discipline? Is there currently instructional recognition of intergenerational trauma experienced by Native American students and their families?

Thus far, literature addressing topics of repatriation, NAGPRA, and intergenerational Trauma has focused on Native American Elders and Native American communities and their responses to housing and displaying of ancestors and their funerary items. Because of the nuance of this study, the population of Native American college and university students, and the lack of literature addressing this population, grounded theory was best suited to help identify what was happening in this exceptional and unique circumstance.

Grounded Theory

Most of the literature addressing topics of repatriation, NAGPRA, and intergenerational trauma have focused on Native American Elders and Native American communities and their responses to housing and displaying of Ancestors and their funerary items. Yet, scholars have neglected to consider the Native American college and university student population who are exposed to these practices every day while walking the halls on their campuses. Given the nuance of this research and the gap in literature addressing this issue, it was clear that a new analysis method was needed to understand and identify what was happening amongst this unique population in an unregulated research format.

This unregulated qualitative approach allowed my research university and college student partners the freedom to articulate their perspectives and use their traditional knowledge-sharing through story work (Cheeseman et al., 2012). Utilizing this research method to construct new theories may help to improve the disparity of literature addressing topics focused on Native American student experiences on college campuses who have housed ancestral remains and displayed them in the halls of anthropology departments, which, I argue, perpetuate intergenerational trauma. Indigenous Research Theory, Historical Trauma Theory, and Grounded Theory were the three research frameworks that allowed the data to build a theory of its own (Chiovitti, 2003). The intersection of the three theories is the best way to frame and generate this study's unique theory from the data.

Grounded in data, grounded theory is a research method concerned with generating theory from the data. Grounded theory features include the co-occurrence of data collection and analysis, the evolution of themes and codes from the data, the avoidance of pre-existing conceptions known as theoretical sensitivity, the use of theoretical sampling to focus on specific categories, the identification of social systems in the data, the interchangeability of memos between coding and writing, and the integration of the discovered categories into a theoretical framework (Noble et al., 2016).

Grounded theory is best used to analyze qualitative data. It uses theoretical sampling to generate theory by collecting, coding, and analyzing the data (Glaser et al., 1967). Additionally, the researcher may feel that further details must be explored as new theories evolve. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that theory may develop after initial key themes or categories have been identified. The researcher must also be cognizant of theoretical sensitivity. Theoretical sensitivity refers to the researchers' perceptiveness and the ability to give meaning to and understand the data. In terms of theoretical sensitivity, the researcher must identify data that needs to be separated from what is or is not relevant to the study. Three sources contribute to the theoretical sensitivity. First, reading literature helps with understanding the phenomena being studied. Second, personal and professional life experiences suggest a unique understanding of the topics being studied. The third source is the analytic process that utilizes the researcher's perception to understand the studied phenomena (Noble et al., 2016). Thus, this research method seemed best suited to this study. Yet, how does grounded theory, known as a traditional academic method, intersect with Indigenous and historical trauma theories?

In the words of Charmaz (2005),

> *I call here for a dialog between grounded, critical, pragmatic, and Indigenous theories of social structure. I seek a form of sociological theorizing and practice that advances the goals of justice and equity. I locate my arguments in a decolonizing, post-colonial performance space that draws inspiration from the ending Decade of Indigenous Peoples (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). I begin with grounded theory, arguably the most influential model of theory construction used by qualitative researchers in the social sciences today.*

Denzin (2010) argues that grounded theory does not have a grand, middle, or formal theory. It lacks a testable hypothesis and is not linked to an existing theory or formal argument. As Denzin (2010) states, "grounded theory is a verb, a method of inquiry, and a noun, a product of inquiry that work together simultaneously" (Charmaz, 2005; Glaser et al., 1967). "You let the obdurate empirical world speak to you, and you listen, take notes, write memos to yourself, form writing groups. There is no hierarchy, and social theorists are not privileged. In the world of grounded theory, anybody can be a theorist." I argue that Denzin's (2010) statements mirror Indigenous research methods in that the participant is a research partner, supporting that there is no hierarchy between the researcher and the Indigenous knowledge keeper. In the relationship between the Indigenous research partners and the researcher, the researcher remains the student, taking notes and memos of the oral history that is being shared.

Additionally, the researcher must include sharing their notes and memos with the knowledge keeper to ensure that the researcher has captured the true meaning and message shared with them. The researcher should only assume that they understand the meaning and message with the knowledge keeper's review. Reviewing the researcher’s

notes with the Indigenous knowledge keeper exemplifies what Charmaz (2006) and Clarke (2005) call a traditional positivist, emphasizing the importance of correspondence theories of truth. Another shared concept between Indigenous and grounded theory is connectedness and the data's relationship to the social world. In this study's case, there is a holistic relationship between traditional practices, Indigenous epistemologies, and the academic world. Thus, grounded theory's interconnectedness has political implications.

Denzin (2010) emphasizes the political interpretation and asserts that nothing speaks for itself. Denzin (2010) argues that Indigenous participation only fosters an analytical self-awareness through performances. I argue that Native students are performative (Hill, 1997) when navigating the traditional academic system. The traditional learning system is very foreign, complicated, challenging, and contrary to Indigenous epistemology. Native American students find themselves performing in the academy as expected and demanded by faculty, staff, and administration to succeed and earn their degrees. However, these academic expectations go against their culture, tradition, psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being. Denzin (2010) identifies that fostering an analytical self-consciousness structures a framework where Indigenous voices can be heard through the background noise of the traditional academic learning system, opening the door to Indigenous resistance and political integrity. This battle is known all too well in the Indigenous communities who fought historically. This reconceptualization lays the foundation for grounded theory and Indigenous discourse.

In conversation between Indigenous and grounded theory, Denzin (2010) identifies five significant difficulties: (1) Resistance to Western colonization. Smith

(1990:80) states, “They came, They saw, They named, They Claimed,” meaning that the Indigenous are excluded from discussions and agency of their methodologies, evaluations, assessments, representations, and distribution of the newly shared knowledge. In other words, the colonial structure propagates the exploitation of Indigenous peoples without acknowledgment of their essential contribution to research. Grounded theory allows the Indigenous scholar to challenge these practices and begin the decolonization of the academy by introducing Indigenous research methods compatible with the Indigenous holistic way of knowledge-sharing systems and by changing traditional research language to a more respectful and Indigenous inclusive language.

In its almost sixty-year-long history, grounded theory has served as a method to conduct emergent qualitative research (Charmaz, 2008, p. 155). Emergent means an inductive, undefined, and open-ended that begins with empirical information and constructs an inductive understanding of the data, accumulates knowledge, and is best utilized when studying new and unexplored phenomena. Charmaz (2008, p 115) identifies four principal philosophies of grounded theory. The first is the minimization of preconceived ideas about the research problem. Second, the data must be collected and analyzed simultaneously to inform the other. Third, the researcher must be willing to accept various explanations or understanding of the data. Fourth, the researcher must focus on data analysis to build a foundation for intermediate theories. These philosophies set the framework for understanding the method, beginning with inductive logic and including epistemology and emergence as grounded theory’s fundamental properties.

Charmaz (2008, p. 157) states, "Emergence is fundamentally a temporal concept; it presupposes a past and assumes the immediacy of the present from the past and implies the future." I argue that Charmaz's description of emergence assumes an epistemological concept understood as a theory of time, which concurs with Indigenous Theory's concept of time existing simultaneously. For example, it is essential to remember the teachings of seven generations of ancestors who walked before and share that knowledge with the seven generations that will come in the future (Nutton, 2015). The concept of emergence also allows for the unexpected to occur during the data collection, coding, and analytical process (Haig, 1995), where the past forms the present and future. Indigenous theory would argue that past, present, and future shape each other interchangeably. Consider historical trauma, where trauma is passed down through the generations using the concept of the five pounds taken on by each generation. Each generation has the opportunity to change the direction of the future, and they can look back at the past and understand why the cycle of trauma was not broken, which supports the ideology of time not being linear. We can also see how trauma is perpetrated generation after generation with new current assaults such as obstetric violence and the socioeconomic issues that are the current lived experiences of Native Americans today.

Grounded theory then transitions to abductive reasoning. Abductive reasoning utilizes the researcher's intuition in interpreting empirical observations and developing creative ideas that may help with confusing results (Dey, 2004; Reichertz, 2004, 2007; Rosenthal, 2004). Understanding that abduction may take a researcher into unfamiliar theoretical dimensions is helpful in this study because the nuance and lack of literature or

theoretical guidance prevent theoretical saturation. Charmaz (2008) defines theoretical saturation as a researcher who has gathered more data than needed. It is identified when the same themes are repeated in the data but do not contribute to the theoretical category (Charmaz, 2008).

Conclusion

The intersectionality of Indigenous Theory, Historical/Intergenerational Theory, and Grounded Theory is critical to this study. Each theory builds on another, offers support where there is a gap in the literature and theoretical concepts, and makes sense of what is happening in this new phenomenon. The unitization of these three theories collaboratively will generate this data's own theory, highlight the nuance of this study, and disseminate this new concept to those needing to understand this important population and their experiences on college campuses nationally.

Chapter Four

Methods

Introduction

In collaboration with the Native American students at a prominent Research University in a large public university system, my goal was to gain insights into how Native American students are impacted by the display of Native American cultural items and the knowledge that Ancestor's remains may be housed on campus. I was particularly interested in the relationship between the processes of intergenerational trauma among Native American students and university policies and practices which may not fully recognize that specific type of trauma. I utilized a mixed methods data collection and analysis approach by employing surveys, participant observation, and talking circle conversations. Every member of the talking circle was equal, meaning there was no dominant person in the group. Instead of formal interview questions, natural conversations focused on the main topic. Current Native American college students and alumni of the university and current students at a tribal community college participated via Zoom online meeting application for convenience for those who are time-limited and geographically distant. Partners for these in-depth conversations included Native American students selected from the talking circles, Native faculty, and Native American staff in the Native American Student Program at the university. With the collected mixed-method data, I utilized MAXQDA coding software to conduct analysis utilizing inductive coding processes.

Preliminary Methodologies

I began my preliminary research by asking for permission and insight, a standard practice within Indigenous methodologies (Smith, L.T., 2021), from Native American college students who were broadly involved with Native American student organizations at the university. I then expanded my preliminary inquiry to students I organically met at the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) meetings held at the convention center in Palm Springs, California, on October 6, 2022, and at the American Indian Affairs repatriation meeting in New Buffalo, Michigan, on October 11, 2022. Within these informal conversations, I asked questions that specifically sought to gain insight into their subjective feelings and knowledge relevant to my proposed research study. I aimed to gather their insights on whether research on college students' perspectives on the practice of housing ancestral remains and displaying sacred cultural funerary items would be beneficial, necessary, and important to Native American college students broadly.

The response was an astounding YES, and a few students remarked, "It's about time someone did this research." Another student emphasized, "It's time they hear our story and learn about our experiences as Native American students on college campuses where these practices are and have been the academic policies and best practices."

It was important for me to be true to my culture and to show respect for other Native peoples. I desired to not only have the support of the Native American college students but also for my research to fulfill the needs of Native American students and communities broadly. Within Indigenous research methodologies, Native American

college students who within Indigenous research methodologies, act as both participants and co-constructors of knowledge. As legitimate and equal research partners, their needs must be addressed. Also, in line with Indigenous research methods, Native American students, faculty, and alumni stories must be told in an Indigenous way. Doing so utilizes well-recognized cultural modes of knowledge sharing and methods production, in this case occurs in the form of storytelling and knowledge sharing in talking circles instead of focus groups.

The difference between talking circles and focus groups is that talking circles have no hierarchy. All who participate in the talking circle are equal in the relationship. There are no formal questions but rather more extensive, open-ended discussion topics. Another difference is that talking circles include smudging, a traditional practice of burning sage plant leaves, inhaling the smoke from the burning sage, and moving the sage smoke to cover the body, from the head to the feet, on both sides of the body. Burning sage is considered a healing practice and therapeutic cleansing after conversations that address sensitive research questions (Brown et al., 2020).

Research partner, is a term used by Native scholars to identify that the knowledge sharers are the educators in the relationship, and the researcher is considered the student. This research functions as the vehicle that escorts Native American student voices to those in power, such as policymakers, university administrators, anthropology department chairs, NAGPRA coordinators, university faculty, and university staff who interact daily with Native American students.

As a Native American scholar, it was essential that the utmost attention and respect be given to the Indigenous way of sharing knowledge (Kovach, M., 2020) to acknowledge our valued, unique, and equally legitimate Indigenous knowledge production systems. However, using Indigenous research methods can be especially difficult to fit non-Western Indigenous knowledge collection and sharing methods into the traditional Western academic system. This system traditionally conceived research methods as the ownership of knowledge, which falls solely upon the Western scholar as the 'expert' instead of seeing participants as co-creators and equal knowledge producers (Genovese, T., 2016).

There are times the methods from Indigenous knowledge production systems and traditional Western ones are incompatible. For example, the concept of the researcher in the Western academic ideological tradition is one where the researcher is considered the expert. In contrast, the knowledge keepers are the people whom the researcher seeks to gain knowledge for their project and are the experts in Indigenous research methods (Datta, R., 2018). However, using Indigenous research methods to explore and understand Indigenous knowledge systems of sharing knowledge (Hart, M., 2010) is critical to this research, especially when addressing issues that specifically impact Native American students' experiences.

Sample population

My primary focus population was Native American college students, including undergraduate students (current and alumni) and graduate students (current and alumni). I centered the research on their experiences at the university and the tribal community

college campuses. I selected the students at the university because they were students who, prior to my dissertation research, engaged in informal conversations about issues of identity, intergenerational trauma, and loss of culture. We, as Native American students, face these issues daily, both on campus and within our own communities (Willmott et al., 2016). These essential conversations happened organically over several years. They brought to the surface emotions of frustration, hopelessness, and feelings of invisibility on campus, where they were less than one percent of the student population of the entire campus. Meanwhile, Tribal Community College students were included in my research because some are prospective university undergraduate transfer students. I wanted to learn if these students faced similar challenges or if these experiences were first introduced and or exasperated at the university level versus the tribal community college.

Criteria for inclusion in this research study were that the research partners be current students or alumni of the university and enrolled members of a federally recognized tribe or tribal community identified by any tribe in the United States. Tribal diversity was also important for this research to pinpoint whether there was diversity in the cultural responses among the U.S. tribes. Participants had to be at least 18 years of age and able to read and speak English.

Utilizing a comparative approach between current students and alumni, I sought to learn if student experiences have improved, remained the same, or worsened over time. To that end, I extended my study to Elder alumni to have them share their perspectives on the housing of ancestors and the display of sacred cultural items on the university campus to see if the perspectives of current students were different or the same on this topic.

Five months into my research, I extended my study to include students currently attending a tribal community college. After realizing my research was missing critical insights from prospective Native American students, I added the tribal College. The Tribal College is a local two-year college where 50% of the student population is comprised of Native students enrolled in at least one federally recognized tribe in the United States. I focused solely on Native American student populations because they, myself included, are the people who walk the halls of colleges and universities throughout the United States. We are the students who consistently see our ancestral funerary items on display. Who better to address the issues and challenges Native American college students experience in pursuing education in a Western higher education system than the students themselves? Furthermore, prospective students' insights, especially those coming from a college that is comprised and focused on the Native student experience, were a vital comparison point to the current university students, Elders, and alumni.

Preliminary participant observation began in March 2018, when I became involved in the Native American Student Program as an undergraduate enrolled in a prominent research university in a large public university system. While visiting the Native American Student Program's office, we, as Native American students, engaged in regular organic conversations about student experiences and the impacts of intergenerational trauma on students, their families, and their communities.

As discussed in Chapter Three, intergenerational trauma presents itself differently than Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which is usually associated with our military

veterans. PTSD is known to be experienced by the person who experienced the trauma directly. In contrast, intergenerational trauma is a trauma experienced by a previous family member or Ancestor, which has then been passed down to their descendants. Intergenerational trauma is embodied and manifests itself through physical health and mental health issues, including within a social construct (Lester, R., 2013)

Early conversations with Native American students at the Native American Student Program office, were broad in nature. In these conversations, my research focus and key research questions were formed in collaboration with Native students. These questions were:

What are institutions doing to help with everyday trauma experiences? Is there a different way of healing from trauma? What should institutions of higher education be doing to help Native American students experiencing trauma?

Further questions I sought to address were:

What are Native American university student perspectives of the institutional usage of ancestor remains for educational purposes? Do the university student perspectives on repatriation and the use of human remains for education differ according to their discipline? Is there currently instructional recognition of intergenerational trauma experienced by Native American students and their families?

The relationship between Native American college students and anthropology departments globally has been, at best, problematic (Starn, 2011). Despite the barriers traditionally faced by anthropologists using Native Americans as ‘research subjects’ within traditional anthropological research paradigms, I was still moved to pursue

anthropology as a Native American. Anthropology couples its holistic lens not without its own failings with more culturally sensitive and empathetic Indigenous Research methods. This approach encouraged me to conduct an in-depth examination of the Native American student's perspective, their understanding, and their experiences of how intergenerational trauma plays out within, both with anthropology and the Western academic system (Denham, A., 2008).

Both as a university undergraduate and an anthropology graduate student, I experienced many of the same issues that other Native students experienced. I experienced intense feelings of not belonging within the STEM field because of my practice of honoring animals for their contribution to our research. This was especially salient as a graduate researcher who had to euthanize mice and had experienced the adverse reactions I received from my peers and faculty during the honoring process. I faithfully thanked the animals for offering their lives to better the lives of the human population. This appreciation and respect is much like Native Americans have done with the animals that were their food source. There was also an ongoing, conflicting, and agonizing issue of belonging and visibility on campus. I felt invisible as a Native American student, primarily when repeatedly being referred to as a long-lost historical antithetical character of the United States and through insensitive lectures that placed Native Americans as either part of the historically dead or contained in reservations.

On the other hand, there is a type of unease, sadness, and anger I felt when visibility came at the cost of performance, that is, being identified as Native American only when wearing regalia and performing what non-Native people believe to be 'typical

Native American behaviors. These feelings of marginalization are only intensified as academics, where the only disciplines and departments that have space for us are ethnic studies, history, dance and the arts.

Ethical Considerations

As a Native American scholar, I had to address other critical and ethical considerations when conducting this research. Some ethical considerations involved issues of identity. In situations of tribal enrollment in federally recognized tribes, there are questions about who qualifies as a legitimate Native American and who makes that distinction. During the recruitment process for this research, students were initially invited by a flyer posted on the Native American Student Program social media platform that explained the project and the participant qualifications (North American Native students). Those students who responded were asked to complete an online survey. One of the questions on the survey asked if the student was an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe or was a member who was community-identified, meaning that the participant self-identified as a Native American and as a tribal community member.

Their response to identification then prompted these questions: How are Native Americans validated as authentic, and how is that determined? Does blood quantum confirm validation, using "blood" to trace Native heritage (Schmidt et al., 2011) or by Native American tribal lineage? What category do people whom their tribe has disenrolled fit into when they have been enrolled until their 18th year of life, and how does the status of being disenrolled perpetuate another level of trauma? In the case of

mental and emotional health responses, mental health resource information was provided to the participants. These resources included referrals to Indian Health Services (an external health clinic specifically for the local Native peoples) and Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), a university mental health resource.

Other ethical considerations included how the data would be presented in written form. Would Indigenous writing and research methods, using Storywork and Native American language, aimed at fully understanding the context in which Native Students experience student life at the university and the Tribal college be made central to the dissertation format? How would this data information be presented to the anthropology department and other university administration offices? Finally, what is the agreement between the researcher and participants? Would it be a Native American tradition of reciprocity or something else?

Method Selection

Grounded Theory

This study employs grounded theory, as discussed in the theory section in Chapter three's theory section. This method was selected because it was most appropriate to account for the nuanced data and qualitative, subjective experience that this research required. Grounded theory is also ideal for researching new, emerging, or under-researched phenomena, focusing on theory generation instead of theory validation (Charmaz, K., 2006). Little literature addresses this population and their experiences as

Native American college students (Willmott et al., n.d.), which created a challenge when looking for supportive sources that highlight the benefits of grounded theory.

The theoretical and methodological approaches of grounded theory were beneficial to gathering narratives on the intricate topics we addressed within a qualitative framework. Grounded theory helps to manage large amounts of qualitative data, such as data from multiple participants during talking circles and in-depth conversations, to better understand the complexity of complicated life experiences (Charmaz et al., 2021). This is done by using themes generated from the data itself instead of predetermined categories. The themes are then coded, resulting in the data generating its own theory. In grounded theory, the coding process is the fundamental data analysis process. It transforms the qualitative data from narratives that inform the research (Walker et al., 2016).

Grounded theory allows me to draw from an indigenous perspective to analyze the data and unpack the intersectionality observed. To better understand "Grounded Theory," I have included a diagram below.

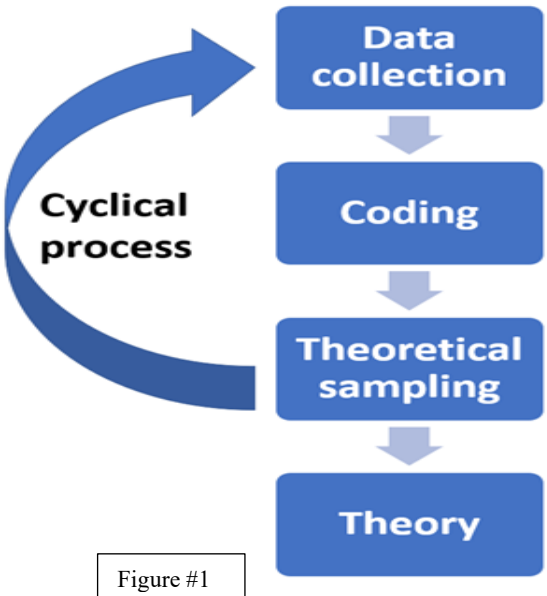


Figure #1

MAXQDA.com

As shown in the diagram above, the study begins with data collection. The initial data came from informal conversations with Native American students at the Native American Student Program office. Though the conversations covered a broad range of topics, such as the Native American university student experience, I identified themes within the board topic of the Native American student experience. Some topics included identity issues, intergenerational trauma, lack of resources both on the university campus and beyond, and feelings of invisibility. In essence, the coding process involved identifying themes through our conversations. This led me to the question: Are other Native American students having the same experiences?

I attended the American Indian Science and Engineering meeting held in Palm Springs, California, in October of 2022 and gathered preliminary data by asking the question of five students in attendance who were students from various colleges: Are you, as a college student, also experiencing the same issues at your college and if so, do you feel that this issue should be researched? As stated previously, the answer was yes. As shown in the diagram of the grounded theory process, I was cycling between data collection and coding. Initially, by gathering the data and then coding or identifying themes that came up in the conversations. The next step was to research the literature to see what data and information were available on my topic. Because of the nuance of this topic and study, there were only a few sources to pull from, and none of them completely addressed the population and issues I was researching. The lack of sources and theory reinforced my decision to apply the grounded theory method to my project.

Following the talking circle group conversations, I returned to coding the conversations to identify similar themes while simultaneously going through theoretical sampling that generated the in-depth topics I wanted to discuss further in detail. Once the data from the surveys, focus groups, and in-depth conversations were collected, the data was uploaded to the inductive analytical software MAXQDA (software description is discussed in the software section of this chapter). Because of the nuance of this study, utilization of the grounded theory research method assisted in determining that the data did not fit nicely into any established theoretical box. Therefore, grounded theory would allow the data to determine the generated theory. Grounded theory addresses the uniqueness of this research, unlike the traditional research methods that are known and used in the academy. This method allowed me to draw from multiple methods and perspectives, such as an Indigenous perspective, to analyze the data and unpack the intersectionality (gender, identity, spatial, intergenerational trauma, and connectedness) observed in the data using other methods, such as Indigenous research methods.

Indigenous Research Methods

Relationality is the fundamental basis of the Indigenous research method paradigm. It is the relational epistemology of ways of knowing (Wilson, S. 2008). Indigenous research methods view ontology as more than just the relationship between people. Instead, this involves the relationship to the land, people (humans), animals or plants (non-humans), oral history, the world, and the concept of the seven generations (the ancestors seven generations before, and the descendants seven generations in the

future previously described in Chapter1) and an understanding about what it means to be in these relationships. This means holistically approaching the research, viewing the research as not only that one topic but also how that topic and issue[s] impacts the research partners' worldviews.

This methodology collects data through narratives, better known in Indigenous communities as storywork. Storywork is a traditional Indigenous way of sharing knowledge practiced for millennia. Storywork is not simply a story but a tool to teach critical thinking to youth. In a research environment, Storywork conveys an event or experience's impact on the storyteller or in a relationship with the storyteller. Storywork can be practiced between individuals within a talking circle, such as an Elder and a youth.

In a talking circle, research partners were arranged in a group setting in a Zoom meeting focused on discussing the research topic, where the researcher honored the talking circle member's agency on what they wanted to share about the topics of repatriation of Ancestors and intergenerational trauma within a safe environment. A safe environment for Native Americans is the foundation of talking circles as ceremonial, meaning that in person, the talking circle begins with an Indigenous spiritual prayer (not a structured religious prayer) and includes smudging, a method of burning the sage plant leaves to begin the conversation in a positive environment, especially if the topic includes sensitive issues (Brown et al., 2020). The researcher, or knowledge seeker in the talking circle, initiates the conversation by starting with an oral history or sharing a story that was told to them by an Elder related to the research topic. For example, in one of my talking circles, I shared a story about when I attended a repatriation conference in

Michigan and an Elder's response to one of the panelists. The Elder expressed his concern about repatriation and talked about what repatriation meant to him, as well as how the practice of housing ancestors has created so much pain for him and his community. After I shared the story about the Elder, I asked the talking circle members to share their perspectives on how the Elder responded.

This approach sets the conversation, whatever the topic, in a safe and comfortable environment. After initiating the conversation, the members now manage the conversation but have been asked to discuss the survey questions more in-depth. The researcher is a facilitator of the conversation, present to answer any questions the members may have, remind them of a particular survey question, or share another story about a topic that has not been yet discussed.

Respect is one of the main components of Indigenous research methods. In a talking circle, all the members are equal; no one is dominant over the other. The researcher is the knowledge seeker (or student in a Western ideology) as a sign of respect (Weber-Pilwax, 2004). To complete the talking circle conversation, the members discuss their needs, feelings, and any recommendations or guidance for the researcher or project.

Reciprocity is also a fundamental component of Indigenous research methods. Historically, researchers have exploited Indigenous communities by collecting data, using the data in their research, and not reciprocating back to the communities or peoples that shared their knowledge with them. Researchers have often left the communities in worse conditions than when they began to work with them. Indigenous tradition has been one of reciprocity based on gifts that Indigenous people bestow on others. In research,

reciprocity is the gift of knowledge shared with the researcher. Indigenous communities expect the researcher to reciprocate the gift by way of helping their community, whether it be to make lawmakers aware of the need for more resources or changes in policies. In the case of this study, the knowledge seeker reciprocates by raising awareness of the Native student experience on the university and the Tribal College campuses. The research must address their needs, including emotional and mental health resources and support systems.

Responsibility is the third component of Indigenous research methods. Cora Weber-Pilwax (2004) discusses in her article. The researcher is responsible for giving back to the community that shares their knowledge with them. It is the researcher's responsibility, especially Indigenous scholars, to enter into the research topic relationship by understanding and respecting the relationships being developed. Being a responsible researcher means being true to the Indigenous culture by accurately documenting the conversations and quotes, including the original language the research partner uses, and asking the partners to write the words down with the translations. As a result, I developed an authentic research partnership with the students at the Native American Student Program using Indigenous research (Drawson et al., 2017), storywork (Smith et al., 2019), and participant observation, a critical anthropological research method, in conversation with each other.

Community-Based Research Methods

I developed my data collection methods to be community-based. Community-based research gives the participants agency, so they can guide the direction of the project and the knowledge that will be shared. Community-based research, also known as community-based participatory research (CBPR), joins together the researcher (knowledge seeker) and the community (knowledge keepers) as equal partners in the research partnership (Holkup et al., 2004). It is one of my personal and professional goals in the future that in return for the knowledge the participants share, a gift be reciprocated in the form of a handbook or written guidance to the University Department of Anthropology and Administration to help them put policies and practices in place to nurture the success of future Native American students on this campus and campuses more broadly.

Mixed methods

Mixed methods draw from qualitative and quantitative data in a single study to get a comprehensive perspective of the research focus (Almeida, F.,2018). Mixed methods were used to compile both qualitative and quantitative data in the form of surveys. Qualitative data collected from recorded narratives shared within the focus groups and in-depth interviews. These mixed methods provide a comprehensive view of the perspectives of the participants to evaluate the data (Palinkas et al., 2019). Mixed methods are used when using quantitative or qualitative data alone, will not illuminate the entire problem or research focus. Instead, both qualitative and quantitative data are

needed. Utilizing both comprehensive approaches within a conceptual framework, triangulation was used to eliminate biases by utilizing multiple methods, including surveys, focus group conversations, and in-depth dialogues (Greene et al., 1989). A triangulation approach utilizes multiple methods of collecting data to increase the validity and credibility of the findings. In this project, the methods include surveys, talking circles, and in-depth conversations that assist in confirming the results and identifying different perspectives. A triangulation approach utilizes multiple methods of collecting data to increase the validity and credibility of findings. Triangulation also uses multiple data collection methods to support or reject a researcher's theory (Carter et al., 2019), a helpful tool when working with the grounded theory method.

Figure #2 www.fiverr.com

Figure 1 explains how the quantitative data survey on a 5-point Lickert scale of 1-5, a score of 5 being the highest level of agreement, connectedness, or understanding depending on the question and a score of 1 being the lowest level of agreement, connectedness, or understanding (discussed in the analysis chapter) overlapped with the narratives of the talking circles and in-depth conversations. This collaborative approach helps to identify themes within the data sets, which can then be analyzed using the MAXQDA software. The natural progression for this project was to begin with quantitative data and then add in the qualitative data since the quantitative data would check for data and personal biases given the researcher's positionality to the topic in the narrative qualitative data.

Quantitative research methods

One use of quantitative methods is identifying patterns within geographic information, in this study's case, tribal ancestral homelands. Other quantitative data collected included participants' age, educational grade level, and gender. Data was analyzed using statistics, graphs, and charts that include demographics and questions rated on a 1-5 Lickert scale. Lickert scale scoring, is a technique used for measuring attitudes and emotional responses (Batterton et al., 2017). The surveys used in my research were designed on a 1-5 Lickert scale. 5 being the highest level of agreement and 1 being the lowest level of agreement. This method was used to analyze survey questions, including both demographic information and Lickert scale responses. The survey

included mixed questions, including open-ended questions at the end as a comparative measure to the talking circle response and the in-depth conversations.

Qualitative research methods

The qualitative research method is a measurement tool to assist in the analysis of large amounts of subjective data in the form of focus group conversations, in-depth interviews, literature reviews, ethnographic and autoethnographic research, participant observation, audio or video recordings, and surveys (Guthrie, G. 2010). Simply put, qualitative data involves words and unstructured data, whereas quantitative data comprises numbers. Qualitative research includes talking circle conversations, in-depth conversations, and literature reviews. The qualitative data collected in this research were narratives in the form of focus group conversations and in-depth dialogues. Together with the quantitative data generated through surveys, the mixed methods approach helped identify any data biases. It was used to compare the responses of the surveys to the narrative transcripts. This mixed methods approach helped progress to the next phase of analysis, grounded theory.

Survey, Focus Group, and In-depth Interview Design

My study began with a survey accessed online with a log-on unique to each individual through the SurveyMonkey website. I used this website service specifically because Internet surveys are powerful tools to economically and efficiently reach a wide field of participants who can complete the survey when convenient. This mode also

allowed the research partners to access the survey via several devices, including PCs, mobile phones, or laptops, and anywhere internet services are available, making this a convenient and inclusive survey delivery system. However, even this form of survey faced limitations ranging from technical restrictions, such as lack of internet access, to survey fatigue, which many online users feel today (Couper, 2008), especially college students.

The Online Surveys

The two surveys were designed as self-administered surveys, given that the project involves a college-educated, computer-literate population. This was determined to be the most suitable for their varied schedules. One survey was designed to address questions unique to the tribal community college, with questions geared toward prospective students. The other survey was designed specifically for undergraduate and graduate students at the university. It included questions that addressed issues related to their experiences and feelings of connectedness on the university campus. The service www.surveymonkey.com was used, which proved an effective, inexpensive, and easily accessible tool to create a custom survey. The surveys were formed from a mix of question types (Bernard, 1994) by combining open- and close-ended questions and asked respondents to reflect on their own experiences as college students about their understanding of NAGPRA policies, intergenerational trauma, and how these topics impacted their daily lives as Native American student's. I sent out invitations to Native American students via mass email and social media to complete the survey, asking for

their help in my research. However, due to the demanding academic schedules, student participants had to be reminded to complete the survey via email and personal communication. Not being constantly on campus and working remotely became a challenge since I was not present daily to interact with the students and actively recruit participants for the research project.

A database of names and email addresses was compiled. Emails containing an invitation to participants announcing the survey were sent to all the people on the database beginning January 4, 2023, and continuing through February. 2024. A total of 62 (n=62) individuals participated in the survey (a response rate of 25 percent of university students and 78 percent of Tribal college students). Despite the relatively low response rate, the respondents who responded constituted a broad spectrum of tribal affiliations and various religious and political backgrounds. Once the study partners completed the survey, they were invited by email to participate in one of several talking circles, depending on their year and program. For example, if one of the partners were a second-year college student in the ethnic studies program, they would be included in the current undergrad student non-STEM talking circle. After the partners participated in the focus group, each partner was invited by email to participate in an in-depth conversation. All partners of the talking circles and those who volunteered were then scheduled for the in-depth interview at their convenience via the online meeting app Zoom.

Talking circles

The next phase of the project was arranging the participants into talking circles. All talking circle meetings were conducted using the Zoom online meeting app for convenience in terms of time and geographical distance. The research partners were grouped into the following groups: Group 1 consisted of current university undergraduates in the arts and humanities disciplines. Group 2 consisted of the current university graduate students in the arts and humanities disciplines, and group 3 consisted of the current university students in the STEM fields. Group 4 consisted of university alumni undergraduate students in the humanities field, and group 5 consisted of university alumni undergraduate students in the arts and humanities fields. Tribal college students participated in talking circles that were not grouped in any category but rather by the availability of the students, resulting in three talking circles.

Talking circles were designed for the participants to facilitate the conversation (Dawson et al., 2017). Conducting this research project in a Native American culturally centered space was essential for upholding participants' agency and ensuring they were comfortable discussing the impactful research questions. I began the focus group session by sharing the research questions I would like to discuss. I stated that if the participants felt uncomfortable discussing any of the topics, they could let me know either through the chat on Zoom or verbally.

In-depth conversations

The third phase of data collection was conducted through in-depth conversations. All in-depth conversations were conducted using the Zoom online meeting app for convenience in terms of time and geographical distance. Once a research partner from each talking circle agreed to contribute, they were asked to elaborate more on the questions presented in the talking circles. Participants in the talking circles were asked if they would be interested in helping in an in-depth conversation. No other criteria were needed for selection. During the in-depth interviews, they were also asked if their perspective on the survey questions and talking circle questions changed. This approach aimed to understand if the participants' perspectives had changed and, if so, why. The results revealed participant biases and where the participant biases were developed. Additionally, in-depth interviews also included Native American Elder alumni, faculty who taught courses about Native American topics, Native American Student Program staff, the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, and University NAGPRA coordinators.

Analytical Software

MAXQDA, an inductive Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software, was used to analyze quantitative and qualitative data (Kuckartz et al., 2019). Although initially designed to analyze only qualitative data, with the new updated design, MAXQDA now has functions to analyze quantitative data as well, making it a great analytical tool for mixed methods research. Prior experience, knowledge, and training with this software were a major factor in deciding which software to use for this project.

Surveys, transcriptions, and literature (using the bibliography function) were all uploaded into the MAXQDA program and then coded to identify themes by overlapping the data sets.

Using the word cloud function allowed me to better view the words most used in the survey's open-ended questions compared to the talking circle groups and in-depth conversations to track the topics/issues most discussed. The program assisted in drawing from quotes within the conversations to support theoretical concepts during the data analysis. To finalize the analysis, the software assists in the grounded theory method by uploading the data, then coding the data, identifying any themes and comparing the themes to the literature uploaded to the software, and identifying a theory within the data collected from the surveys and focus group and in-depth conversations. MAXQDA was found to be the most appropriate and efficient software for use in this project.

Methodology Challenges and Discussion

One concern that a talking circle member discussed was the Internal Review Board's (IRB) policy of the researcher offering resources to the participants when discussing complex and sensitive topics such as NAGPRA practices and intergenerational trauma. As Native students who have historically been treated as though we are incapable of caring for ourselves or cannot seek mental health services from our tribal leaders and healthcare providers, one student expressed their feeling that this policy was insulting to the Native American students.

Conclusion

In the future, institutional measures should be taken to avoid language, policies, and practices that perpetuate the idea that Native American research participants cannot resist harmful research topics. The student research partner believed the policy and practice were paternalistic, no matter how well-meaning. This topic will be discussed at length in a future chapter.

Chapter Five

Data and Results Chapter

For this study, I employed unique recruitment methods. Initially, I sent a recruitment letter through a Native American Student organization's social media and mass email at a university. Later, I expanded the scope by including students from a tribal community college, incorporating more diverse perspectives. The total number of participants was 85 (n=85), including 62 (n=62) students who completed the surveys, 47 community college students, and 15 university students. The study involved three community college talking circles and five university student talking circles. In addition, there were three separate individual in-depth conversations with community college students and five individual in-depth conversations with university students. An in-depth conversation was conducted with an older alumnus to compare and contrast student experience from the 1970s with current student experiences. The research study also included two faculty members who teach Native American studies courses, two employees of the university's Native American Student Program, the NAGPRA coordinator, and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.

The participants in this study were a remarkably diverse group of people, representing a wide range of Native American Nations, genders, and ages. This diversity is a crucial aspect of my research, as it ensures that the findings are not limited to a specific subset of Native American students. Some respondents were community-identified students, others were enrolled in non-federally recognized tribes, and others were from federally recognized tribes. The data was collected using SurveyMonkey, an

online service chosen for its ease of use and accessibility, allowing students to participate via laptop or mobile phone. SurveyMonkey is compatible with the analytic program MAXQDA and produces graphs for easy viewing and comparison of results.

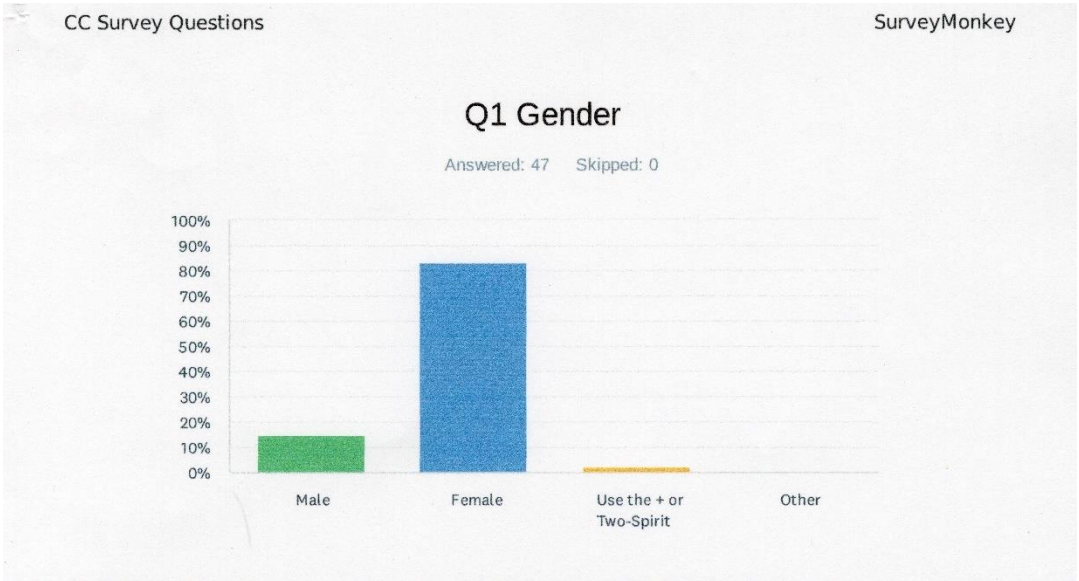
I created two surveys, one with questions focused on the community college student experience and the other survey designed with questions focused more on the university student's experience. There are common questions in community college and university student surveys, such as demographics and feelings of connectedness. I will include a sample of these questions later in this chapter. The difference between the two surveys is that the community college student questions focus more on the students who are prospective university students and their assumptions and expectations about what it will mean for them to transfer to a four-year university. Whereas the survey the university students completed focused on the student experience on a university campus.

Only students were invited to complete the surveys. The university students were recruited via mass email and social media. The community college students were recruited by emailing their professors. They were encouraged to offer 10 points extra credit for completing the survey and 10 points for contributing to a talking circle and in-depth conversation. Since the survey was anonymous, the students were taken for their word that they completed the survey for the extra credit points. The university students were compensated $20.00 for attending and contributing to the talking circle and another $20.00 for helping with an in-depth interview. The university Native American program staff, faculty, NAGPRA coordinator, Elder alumnus, and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs were excluded from completing the surveys. They were only included in the

interview section of the study. Additionally, the surveys were unrestrictive in that a respondent could skip over questions the respondent felt uncomfortable answering.

The data collection period for the community college survey was from February 2024 to March 2024. The first question on both surveys was about gender. I designed the question to determine who the respondents were and if their gender would show differences in their responses. The graph below shows the gender breakdown of the community college students who contributed to the study.

There were three categories of gender selection: male, female, two-spirit (LGBTQ+), and other. Out of a total of (n=47) community college students, 14.89% identified as male, 82.98 identified as female, 2.13% identified as two-spirit, and others received 0 responses, as seen in Figure #3.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	14.89%	7
Female	82.98%	39
Use the + or Two-Spirit	2.13%	1
Other	0.00%	0
TOTAL		47

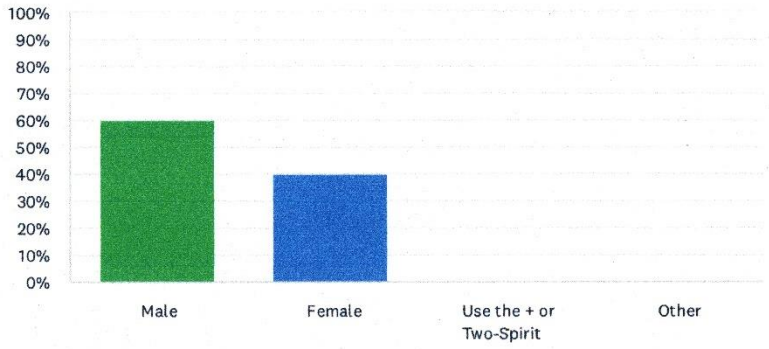
Figure #3

The gender response breakdown of university students was (n=15): 60% male, 40% female, 0% Two-spirit, and 0% other, as seen in Figure #4.

Dissertation Pre-Focus Group Survey SurveyMonkey

Q1 Gender

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



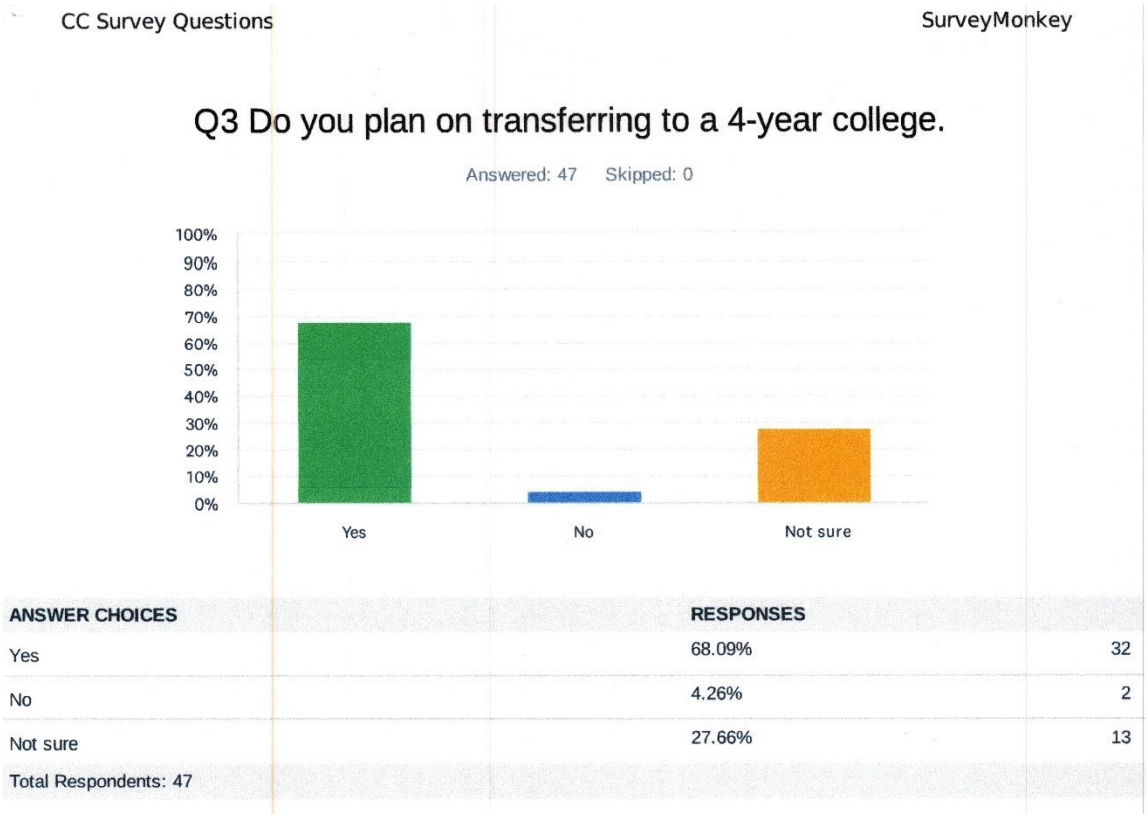
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	60.00%	9
Female	40.00%	6
Use the + or Two-Spirit	0.00%	0
Other	0.00%	0
TOTAL		15

Figure #4

Question # 2 asked about the respondents' age. This was a fill-in question, where the students typed in their age. In the community college survey, 46 respondents out of 47 answered this question, with ages ranging from 19 to 62 and a mean of 34.82. Of the

15 university students who answered this question, the respondents ranged from 20 to 66 and had a mean of 32.73.

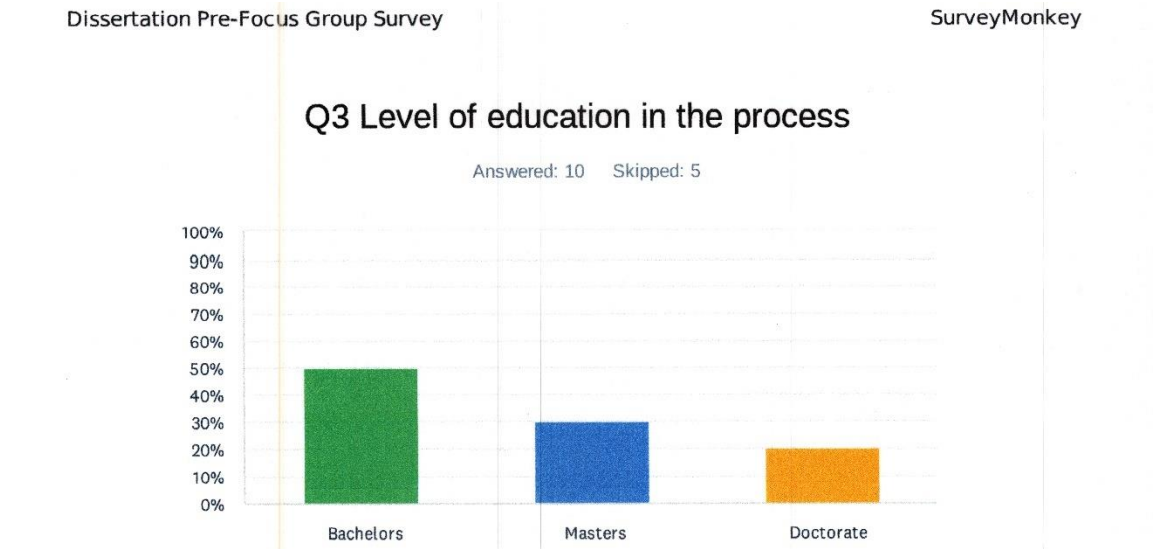
Question #3 was exclusive to the community college students and asked if the student planned on transferring to a four-year college. This question was a precursor to a later question that asked, “What do you require of the university for you to consider applying?” The results indicate that all 47 respondents answered this question, with 68.09% of the respondents saying they were planning on transferring to a four-year university, 4.26% saying they were not planning on transferring to a four-year university, and 27.66% stating they were unsure as seen in figure #5.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	68.09%	32
No	4.26%	2
Not sure	27.66%	13
Total Respondents: 47		

Figure #5

Question #3 in the university students' survey asked about their level of education. This question was not asked of the community college students since all of the students at the community college are at the undergraduate level. The question asked “what level of education or degree you are pursuing, such as a bachelor's degree, master’s degree, or doctoral degree.” This question was designed to determine if there were differences according to the level of education in their responses to topics such as NAGPRA and intergenerational trauma. As indicated in Figure #6, most university respondents completed their bachelor's degree, with the next highest being a master’s degree, and the least sought a doctoral degree.



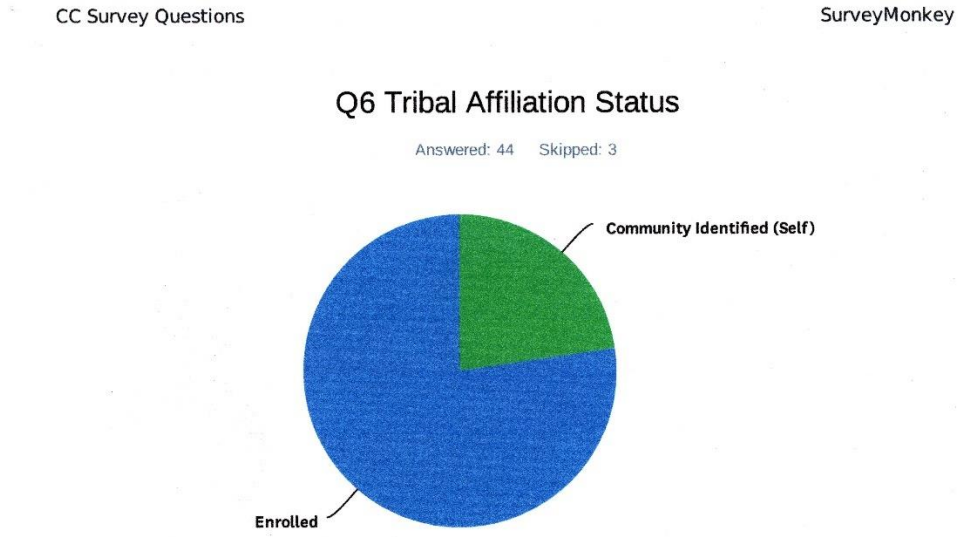
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bachelors	50.00%	5
Masters	30.00%	3
Doctorate	20.00%	2
Total Respondents: 10		

Figure #6

Question #5 in the community college survey asked the tribal nation that the student identified with. This question was created to compare and contrast the responses according to the student's ethnicity. I was interested in exploring if responses would differ or be similar between the diverse nations.

In the university student survey, the breakdown of Native Nations included Hopi/Alaskan Native, Hualapai, Apache, Cahuilla, Luiseno, Chemehuevi, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Colorado River Indian Tribes, Shoshone Bannock Tribes, Muscogee Nation, Dine Oneida, Pinoleville Pomo Nation.

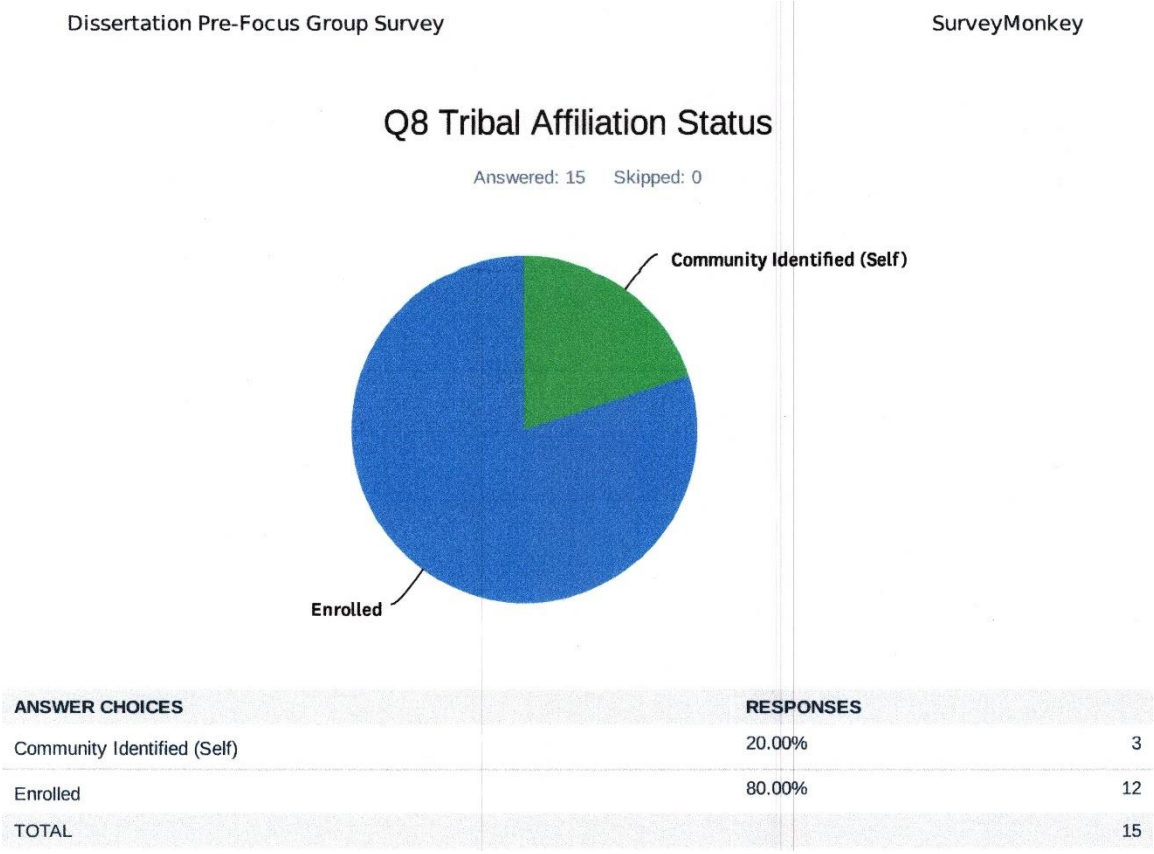
As observed in Figure #7, the community college survey asked the respondents how they identified themselves 77.27% identified as enrolled members of a federally recognized tribe, and 22.73% identified as community-recognized.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Community Identified (Self)	22.73%	10
Enrolled	77.27%	34
TOTAL		44

Figure #7

Question #8 asked the university student respondents about their tribal affiliation. This question was created to determine the demographics of the respondents. It was designed to ask if the respondent was enrolled in a federally recognized tribe or was community-identified, meaning that the tribe may not be a federally recognized tribe, or the respondent may not be enrolled in the tribe. However, the tribal community considers the respondent a member of their tribe. The results are in Figure #8 below.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Community Identified (Self)	20.00%	3
Enrolled	80.00%	12
TOTAL		15

Figure #8

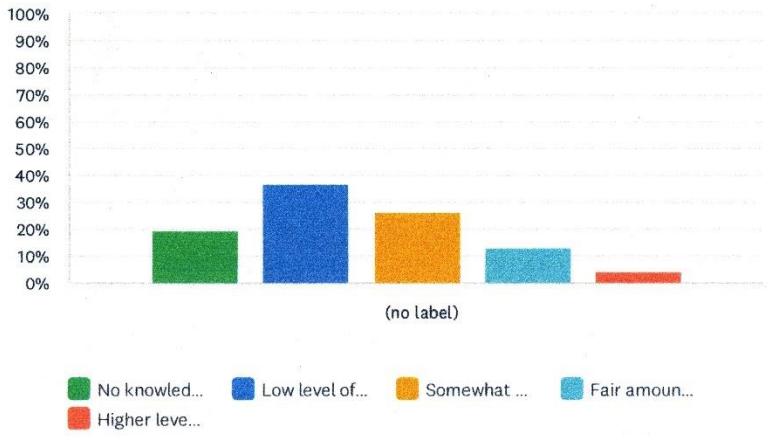
Questions 7-9 asked the community college student respondents' level of knowledge of NAGPRA and how often the topic is discussed within their families.

Unsurprisingly, most respondents reported little or no knowledge of NAGPRA and did not discuss the topic with their families, as indicated in Figures #9 and #10.

CC Survey Questions SurveyMonkey

Q7 On a 1-5 scale, with 1 having no knowledge and 5 having a higher level of knowledge. Please rate your level of knowledge of NAGPRA (Government Policy on returning ancestor remains back to their tribal communities)

Answered: 46 Skipped: 1

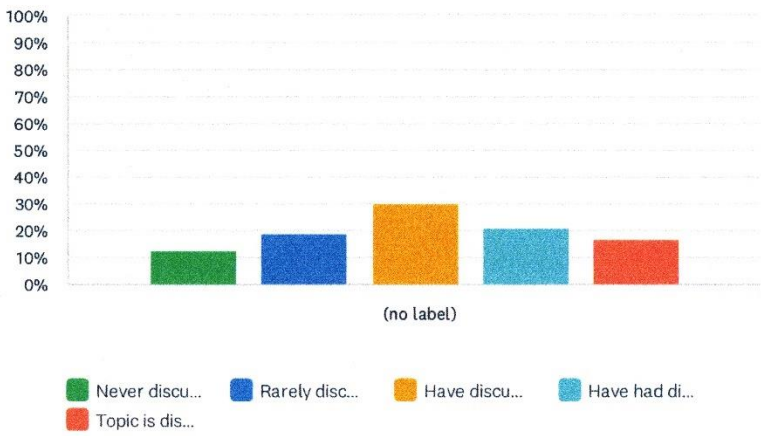


	NO KNOWLEDGE	LOW LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	SOMEWHAT KNOWLEDGE	FAIR AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE	HIGHER LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	19.57% 9	36.96% 17	26.09% 12	13.04% 6	4.35% 2	46	2.46

Figure # 9

Q9 On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the least amount of time and 5 being very often, how often do you and your family discuss the repatriation (returning of ancestor remains) of ancestor issues? Please circle the number that corresponds with your answer.

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



	NEVER DISCUSS THE ISSUE	RARELY DISCUSS THE ISSUE	HAVE DISCUSSED ON RARE OCCASION	HAVE HAD DISCUSSIONS A FEW TIMES	TOPIC IS DISCUSSED SEVERAL TIMES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	12.77% 6	19.15% 9	29.79% 14	21.28% 10	17.02% 8	47	3.11

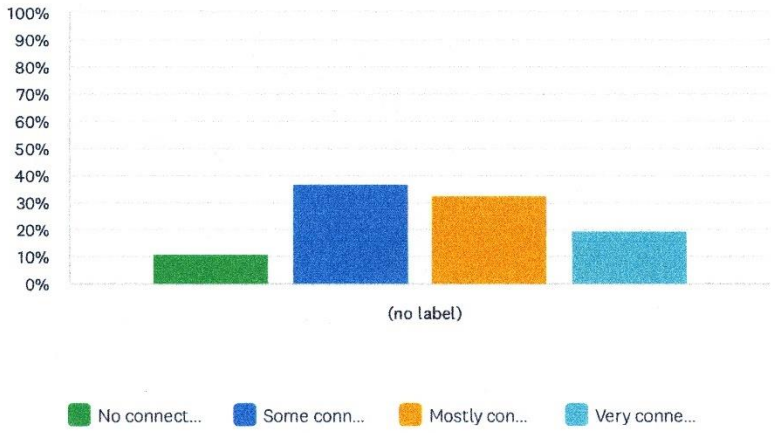
Figure #10

The university student respondents reported having little knowledge of repatriation or NAGPRA. As indicated in Figure #10, it was not often discussed with their families or communities.

The results of question #13 asked about the level of connectedness the student feels with the Elders in their community. As indicated in Figure #11, the respondents felt someone connected to the Elders in their community.

Q13 The level of connectedness you feel with the Elders in your community. Please circle the square pair that best portrays your feeling of connectedness

Answered: 46 Skipped: 1



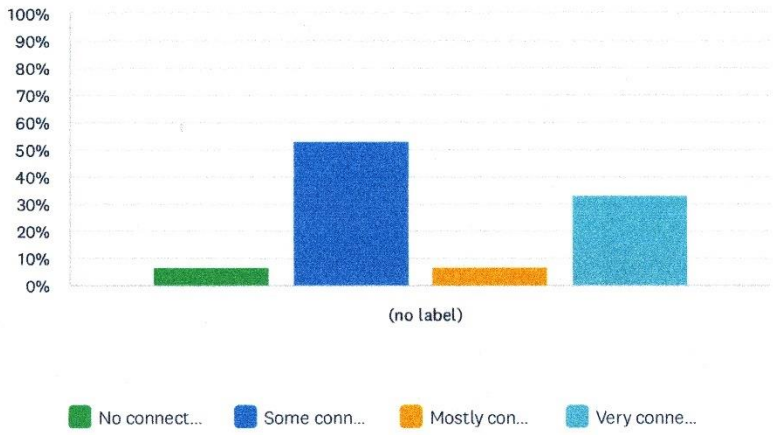
	NO CONNECTION	SOME CONNECTION	MOSTLY CONNECTED	VERY CONNECTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	10.87% 5	36.96% 17	32.61% 15	19.57% 9	46	2.61

Figure #11

I included the same question about feelings of connectedness to the Elders in the university student survey, and the results were consistent with the community college student's responses, as indicated in Figure #12.

Q17 The level of connectedness you feel with the Elders in your community. Please circle the square pair that best portrays your feeling of connectedness

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



	NO CONNECTION	SOME CONNECTION	MOSTLY CONNECTED	VERY CONNECTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	6.67% 1	53.33% 8	6.67% 1	33.33% 5	15	2.67

Figure #12

I found this answer surprising, knowing that in Native American culture, one practice that is consistent across Native American and Indigenous ethnic groups globally is the high regard and respect for the community's elders. Although the university students responded with a higher level of connectedness, 53.33% felt they were somewhat connected to the Elders in their communities. I assumed that community college students would feel a higher level of connectedness because they typically live in their communities while attending classes. In contrast, university students typically live further away from campus and travel long distances from campus. I wanted to explore this phenomenon further, so utilizing grounded theory methods, I modified the talking

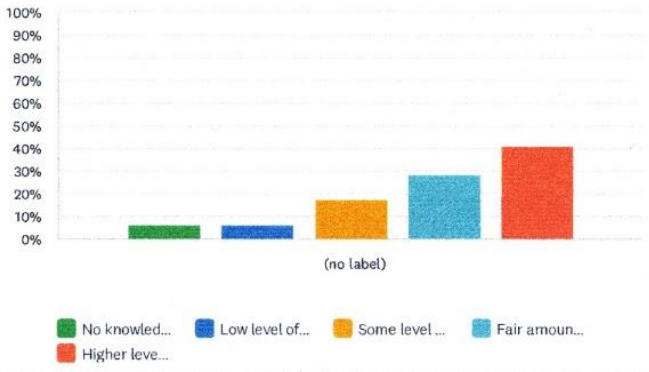
circle topics to include a question to ask why the students felt somewhat connected to the Elders in their communities. The answer was unexpected and will be discussed in the analysis chapter.

To address the research question on the student's level of knowledge of intergenerational trauma, unsurprisingly, the community college students reported that they felt they had a high level of knowledge about intergenerational trauma. 41.30 % of the community college students reported that they had a higher level of knowledge about intergenerational trauma, as indicated in Figure #13. However, most of the community college students, 34.04%, reported that they discussed the topic of intergenerational trauma occasionally with their families, as indicated in Figure #14.

CC Survey Questions SurveyMonkey

Q16 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 having no knowledge and 5 having a higher level of knowledge, please rate your knowledge of Intergenerational trauma by circling the number corresponding to your answer.

Answered: 46 Skipped: 1

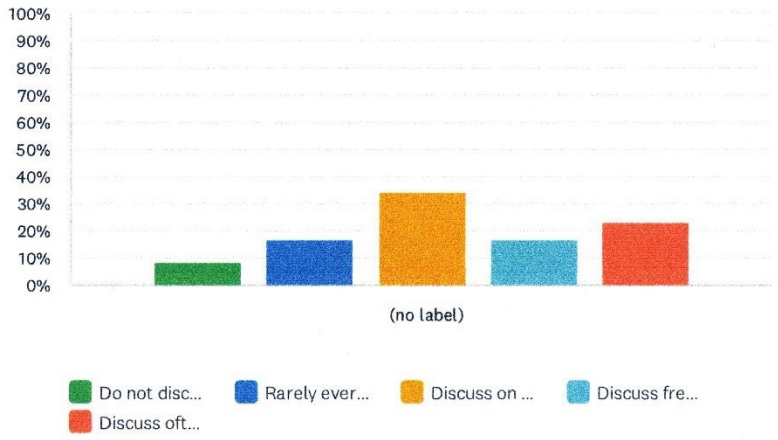


	NO KNOWLEDGE	LOW LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	SOME LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	FAIR AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE	HIGHER LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	6.52% 3	6.52% 3	17.39% 8	28.26% 13	41.30% 19	46	3.91

Figure #13

Q17 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the least amount of time and 5 being often. Please rate how often you and your family discuss issues of intergenerational trauma. Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer.

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



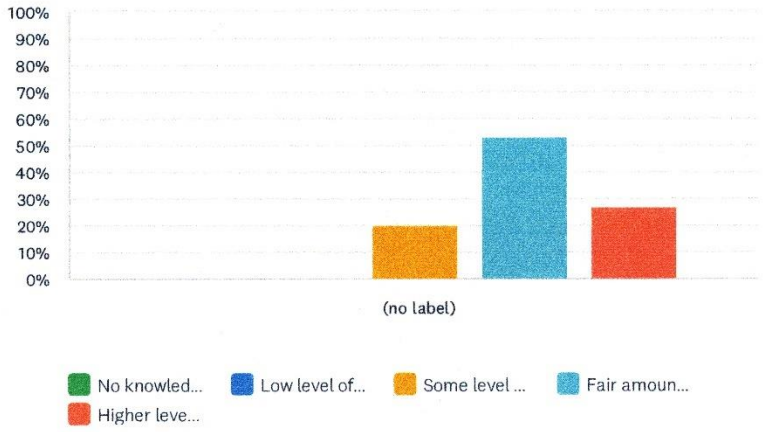
	DO NOT DISCUSS AT ALL	RARELY EVER DISCUSS	DISCUSS ON OCCASION	DISCUSS FREQUENTLY	DISCUSS OFTEN	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	8.51% 4	17.02% 8	34.04% 16	17.02% 8	23.40% 11	47	3.3(

Figure # 14

When the university students were asked about their knowledge of intergenerational trauma, most responded that they felt they had a fair amount of knowledge, as indicated in Figure #15. The university students responded to the question of how often they discussed the topic of intergenerational trauma with their families. Their answers were consistent with those of their community student counterparts, with 33.33% saying they only occasionally discussed the topic with their families.

Q20 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 having no knowledge and 5 having a higher level of knowledge, please rate your knowledge of Intergenerational trauma by circling the number corresponding to your answer.

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0

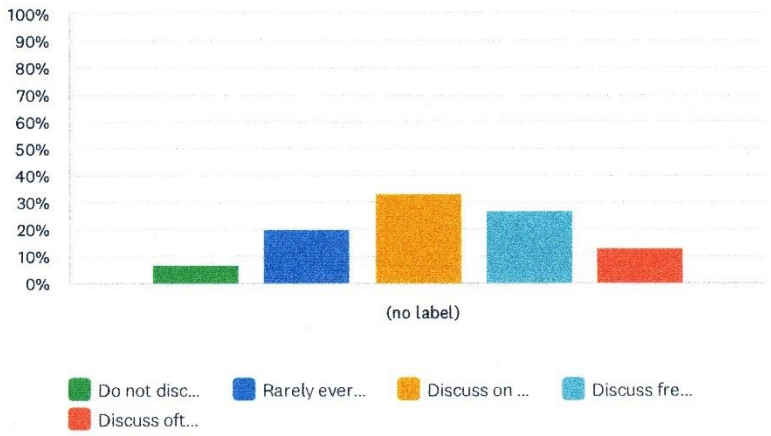


	NO KNOWLEDGE	LOW LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	SOME LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	FAIR AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE	HIGHER LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 3	53.33% 8	26.67% 4	15	4.07

Figure # 15

Q21 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the least amount of time and 5 being often. Please rate how often you and your family discuss issues of intergenerational trauma. Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer.

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



	DO NOT DISCUSS AT ALL	RARELY EVER DISCUSS	DISCUSS ON OCCASION	DISCUSS FREQUENTLY	DISCUSS OFTEN	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	6.67% 1	20.00% 3	33.33% 5	26.67% 4	13.33% 2	15	3.20

Figure #16

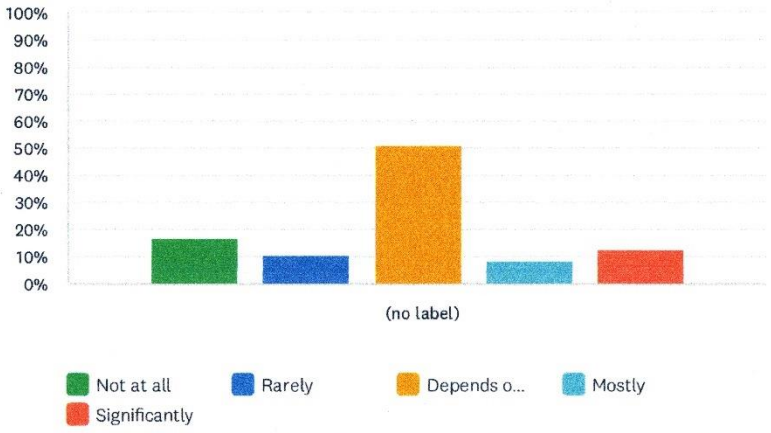
This topic was discussed in all talking circle groups to explore the results of the question of the student's level of knowledge of intergenerational trauma. The response was as I suspected. The students defined intergenerational trauma by its impact on their respective communities. For example, they cited alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, and socioeconomic issues. However, none of the students explained intergenerational trauma in the ways the psychological or biological impact or symptoms are connected to the behaviors.

To address the research question of whether there was a difference in the student's perspective of whether using Ancestral remains is ever appropriate for educational purposes, I included a question in the surveys that asked if the students felt that housing sacred cultural funerary items or Ancestral remains would be a benefit to the education of students in the science majors. The community college results were surprising; most students answered that it depended on the situation. They had more nuanced responses than the university students in the sample. Here is a story a Tribal college student shared with me about their family's experience with intergenerational trauma.

> *The California conquistadors came over here and made us build the missions. And come to find out, long years later, the Gabrielino Tongva people built the Redlands mission. My mom was married in the Redlands mission, so she was married in a mission that her, our ancestry, made. We didn't even know about it until way later because of the education system. Never told us about these types of things. And that's identity theft telling us, like, we just found out about, like, oh, that never happened because it never happened. But it did, in fact, happen. There's lots of evidence everywhere, prevalent evidence. And so my mom told me about it, but she didn't. When I showed her the books, I found out that it was the first time she had read them in a physical form, like it was actually out there. And so I think the education system is deterred from showing the truth a lot about a lot of cultures, not just the natives, but many cultures. But I think that could be handled better in the future. Be honest*
>
> *Community college student*

Q26 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not at all and 5 being significant. Please rate the level at which you believe housing scared cultural funerary items or using ancestor remains would be a benefit to the education of students in the science majors by circling the number that corresponds to your answer.

Answered: 47 Skipped: 0



	NOT AT ALL	RARELY	DEPENDS ON THE SITUATION	MOSTLY	SIGNIFICANTLY	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	17.02% 8	10.64% 5	51.06% 24	8.51% 4	12.77% 6	47	2.89

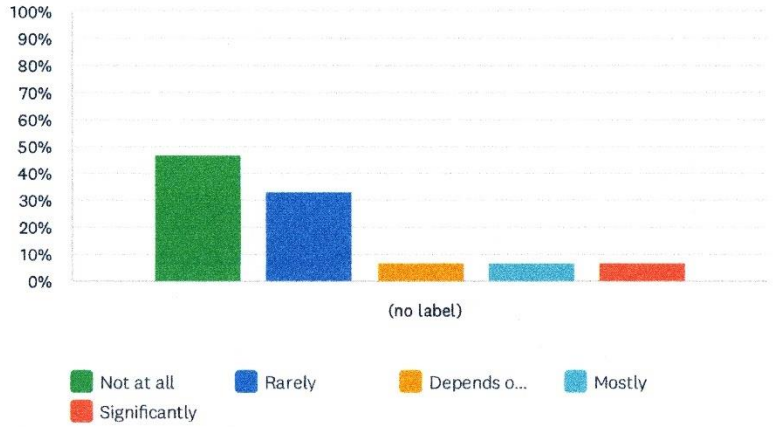
Figure #17

As indicated in Figure #17, most of the students in the university group answered that it was not at all beneficial to the education of students in the science majors. A university student stated,

> *"Of course, to be put in the middle of an institution that's been part of carrying out that action is even more difficult. It's more painful. As I was saying, we feel like I sometimes feel like, am I really safe here? Am I really welcome here? Do I really belong here? And I can see how this system has existed all of these years."*
>
> *University student*

Q29 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not at all and 5 being significant. Please rate the level at which you believe housing funerary items or using ancestor remains would be a benefit to the education of students in the science majors by circling the number that corresponds to your answer.

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



	NOT AT ALL	RARELY	DEPENDS ON THE SITUATION	MOSTLY	SIGNIFICANTLY	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	46.67% 7	33.33% 5	6.67% 1	6.67% 1	6.67% 1	15	1.93

Figure #18

To determine if there were differences between the disciplines. I separated the university student's talking circles into different groups according to whether they were STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) majors or humanities majors and asked this question during our conversation. I found no differences between the groups in their response to the question of whether it is ever acceptable to use Ancestral remains for educational purposes. However, when this question was asked of the community college student talking circles, their response was, "It depends," a surprising answer. The community college students were not separated by discipline since they were undergrads

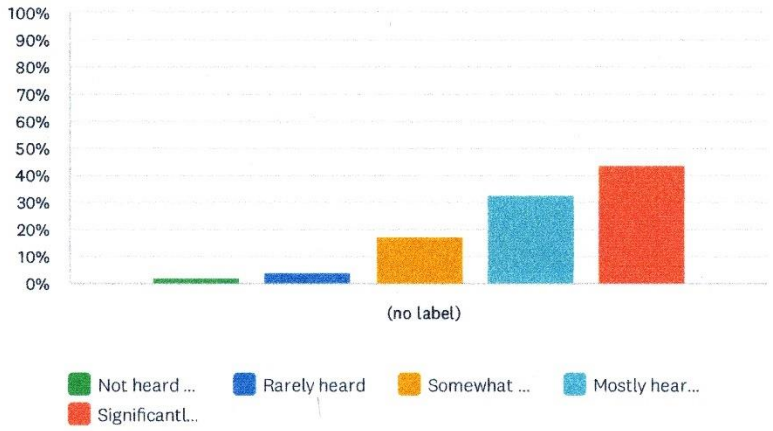
at the associate level, and all students who contributed to the talking circles were seeking degrees in humanities majors. These findings will be discussed further in the analysis chapter, Chapter Six.

One of the most important questions I included in both surveys was at what level the students felt heard. The Tribal community college students felt significantly heard (as indicated in Figure #19). This outcome is unsurprising given that the college's mission is centered on Native American pedagogy and the promotion of traditional cultural values, including addressing issues such as intergenerational trauma.

CC Survey Questions SurveyMonkey

Q22 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 not heard and 5 significantly heard. Please rate the level that you feel as a Native American student that your voice is heard on Native American-centered issues at CINC by circling the number that corresponds with your answer.

Answered: 46 Skipped: 1



	NOT HEARD AT ALL	RARELY HEARD	SOMEWHAT HEARD	MOSTLY HEARD	SIGNIFICANTLY HEARD	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	2.17% 1	4.35% 2	17.39% 8	32.61% 15	43.48% 20	46	4.11

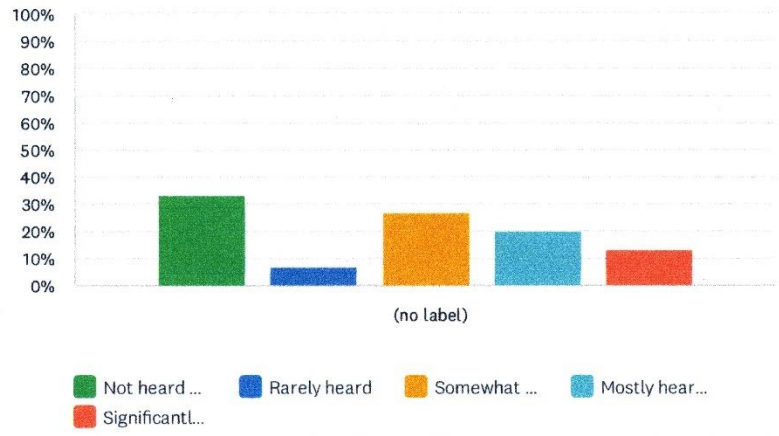
Figure #19

As indicated in Figure #20, the university students felt they were not heard at all. I wanted to explore this question further, so I included a question about this feeling of not being heard in the talking circle conversations.

Dissertation Pre-Focus Group Survey SurveyMonkey

Q25 On a scale of 1-5, with 1 not heard and 5 significantly heard. Please rate the level that you feel as a Native American student that your voice is heard on Native American-centered issues here at UCR by circling the number that corresponds with your answer.

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



	NOT HEARD AT ALL	RARELY HEARD	SOMEWHAT HEARD	MOSTLY HEARD	SIGNIFICANTLY HEARD	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	33.33% 5	6.67% 1	26.67% 4	20.00% 3	13.33% 2	15	2.73

Figure #20

This response supported the Native American students' feelings of invisibility on campus, which included such spaces as classrooms, being invited to voice their opinions on matters centered on Native American topics and issues in general. One student stated, “There are always emails from the administration of solidarity with other ethnic groups and their issues, but none that addresses our issues like NAGPRA violations?” The

student further explained that they were not against solidarity with the other groups. They were asking for the same respect and compassion administrators extend to other groups.

Conclusion

The responses of the university and community college students revealed both similarities and differences, which I will review and discuss in the analysis chapter, Chapter Six. Some responses were expected, and others were surprising. In the analysis chapter, I will review the qualitative data of the talking circles and in-depth conversations. I utilize a coding system to compare and contrast the qualitative data from all of the research partners, including community college students, university students, Elder alumni, the NAGPRA coordinator, Native American Student Program staff, faculty who teach Native American-focused courses, and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. Comparing the data among and across these groups will help us better understand the student's perspectives of the university's policies and best practices, especially concerning NAGPRA and feelings of belonging and support for Native American students. And finally, I wanted to know if these practices are perpetuating and even enhancing intergenerational trauma among Native American students.

Chapter Six

Analysis, Recommendations, and Future Directions

Introduction

In this chapter, I review some of the essential findings and interpretations presented in the previous chapter. I analyze them within a framework that considers the intersectionality of NAGPRA, intergenerational trauma, the college student experience on college campuses, and its impact on student success in completing their degrees and their relationships with their families and communities. Thus, while the literature provides valuable information in isolation, their combined consideration concerning the Native American college student experience highlights the previously unexplored perspective of Native American college students. The literature on NAGPRA focuses on the impact repatriation and NAGPRA policies have on Tribes and Tribal communities and NAGPRA coordinators in educational institutions and museums but lacks the engagement and conversations with the Native American college students at these institutions to gain their perspective on this topic. There is literature focusing on intergenerational trauma, but these sources fail to discuss the intersectionality of the Native American college student experiences in academic institutions, the housing of Ancestral remains and the display of sacred culture items, NAGPRA policies, and how anthropology departments and institution administration may be perpetuating additional trauma on their Native American college students. Therefore, I will explore in greater detail in this chapter how the quantitative and qualitative data in the form of surveys and

narratives combine to provide answers to the following research questions. Questions that are significant to the investigation of Native American college student experiences.

Question 1. What are the Native American university students' perspectives on institutional use of ancestor remains for educational purposes? Do the university student perspectives on repatriation and using human remains for education differ according to their discipline? Is there currently instructional recognition of intergenerational trauma experienced by Native American students and their families?

Question 2. Do Native American students associate trauma experiences with the academy, and specifically its practices of displaying or housing sacred cultural items and or ancestral remains? Is trauma so embedded epigenetically and biologically passed down through the generations that it is difficult to identify?

Question 3. Finally, does the academy unknowingly amplify and enhance its students' trauma experiences, specifically through repatriation policies and practices, culturally insensitive acculturation, curricular pedagogy, or some combination of these? Institutional policies may erase or challenge the cultural understandings that Native American students have learned about the historical significance of cultural and sacred practices through oral histories elders have passed down generationally.

These were the main research questions initially. However, the data revealed more prominent themes as the data analysis progressed, which I will discuss further in this chapter.

Research questions.

Question number one. What are the Native American university students' perspectives on institutions' use of ancestor remains for educational purposes?

I first explored how the students would answer this question and whether there were any differences in responses. I grouped the university students according to their major, with one group consisting of STEM students and the other students in the humanities fields, to learn if their responses would vary depending on their major. I hypothesized that the humanities students would respond with no tolerance for using Ancestors for educational purposes. However, I did not know how the STEM field students would respond to this question. I assumed that there might be some conflicting feelings about the use of Ancestors in a scientific environment where the use of cadavers is a common practice in the biological fields and especially in medical schools. The STEM student responses surprised me. Like their humanities cohorts, they also expressed zero tolerance for using Ancestors for educational purposes. However, the responses of community college students to this question in the survey were also surprising. Some of the community college students responded that "it depends." This response was unexpected, especially from the community college level, where the students are not exposed to the use of biological materials in their science courses. When directly asked this question during the talking circle and in-depth conversations, the community college students explained that they needed more information on how the Ancestors would be used in the scientific environment. My findings indicated no difference between the university college students' STEM and humanities groups in their perspective on housing

Ancestors and displaying sacred cultural items. Below are a few of the student's comments.

> *I feel that funerary items are only helpful in the conversations that they can generate about respect for native remains. housing remains is not correct to me. Using them is even more incorrect. You don't need remains to have discussions about the respect needed to be paid to Native American communities. Additionally, I think that there are things that are more important than Science and our need to know, and students should learn this early so that they grow as academics with respect for people and the process by which we obtain knowledge. If these conversations are had early and often in the sciences and across educational contexts, we can have honest conversations about our values and attempt to come to a consensus on these highly controversial issues. Although I am not sure that it will help because of the trend towards empirical Western education that deems the world in need of being labeled and classified, these conversations need to be had. Intergenerational trauma is related to issues like repatriation because if you cannot even be in control of the remains of your ancestors, the anger and the hopeless feeling can be debilitating.*
>
> *University student*

> *I can't imagine the hard sciences finding value per se; however, the social sciences may benefit. But I don't think that's what question 29 is alluding to. Funerary items should return to where they originate because their value is more meaningful there.*
>
> *University student*

> *Education has really changed my perspective on many native topics. When it comes to NAGPRA, I support not having ancestors or cultural items used for research purposes. After learning more about NAGPRA, I was able to understand the mistreatment of native peoples and their belongings.*
>
> *Community college student*

> *We have been deprived of cherished possessions with significant cultural and traditional value—items that colonizers have taken for themselves without understanding the honor, meaning, or purpose behind them. These appropriated artifacts are then displayed in museums, homes, and colleges in America and various other countries. It is crucial to recognize and respect the power and dignity our people deserve, enabling us to work towards saving, healing, and educating our community.*
>
> *Community college student*

The humanities and the STEM university student groups agreed that there was no legitimate reason for using Ancestors as educational tools. I expected the university STEM students to answer the question similarly to the community college students' responses. Still, the university students' responses echoed the responses of the university humanities students, who stated that there was no reason for using Ancestors for educational purposes. The difference in the community college student's response to using Ancestors may be in the answer to a question about feelings of connectedness to their Elders, community, and families. To explore the discrepancy in responses, I followed up with a question asking about feelings of connectedness to determine if the student's perspective on the housing of Ancestors and the display of sacred cultural items aligned with the views of Elders in their communities.

To understand the root of this difference in perspective, I had to determine if the students interacted with the Elders in their communities enough to share the Elder's perspectives on the topic. Because of the common cultural respect and practice of honoring Elders, I assumed that the university and community college students would report a strong feeling of connectedness to the elders in their communities. I was

surprised by the community college student's response to this question. The community college students reported feeling less connected to the Elders in their communities than the university students. I found this response interesting, given that community college students typically live at home in their tribal communities, whereas university students' communities tend to be geographically distant from campus, preventing daily interactions with their Native communities.

Confused by community college student responses, I researched this response further during talking circles and in-depth conversations; I asked why they thought their classmates felt such a disconnect with their tribal Elders. They explained that the disconnect may result from gaming (casinos) on the reservations. One of the community college students said their theory was that with the increase of jobs at the casinos, the younger working-aged Native Americans and their children moved from their reservations closer to the casinos in newer homes. This creates a geographical distance between the younger generation and the Elders who remained on the reservation. Thus, losing a generational connection to the Elders and the knowledge of culture that is passed down through oral history to the younger generations. This separation resulted in the disconnect of perspectives on ancestral beliefs and practices which impacted the community college student's perspective.

A community college student explained it like this:

> *It's [tribal community] not communal like it was back before. Um, I'm going to say gaming, really. Uh, whereas, you know, we all needed each other. Our families needed one another. And now that we're self-sufficient, it's I kind of feel like that dynamic kind of pulled all of that away because we no longer needed, you know, that communal aspect. Um. And so now, with our kids, we're realizing that that's a necessity. We need our elders. We need that knowledge passed down, you know?*
>
> *Community college student*

My interpretation of this conversation is that although the implementation of gaming in the tribal communities may have been well-intentioned and has drastically increased the tribal economy, it has also created a gap in the relationship between the community Elders and the younger generations. This gap caused a loss of passing down the culture to the younger generation. The student who shared this information expressed their concerns about losing the knowledge that the Elders carried to other members of the tribal community. The result was that the student and other Tribal community parents of tribal youth had to make an effort to implement a program to address this issue by rebuilding the relationships between the Elders and the tribal youth. The Tribal parents held events such as beading and basket weaving workshops that included the Elders and the youth as an intervention to encourage the passage of tribal culture, language, and tribal history, all of which are critical to the preservation of the Tribal community.

Next, I explored question two. Do Native American students associate trauma experiences with the academy and, specifically, its practices of displaying or housing sacred cultural items and or Ancestors?

I learned that the students do associate trauma experiences with the academy. This response was predicted because of my preliminary conversations with Native American university students who had similar responses. Many of the conversations with the university and community college students echoed this response. They explained how the relationship between educational institutions has been problematic, with distrust rooted in the historic Indian Boarding School scandals. Here are some of their responses to the question.

> *Have tried and tried all these different ways, and it's still stuck, then you get into feeling disempowered, you feel depressed on all of the things that come along with that sort of not having control over things. I don't propose to be able to come up with an answer, but for me, as a student, it just impresses upon me the importance of having these conversations. And even if they're outside of conversations about repatriation, but they're conversations about Native history, that Native people are still here, they are in these institutions, that there are these issues raising that consciousness amongst the broader community. And it's crazy, but I think that the solution in order to get to the heart of the matter and really get to the emotional heart of the matter in these conversations, it can't just be approached intellectually, but it has to be approached emotionally and spiritually to be able to actually start to create change. At least, that's what I think.*
>
> *University student*

> *Disempowering to think that no matter what people say and how they explain that these are ancestors and how they explain that they need to be treated with care and how they explain that all the things and it still just falls on deaf ears, you know. And I heard, you know, I understand that feeling of not knowing how we fit in or how I fit in the university for many reasons. And I think it's just at the same time as it's really disheartening to hear that there are remains and that these conversations haven't really changed anything in the institution. These are still conversations that need to be had, and hopefully by, each of these conversations will have some change. Because I think that the change doesn't happen intellectually. I think it has to happen through the heart. We think so much of our minds, and I think that it's a different conversation that needs to be had that speaks to people's emotions. The felt experience of all of these things needs to be talked about.*
>
> *University student*

The tribal community college student perspective on this question differed from that of the university student mainly because they attend a culturally Native American-focused tribal community college, which aims to provide an environment where Native American students feel safe and valued. The following community college responses support this theory.

> *I never felt seen in an academic setting until I enrolled at [the tribal community college]. I finally felt like I belonged like I was meant to be there. I never experienced that in any of [my] other college settings. I have been to two community colleges and one university, and [this tribal college] has felt like a place where I can thrive. I would like that same feeling for all Native students.*
>
> *Community college student*

The community college students' responses did not mention the topic of Ancestors and the display of sacred cultural items. I inferred this was mainly because the community college students are not exposed to these practices at the tribal community college. In contrast, the community college students expressed a feeling of belonging and value at the tribal college.

A recurring overall theme associated with the question, “Do Native American students associate trauma experiences with the academy and, specifically, its practices of displaying or housing sacred cultural items and or Ancestors?” was an association with the historic Indian Boarding Schools. When discussing trauma associated with the academy, the university and community college students expressed that the academy impacted them because many of the university and community college students reported that they were descendants of Indian Boarding School alumni. When sharing their family history about an Ancestor who was sent to an Indian Boarding school, they became emotional. Still, they expressed that these stories had to be shared because people needed to know the impact these schools had on their families generationally. Although these students did not personally experience the trauma of the boarding schools, they were still impacted emotionally and mentally by the oral histories of their ancestors and witnessing the fallout from the trauma their ancestors experienced. Here are some of the stories that the students shared with me.

I know that. Boarding schools was in our history, in our family. But just like [she] said, there are certain things, it's like a taboo. You just don't speak about it. And you know, my grandma passed in 2009, and like her brothers and she, it was only three siblings. It was my grandma, her brother, and their sister. And I mean, other than that, it's like any information that I want to get, I have to ask, like my eldest uncle. And different stuff is like [she] said, when you ask him, bring up certain things, it makes people sad. It makes you feel a certain type of way. And that was his mom, you know, that was my grandma. And it's like he has the knowledge, and he has the wisdom. But it's like, if you're not open to speak about those things without me having to kind of drill a hole, I'm not going to ask, you know because I don't want to bring up that trauma. I don't want to bring up that pain of having to talk about something that, you know, your mom went through, and you probably had to go through a part of life with her where she was shut off and didn't want to talk about different things or different experiences. And so, I don't really know, you know too much about it.

Community college student

My grandfather was taken as a young boy from our reservation. He was taken at the age of six years old to the boarding school that was just down the way. It was about 20 20-minute drive, so it was a couple of miles away from our house up there. He ran away from the school, actually, when he was ten years old, and he never went back never went back to school after that. He actually ended up getting his GED and going off to the army.

University student

I think another hesitation of um, higher education is sending your kids away to school, and that's a generational trauma. Like that impacts people like, my mom went to college in Delaware, and that was really hard, like my grandparents, to cope with and deal with their child. Being away, you know, is on her own, you know, accord and everything. It was still traumatizing. And I was like, well, why is it so traumatizing? Like a little bit traumatizing, I guess for like, my grandma to even, like, fathom that I was going all the way down to Southern State, California, but going down to Riverside, California. I think the only like sense of um comfortability to have, like letting me go. Or also like, you know, me leaving to go to school. Was that okay? Like it's Riverside and she's familiar with that. And, uh, she did have some fond memories there. She didn't graduate from there, but, um, that was like the sad part. The sad part is like, you know, there was a lot of abuse. There's a lot of, um, scolding, a lot of, um, physical, sexual abuse that went on there. And, you know, kids died there, and there's this whole cemetery across the road and. There's good and bad times that were, um. Portrayed to me through oral history.

University student

My observation of the responses to this question was that the oral histories of the traumatic experiences at the Indian Boarding schools are still present and are just as painful as when they were initially experienced. Thus, the negative feelings towards academic institutions are one reason for the low enrollment. Another reason for low enrollment is the discouragement by the Elders. They fear their children and grandchildren will suffer a similar trauma at current colleges and universities. Another concern of the Elders is that the children and grandchildren will not return to their tribal communities.

This is a major concern because many tribes' populations are declining, jeopardizing their future existence. Other reasons for the low enrollment at universities and colleges are lack of funds for tuition, universities lacking cultural sensitivity, Native children that have never lived away from their Tribal communities, and finally, the fear of living outside of the protection their Tribal communities provide.

The next question I explored was:

Is trauma so embedded epigenetically and biologically passed down through the generations that it is difficult to identify?

My hypothesis on this question was yes because of my preliminary conversations with Native students. During these conversations, Native American students could not define intergenerational trauma as they could Posttraumatic Stress Disorder or depression, but defined intergenerational trauma by its symptoms. The symptoms Native American university and community college students described as associated with intergenerational trauma were alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, uncontrolled anger, poor physical health conditions, and poverty. It is an extremely painful and difficult topic for the students to discuss however, many feel that these are important conversations to be had and that non-Native people need to be aware of the impact intergenerational trauma has on Native American students.

Here are a few narratives in the students' voices to help understand their perspectives.

I kind of feel like I do cater a lot of my projects around my identity. Um, so the native stuff, the cultural stuff comes up, but I think, um, it's definitely like a weird place to be in because, um, I feel like now, with time and education, I'm like, hyper-aware of this relationship that I have with the institution and also my identity. I also feel like I'm just hyper-aware of my identity. Um, because I'm, I'm disenrolled. So, um, yeah, but I feel like art is like my way of, like, being inside the institution and doing whatever I want, um, without having to, like, conform to too many things. And I feel like I can argue my projects a lot more than I can argue, like a history paper or like a math exam or something like that.

University student

The following response was about how they felt not knowing their cultural language.

Really like a chunk missing. It's, I don't know, like it's. I've tried, you know, I do try to learn as much, but the app is like, really, we have an app for the language, but it's. Not enough like it's not. You know, you have to talk with people and such, and like none of my family, like my mom doesn't know my grandmother. She was purposely not taught. Because. They were being treated so badly as natives that they would rather be not seen as native and just black. And then her. Grandmother was white-passing. So she also like she just was like, forget that native groups just we're just not. I'm not teaching you. I don't want you to have a hard life. Uh, so that's how it got lost, you know, over the treatment, if you were to ever speak, is the boarding school. You know, if you ever speak the language, they want them as kids to accidentally, you know, say something and then be punished.

University student

Okay, yeah, I think the long answer is short. Yes. I think intergenerational trauma has impacted myself, my relatives, immediate, distant and it's impacted us in ways that we may not even understand or know it yet. I think just to give a quick example that a lot of us can relate to is I know we mentioned earlier that native people go beyond drugs and alcohol, and that is the case and unfortunately, it also exists in a lot of our families, and it exists in mine. And so it's this weird thing where I have a brother who's going through that and he's in that real, it really has that grip on him. You can see it. And so seeing that and understanding what I understand in terms of the generational ramifications that have led up to this point that have created my grandparents or my great grandparents to my grandparents, to my parents, to now us, it's seeing that chain. It's almost like a chain link fence where you see each chain and how it looped and why the loop is there and why it's so strong and why when you tug on it, it's like it's just not breaking.

University student

No questions. No. It's just it's crazy that. You know, all this trauma, just, you know, kind of gets passed down. And with the lack of the knowledge, you know, it always kind of leaves you wondering, you know, and it's like, what did they go through, you know, and, and a lot of them, you know, alcoholism was. If there's like a pattern, you know, the trauma, alcoholism, you know, and. So I think it's and you know, back then to, you know, with the assimilation and everything, it was like you were forced to just not, you know, even talk about it. You know, you were forced into this whole different lifestyle. And, um, and what I think is beautiful about, you know, present day is. It's okay to talk about it now. You know, we can, like, we're having this conversation, you know? Um, and it's good to get it out there in, in the public. Because a lot of people, I mean, we don't know about it, hardly, let alone non-natives, you know. And so that kind of changes the narrative that everybody has, you know, and so being able to openly speak about it and get it out there, you know, I think that would help others kind of relate to how we are as people because, you know, with all the trauma, it changes you. It changes the way you're brought up. You know, it's all a big ripple. And, you know, for me to have these open conversations with my kids about, you know, the things that I went through with living in an alcoholic household and the reason why We're able to pass on and break that cycle. And, you know, I always kind of it's always a little bit of a concern for me because I remember the things that I went through, all the abuse, all the sexual abuse, all the, you know, different

dynamics that I went through. You know, I made that choice within me to not pass those things and not expose my kids to certain situations. And my only concern, my only concern really is, you know, when you have certain traumatic events like that that have happened, they kind of tend to jump generations, you know, you've got the messed up generation, and then the next one that's like, nope, we're not going to do this. And then the next one that's like, oh, we were goody two shoes, you know, let's go and have, you know, let's go have our fun. And then they're the ones that are messed up. Um, the what, you know, was messed up in my childhood. Like I'm closer with my chosen friends than I am with my family. And it's unfortunate, but because of the alcoholism, a lot of mental health problems and, um, broken bonds and stuff like that.

Community college student

Although I had several conversations in my preliminary research, I wanted to hear from the students in the study to see if their perspectives aligned with those of the students in my preliminary conversations. I found that most of the Native American university and community college students associated intergenerational trauma with Indian Boarding Schools. This might be because the discussion was within the landscape of educational institutions. This is essential information when trying to understand the Native American college student experience, why Native students are reluctant to enroll in colleges and succeed in their academic programs, and why they may not continue to graduate programs.

I observed that the Native American college students understand that intergenerational trauma is passed down through the generations epigenetically. Some Native Americans use the term “Blood Memory,” meaning memory of historical traumatic experiences that run through the Native American veins. The students

expressed that they are aware that the trauma they are experiencing is a result of epigenetics, meaning that the trauma manifests in a biological impact by declining mental health, diabetes, and heart disease. Still, some have resigned to the ideology that there is no hope for breaking the chain of intergenerational trauma and will have to continue living with the stigma.

Although mental health services are available in the Indian Health Services community medical health clinics and through mental health programs on college campuses, the students expressed mistrust of mental health providers. Native American students conveyed that they felt that the mental health providers were unable to understand what they were experiencing and, therefore, unable to provide culturally appropriate therapy. However, the Native American Student Program, with all its resources, addresses this need accordingly to the Native American university students. The Native American students credit the Native American Student Program as a great resource that helps the students access resources such as culturally focused health services and how to navigate the university to improve the student experience.

The university's Native American Student Program was designed to assist students with their needs, such as addressing food insecurity, funding, registering for classes, learning how to coordinate conferences, attending Native academic conferences at other universities, and encouraging networking with Native American students at different universities throughout the U.S., collaborating with the local Native American communities and sponsoring “Gathering of the Tribes.” Gathering of the Tribes is a summer program where high school students visit the university, stay in the dorms, and

attend workshops to help the students complete a college application portfolio to submit to their dream college. Native American university students mentor high school students to help them develop their leadership skills.

Within the Native American Student program, there are individual organizations such as the Native American Student Association (NASA), American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), Native American Honor Society (NAHS), and Graduate American Indian Alliance (GAIA). These organizations sponsor university conferences, where students learn how to plan conference events and the yearly Powwow. They also hire students as office staff or help students find other employment opportunities.

I had the opportunity to talk with the Native American Student Program director and coordinator to ask about their program and its main goal. Here was their response:

> *Retention. Right. And, um, helping the students to succeed. So again, succeed prior to coming. Um, so again, they may not be familiar with college. They may know nothing about it. Again, those how-to's and what to do, um, and how to navigate that before even entering. Right. And then again, being accepted after they fill out the application and all that whole nine yards getting here. And then again, just teaching them about all the resources that our campus has to offer them, um, and build that connection. So again, like a home away from home here in NASP, um, they have a place where they feel comfortable and can meet others. I mean, there's a wide variety, you know, all that we have in here and that our center offers. It's small, but it's cozy. I'm about making those connections with the other offices, right? So, campus definitely, those interactions, that's part of my role, too, to also get and seek out people as well within the community, our elders, again, bringing them for our events, trying to connect them and plug them where I see fit, um, trying to get the students to, you know, acknowledge them and, um, want them to be a part, whether it be like for AISES medicine, ways I connect, um, or just simply coming and, you know, having space in here to connect with our students and see what they do and how brilliant they are. Hosting events, making those connections from beginning to end. Um, although we allow the students, we want*

> *them to grow and develop on their own. And be able to host some of our, you know, major events throughout the year. It also depends on the years of the students, um, what they need. Right. And what they're lacking. Not everybody fits in that boxed frame. Um, so a lot of times it's case by case for me. And again, um, I'm building that rapport with the students as a group, but also individually. I think that's very important. Um, and getting to learn about our student's cultures, right? Who they are, where they come from, um, what they know, what they don't know, and how we work together to build a better future for them*
>
> *University Native American Program Staff*

One of the survey questions was about how connected university students felt to the Native American Student Program. The students responded favorably and stated that they credited the program for their success in completing their degree programs, going on to graduate programs, and success in their careers. My interpretation of this data is that the university's Native American Student Program creates a safe space and a community away from their tribal communities where students are free to express and share their culture proudly with other Native American students. The program's success is a result of the setup of the office space where Native American students feel welcomed.

The Native Student Program office has a small kitchen and kitchen supplies, a table and chairs, and a whiteboard where students can study with their friends. Graduate students also utilize the office and will help the undergraduates with their assignments by proofreading a written assignment or reviewing math equations on the whiteboard. Native Americans need a community environment to thrive, and the Native American Student Program provides that environment for the students. Creating a family-like atmosphere is essential for the success of the Native American student.

Question 3. Finally, does the academy unknowingly amplify and enhance its students' trauma experiences, specifically through repatriation policies and practices or culturally insensitive acculturation and curricular pedagogy? Or some combination of both?

Initially, this was not a topic I contemplated as a discussion point; therefore, I was unsure what the response to this question would be. Once I explored this topic further, I found that the university is aware that it may be amplifying and enhancing Native American students' trauma experiences. However, some administrators actively try to correct this issue and genuinely want to help the Native communities, including the Native student community, by being transparent.

At the same time, others in power are not addressing the issue appropriately, as expressed by the university students. To address this question, I interviewed the university's NAGPRA coordinator and an administrator to understand the university's best practices. I would first like to highlight what students shared and what they were asking of the university administration.

> *I think we've been trained to kind of leave all of this out of the equation, and that is the terrible violence or the denial that the institutions have inflicted upon our people in the first place. And so I think naturally it's something that's going to automatically want to be continued, which is what we're fighting against, really, the dehumanization and the objectification of Indigenous existence or just the humanity of people and not being willing to look at the bigger picture too. I think, as you were saying earlier, always wanting to keep things in a nice clean, that this is the federal law. We're going to follow it this way, that way, and it leads institutions to do things. Like what? Josh was just talking about that. I think we'll do what we have to do, and we'll do it by the letter of the law so that they're not going to be able to hold something against us or prosecute us. And yet in the end, you were saying it kind of goes*

on and on because it took hundreds of years for this problem to grow and develop and it can't be solved overnight. It can't all be done in just a few days or a few years even.

University student

I feel like the people that are Running the institution need to take accountability. And I feel like the fact that it's just kind of been not really addressed, not given any notification to Native students, they'll send out information and stuff like that on other tragedies that don't even have to do with the campus. They'll send out information on, like, oh, there was. I'm not sure I have heard it, but there's racial unrest that's going on in the United States. We're going to send out a notification to the campus to express how much we care for the students and their well-being during this time, for instance. But there's nothing like that coming from his office for Native students, it's like it's not even addressed. It's not even seen or heard. And it's like, well, there's a disconnect. The issues that are happening for the Native community aren't seen at the same level as these other sorts of issues that are going on. So, I feel like there has to be accountability within the institution. And I don't know, I'm not an expert in the institution and who holds power and how these conversations need to be powerful. But there's the Chancellor Advisory committee that might be a way to start a discussion about how the university can better dialogue within the campus and also with community members.

University Student

As I get older, the more frustrated I get with schools, the more I understand their realities. And when students are interested in the schools, I'm almost at the point where it's like, this is what's happening at the school. I'm not going to lie to you. So, I think after all my rambling and thoughts, I think that's kind of where I'm going more towards now about the UC's and other schools, about how they treated Native people in the past and how they continue to in the present. And then there was one other thing. Oh, whose role would it be? Is it the native students' role? Is it student programmers? Is it professors? Is it deans? Is it chancellors? The person appointed to do with it? Who is going to be the designated person to tell them about all the trauma that the school does? I feel like every single native person at a school does it in a capacity that they're not required to, but as a community member, they feel like it's their responsibility. So, is there a lead

trauma coordinator of a school? Because from how I understand it, it just falls on every native person at every different level, whether they're a person involved who doesn't go to the school and attend, but an elder who does do, say, basket weaving workshops, who has a relationship with the university over the years.

University student

Professors know about all this. Students know, graduate students, even sometimes down to the workers. I met people, I think it's like an electrician or the people who do a lot of the building inspections. A Lakota man was working at university who, if I'm not mistaken, they were related to the means, and his daughter was interested. And even those workers, the campus workers who know about the things that goes on the campus and we always talk about it within community. So, I guess my question to the university is, how does this go on? Who is in charge of that? Because I don't know, because it falls on everybody, from what I understand, in my experience.

University Student

The university may say that it is not aware that it may be amplifying the trauma that Native American students experience. Still, the university students' perception is that the university is aware, therefore leaving them feeling disempowered and not included in matters that impact their experience on campus.

One of my observations is the university's lack of communication with the Native American students. As indicated by the previous student narrative, the Native American university students expressed feelings of being invisible to the university because they were never in the decision-making process about how the university addressed Native American students' issues. Nor were they aware of the university's practice of housing Ancestors on campus. This is an important issue that needs to be addressed and is critical, especially for those whose tribal culture forbids their citizens from being in proximity to

the deceased, such as the Navajo. The students associate this behavior as reminiscent of the paternalistic policies, laws, and practices that Native American people have experienced for centuries and, by extension, to them.

I found that the university administration was aware of the challenging relationship with the Native American students, as evidenced by the in-depth conversation with the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. When the Vice Chancellor was informed about the Native American students' response to questions focused on their university experiences, the Vice Chancellor explained that the university was actively working on increasing Native American student enrollment and had been working to implement policies such as renaming student dormitories on campus with a Cahuilla[1] name.

Another project that the Vice Chancellor mentioned was the indigenizing of the university campus. Indigenizing the university campus was a project that two faculty members organized. One was a Native American faculty member who organized a team of undergraduates and graduates at the university to create a walking tour where campus visitors could walk on a designated trail throughout the campus. Along this trail, visitors stop at designated areas and learn about the Native American relationship to that geographical location through video and audio, accessible through their phones by scanning a QR code. However, the indigenizing project was funded by an outside donor, not the university. However, the university supported the newly established Tribal Community College with a generous donation to help develop the 2-year institution for Native American students in the local area.

Another concern shared by university students was the lack of faculty representation. The fact is that Native faculty are concentrated in history, ethnic studies, and the performing arts departments. There is a lack of Native representation in all other disciplines, including anthropology, where they are needed most to help avoid NAGPRA violations at the university. I also observed a lack of NAGPRA courses or courses that explained ethical considerations of handling sensitive cultural materials in the anthropology department. This is the department where researchers may be most likely to violate these policies. There is someone, however, who understands the sensitive discourse between the university and Native American students and Native American communities. That person is the university NAGPRA coordinator.

The university NAGPRA coordinator has been an essential advocate for the Native American writ large.

> *And I don't think they're [university administration] getting that. I don't think that they're understanding that there's trauma tied to this. There's a lot of history that comes with that. Like you said, I have no doubts, and I know that it's coming from a good place. It really is. They're trying to make things right. I don't think that they understand how to do that, and they don't understand. I said I don't think you're prepared to take that on because it has to be gradual, and it has to be, again, with some of the [Tibal] leaders, right, [community] representatives first to guide you into how you're going to open this up to the community and the students.*
>
> *NAGPRA Coordinator*

> *Nagra is 99% relationship-building. It is a human rights law, which means that people need to be at the center of it. I have a tribe that comes to campus every month. They come for 8 hours a day. We get*

lunch in the middle of the day. We sometimes talk about things that aren't even related to NAGPRA. And that's what you're saying about taking baby steps. That's necessary. You need to get to know people, and they need to know that they can trust you with their ancestors. It's not as simple as, like, well, this person was removed from San Jacinto. Yeah. You're Luiseno. So you probably want them back. Right. Well, what's the context of the tribe right now? Do they have space for that ancestor? Are they able to rebury them where they want to? Is the entire ancestor accounted for? What kind of ceremony needs to take place? What kind of money is that going to cost? Kumeyaay, for example, will do very long ceremonies where the whole community will come, and they'll feast for days, and they contract to get specific specially made caskets for the ancestors. And that takes a lot of planning, funding, and collaboration, and it's not as simple as just, here you go.

NAGPRA Coordinator

This was a stark contrast to the story a student shared about how an Ancestor was returned to a Tribe by another institution, saying:

I want to say I forgot which tribe it was, but they were giving back some remains, and it was actually really not very personable and really rude in which these families, I think from Montana Tribe, drove all the way to Yale and they got there, there was like, no, let me take you to lunch. Let's get you a hotel room. Let's do a tour of the campus. Let's talk. They just gave them the box of remains, and that was it. They showed it to the school here, the family members, and that was that. That was just a big trade-off in the parking lot. Super crazy. But when you think about it and sit down, it's not really surprising that an institution would do those things. A lot of the times these schools try to promote themselves more recently about being diverse and innovative and trying to do good. But a lot of the times when you look at the larger past and I always tell students this in my class when I teach them the United States has existed for less than 300 years and Indian people have existed this long in comparison to the small amount of time native people have dealt with the United States.

University student

Suppose the university administrators were not aware of the trauma they may be causing Native American students. In that case, the NAGPRA coordinator has actively discussed this issue and has implemented policies to handle the issue of NAGPRA compliance and repatriation with respect and cultural awareness. The coordinator has also reached out to several university departments about a course they have designed for those departments that may come in contact with Ancestors and need to be aware of NAGPRA policies and laws. This includes the Department of Anthropology, which educates students who will be working within the NAGPRA landscape and those students who will not be directly involved in NAGPRA. Included in this group are students who may not work within NAGPRA but who need to be aware should they ever be in a situation that may help others to understand the impact this issue has on not just Native Americans but Indigenous people writ large. The NAGPRA coordinator has reached out to the Native Student program to be involved in meetings with any person who would like more information on this issue.

Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to highlight the voices of Native American students about their concerns and challenges with their university and college experiences. In their own voices, Native American students discussed issues such as intergenerational trauma, cultural assimilation, disempowerment, and their feelings of invisibility within a structure that Native American students feel is against them and their cultural traditions, Western ideology, and policies, including the practice of housing Ancestors and displaying sacred

cultural items in classroom settings. Native American students are concerned overall about how much the institution is aware of how their practices may be enhancing the trauma that Native peoples have experienced in the past and still experience.

The overarching finding is the presence of policies and practices that enhance intergenerational trauma. Native American university and community college students in this research believe that the academy enhances their and their respective communities' trauma. The university's Native American students' perspective is that the university is aware that its policies and best practices impact the Native students and enhance the trauma experience. This perspective is supported as evidenced by the university administration's attempt to satisfy the students' concerns by renaming dormitories and agreeing to projects highlighting Indigenous involvement on campus. These are baby steps in an effort to address Native American student issues. The students, however, demand more inclusive practices in these institutions, for example, inclusion in the decision-making processes when addressing Native American issues. It is not sufficient to include a select few student representatives but to allow a committee of Native American students' peers whom the Native American students themselves select to represent them to help build better relationships on campus.

With sadness and discomfort, students described and explained through their lived experiences how educational institutions continue to perpetuate the trauma that Native Americans have suffered from the Western academic system for centuries, from the Indian Boarding Schools era to the present. Native American students and their families and communities associate educational institutions with the historic Indian Boarding

schools that for so long were committing culturicide by forced assimilation, removing any evidence of centuries-old Native American culture, including traditional language and spiritual practices. Thus, many Native American Elders and family members discourage Native youth from seeking higher education because of the horrible conditions that their Ancestors experienced while at these institutions. They fear their youth will suffer a contemporary form of the treatment that their Ancestors experienced, especially the loss of culture, language, and traditions. Their fears may have some merit.

The responses of the Native American university and Tribal community college students in this research and low enrollment at universities and colleges nationally also appear to support these concerns. These same concerns and perspectives on the issues were shared by all the Native American university students, regardless of their discipline or education level. There were no differences in their responses between STEM and humanities students, undergraduates, or graduate-level students.

Through the conversations with the Native American university students, tokenism was mentioned, as one of the ways they felt invisible and disrespected. The students felt that they satisfied or checked off a box for the university system to fulfill a diversity requirement that allowed the campuses access to more funding. To the students, the paternalistic behavior of the university in the form of lack of inclusion, invisibility, and walking in silence validates their feelings of being disrespected, devalued, and not being important as a people, not unlike the historical maltreatment of Native American peoples by the government and society at large. As articulated in the university student narratives, they feel disempowered by the university and caught in a power play, which

escalates feelings of being in an unsafe environment while at educational institutions that both stigmatize and ignore them.

Stigma was another undercurrent theme that intersected with intergenerational trauma and its symptoms. When describing what the students identified as the symptoms of intergenerational trauma, they resigned to the fact that knowledge that it was a stigma that they would have to live with that some Native Americans were lucky if they were not affected by alcoholism, drug abuse, or domestic violence. Their understanding was that there was little they could do to change the trajectory of these issues. The hopeless feeling of being subjected to intergenerational trauma without control over a different outcome was eased when they learned about research that was done on the consumption of alcohol while pregnant and how breaking the cycle, future generations would start to reverse the effects after the third generation (Abbott et al., 2018). The impact of the stigma they feel is exacerbated by the miseducation of some of their non-Native classmates that Native Americans are historical characters and that only by wearing traditional tribal regalia can they be identified as Native Americans.

There are so many variables that contribute to the perpetuation of intergenerational trauma, many more that were discussed during the talking circles and in-depth conversations that will be included in other literature and future publications that will further help to understand and explain the complex layers of intergenerational trauma and the suffering that Native people have and continue to experience within what they perceive as hostile structures. What is important for this research is how the higher educational system begins to listen to and understand the Native American student

perspective and implement policies to improve the university and college experience. There were many recommendations from the university and Tribal community college students that I have shared in the recommendations section of this chapter. These students have specific ideas and suggestions for improving the college environment and bridging the gap between the two worlds, the Native American world and the Western-oriented world of higher education. This collaboration is for the success of Native American students. But ultimately, it is for the benefit of all students.

Recommendations

The last topic discussed in the talking circles and in-depth conversations and the last question on the survey was, "If you had a chance to talk to college administrators and or lawmakers, what advice would you give them about how to help and support Native American students and how to ensure that Native American students are heard and included in decisions about Native American topics, and policies? Here are some of the student's recommendations in their own voices.

I would advise the administrators and lawmakers that Native Students need support groups, a safe environment, and the ability to be seen.

Community college student

Focus on relationship building is like a biggest thing that I guess I didn't realize how many people don't do that or don't build relationships with other people the way we do in our native culture. I

was like, wow, this is like eye opening. Because just doing something like you just mentioned, having an elder in residence, having someone to talk to you, having these talking circles, it is therapeutic, it is healing, it is a process, but it is specific to our culture, where we want to build those relationships. We want to know that there's someone there and then we don't trust people. That's a big thing, right? You don't just trust nobody. I don't even trust a therapist. And I wouldn't have a therapist for that reason because I have so much trust issues, trauma or whatever. So I'm like, yeah, how are you supposed to feel better and release all that if you don't have the outlet? Just having that place, the facility, and having the opportunity to make those relationships that you mentioned at the very beginning, like a lifelong, lasting relationship.

University student

Don't be afraid to ask questions and inquire about things that you're unaware of. Then there's a lot of power, and there's a lot of power in knowledge to be aware of, not only yourself but the community that surrounds you because there's a lot of people who are unaware of the things like you said, the traumas, generational trauma, different things that go on within the Native American community. And I think that if there was more awareness, that is not to say that it would bring more compassion, but it would bring more understanding as to what the Native American community as a whole has been through. Yeah.

Community college student

I would tell any of the administrators that we only want you to hear us. Hear our stories and problems, and most importantly, hear us. We have suffered for years, and no one is taking the time to hear us out and listen to what we have to say. Let us inform you of our culture and teach you how you can respect us as humans. Community college student

These were just a few of the many student recommendations. However, the main recommendation was **Respect.** That is**,** people in power should ask Native American students about their needs and follow through with their requests.

I want to build on these recommendations further by adding some of my own. First, academic institutions should stop using Ancestors for educational tools and purposes. Nothing more can be learned from their bodies related to injuries, dietary deficiencies, and diseases. Instead, we should learn about Native Americans' resilience to these injuries, diet deficiencies, and how they treated their infirm. To do this, we must learn from the living Elders who have knowledge of these topics. Many people have consented to donate their bodies to science. Use the donor bodies instead of those who have not consented to such use. Furthermore, if remains are on campus, then it is critical that students, especially Native American students, be made aware that the skeletal remains of deceased people are housed in various departments. Out of respect for Native American spiritual traditions, especially when housing of Ancestors and the display of cultural sacred objects.

2. Tribal members should be asked for guidance on how to care for their Ancestors until they are returned to their families if the university knows to which Tribal community the Ancestor belongs. Native Americans are not monolithic. They are diverse and have different criteria for caring for their deceased. Furthermore, when reaching out to the Tribes, after the initial contact, further communication should be face-to-face and not via email. These conversations will be difficult but need to be had respectfully. Invite Tribal members to the university and ask them for guidance on creating a safe space for the Native students and follow through with their recommendations. This may include cleansing the departments and labs, such as medical schools and anthropology departments, by a spiritual healer where Ancestors were housed. Tribal members who

assist in these matters should be treated like professionals, like board members, and should be invited to meet in a boardroom and treated to a meal like any other administrative colleague.

3. Displaying sacred items should be avoided without permission from the tribe to which the items belong. Instead, relationships should be developed with the local tribes to ask permission to display their cultural items and invite tribal members as guest speakers to teach the class about how these items are used and their importance. Building a relationship with the surrounding tribes would ensure school support and teach the students much more about the culture than a photo in a textbook. Often, tribal members bring in supplies for the students to make the cultural item, giving them an understanding of the craftsmanship it takes to create the item. My experience has been that during these cultural workshops, tribal members teach the students words from their tribal language and share stories about their ancestors and how the item was utilized, leaving the students with applied knowledge. Moreover, the guest speakers should be treated like other scholars, and an honorarium should be offered for their time and sharing their knowledge with the students.

4. Utilize class assignments to incorporate Native American culture into the course. This can be done with any course, including science courses. I have used this method in my cultural courses by assigning a final project that incorporates three chapters in the textbook into a project using their talents, such as photography, video, poems, beadwork, ribbon skirts, and drawings that results in the students applying what they have learned in the course. The projects are amazing, and the students feel that their

culture is valued and they are valued for what they bring to the class. I have also utilized this type of assignment in my biological anthropology course, where I ask the students to reach out to an Elder in their community and ask them about their perspective on evolution. The response from both the students and the Elders has been overwhelmingly positive. The students learn about their creation stories, and the Elders are excited to know that a college is proactive in helping to pass down precious knowledge that the Elders carry. One Elder asked the student, “What school has assigned you this project?” The Elder also shared his fear about not passing down to the younger generation all the knowledge he carried before passing on. The students were excited about the conversations with the Elders, and they expressed that they wanted to learn more and would make an effort to spend more time with the Elders to learn more about their culture. These small changes in the curricula help to address the issues of cultural validation, Elder support of education, language, and cultural preservation.

5. Another recommendation is to create a handbook for educational institutions and their departments to use as a guide. This handbook should be developed with the guidance and collaboration of tribal communities and Native American students. NAGPRA policies should be strictly adhered to and updated to reflect the current federal, state, and university system-wide changes. Courses should be offered on NAGPRA policies, should include a Native American perspective, and should not be limited to the anthropology department. As discussed in the prior NAGPRA chapter, chapter two, there needs to be more knowledge on NAGPRA policies in medical schools and medical examiner's offices.

6. The most important recommendation is that researchers understand that the researcher is not the expert on Native American topics. Centuries of knowledge have been passed down and are now shared with the researcher. It is impossible to learn and completely understand everything with the limited time that researchers have to gather the data. Finally, all data is the property of the tribe who gifted the researcher with their knowledge and should be returned to the Tribe to avoid exploitation. The data gathered should not be shared with anyone without the permission of the tribe or tribal members; rather, the data should remain in the care of the knowledge keepers so they can decide who has access to the data and how it will be used.

Future directions

This research will continue and can go in many directions. However, the students' main concern was intergenerational trauma and its impact on them, their families, their communities, and their success in college. To pursue these questions more complexly, research evidence points toward DNA methylation, better known as epigenetics (Lehrner et al., 2018).

My future research goals are to explore this further by studying the biological impact that intergenerational trauma has on Native Americans. I believe that by understanding how intergenerational trauma impacts physiological and mental health, we can start to develop methods of addressing this layered and complex issue. Identifying signs and symptoms in children in the early stages and implementing interventions is crucial to ensure better outcomes.

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