

**Missing, Murdered, and Marginalized: Racial Disparities in Media Coverage of
Missing and Murdered Women**

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1. Introduction

The news media play a vast role in informing society of what is important. It shapes who is seen as newsworthy, thus influencing political narratives. With this, an investigation is needed into the power wielded by media institutions and the role they play in perpetuating hierarchical depictions of different bodies. Like every institution, society built the media within a racialized, gendered, and colonial framework. As such, they reinforce specific notions. These narratives work to reproduce the systems of power in which they thrive. Thus, through an investigation into Missing White Woman Syndrome and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls epidemic, the origins and evolution of this hierarchy will be explored. This will be further explored through a critical discourse and content analysis of the prevalence of, and vocabulary used within white versus Indigenous stories. Ultimately, the media perpetuates specific notions of white versus Indigenous women and, as such, works to reinforce socially constructed ideas of race. This reveals that society sees white bodies as more valuable than Indigenous bodies.

2. Literature Review

Missing White Woman Syndrome refers to the overabundance of media coverage dedicated to missing person cases involving white women and the correlating lack of coverage of missing racialized women (Furey et al. 2023, 1541). It also refers to the media's tunnel-vision focus on young, white, attractive, and rich women (Moss 2019, 741; Slakoff and Fradella 2019, 81). Society views the disappearances of white women as an attack on itself due to how it positions them within a larger social context. This pushes the media to prioritize their stories, mobilizing entire societies to look for the

person. In contrast, the media is less likely to write stories about Indigenous women, and when they do, the stories often perpetuate specific stereotypes. They are framed with stigmatizing high-risk narratives that associate Indigenous women with sex work and substance abuse to reduce perceived newsworthiness and blame the victim (Moeke-Pickering et al. 2018, 57). This paints a picture of what an appropriate victim looks like, normalizing the disappearances of Indigenous women (Furey et al. 2023, 1542; Razak 2000, 106; Razak 2016, 298). Even when cases of Indigenous women going missing reach the media, outlets frequently paint them in a negative light and blame them for their disappearances (Razak 2016, 298). Also, within the coverage, media outlets do not humanize missing racialized women in the same way that they humanize white women, leading to the belief that white women possess more value than their racialized counterparts (Razak 2016, 291; Slakoff and Fradella 2019, 82).

Based on the longstanding history of colonialization, Indigenous women and girls have been going missing for decades with little to no public acknowledgement. Colonial violence, racism, and oppression connect thousands of missing Indigenous women and girls (Macklin 2021, 1090-91; National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019, 4). Mainstream culture largely fails to acknowledge the connected forms of violence that Indigenous women experience. Authorities have conducted no investigation comparable to those for missing white women, and the public shows little awareness of the genocide (Macklin 2021, 1089-90; Simpson 2016, 4). While there would be public outrage if these acts had been committed against white bodies, popular narratives continue to portray Indigenous people as lesser humans to justify the minuscule amounts of media attention that outlets give to Indigenous women

(Alexander 2010, 98; Macklin 2021, 1104; Razak 2016, 291). The silence surrounding this crisis exemplifies Judith Butler's assertion that what is speakable in the public sphere is related to who is framed as human and whose deaths are counted as grievable (Macklin 2021, 1090). Based on this, decolonial theorists have shown that the category of the human has always failed to account for gendered and racialized bodies, amplifying the intersectional nuance of the issue (Macklin 2021, 1090; National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019, 37).

Despite popular narratives, it is becoming increasingly clear that Canada as a post-colonial state is a myth. Since Canadian society was built within coloniality, racism continues to embed itself within the social infrastructure. Race-based ideas and racism persist because these notions built the very structures in which Canadians live (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019, 4). Based on the desire to separate modern society from its colonial past, many institutions have adopted a colour-blind approach to racism. While some may feel that this is a step in the right direction, race-neutral theories work to reproduce racial lines and disadvantage Indigenous individuals (Midzain-Gobin and Smith 2020, 484). By adopting colour-blindness, institutions fail to recognize and accommodate intersectional, colonial experiences. The political, social, and economic world situates women of colour in a way that fundamentally differs from white women or racialized men; as such, women of colour experience racism in a way that is different from their male counterparts and face sexism that is not directly comparable to white women (Crenshaw 1991, 1252). Thus, other dimensions of identity, like race and class, fundamentally situate the violence that some women experience, making intervention strategies centered around only one

facet of their identity ineffective in eliminating the violence against them (Crenshaw 1991, 1242, 1246). This further perpetuates a hierarchy where society only caters to the normative white experience (Midzain-Gobin and Smith 2020, 479). This enables and promotes an inaccurate depiction of Canada, one that erases the ongoing recreation of settler colonialism (Midzain-Gobin and Smith 2020, 479).

The phenomenon of Missing White Woman Syndrome can be further understood through a case study of Gabby Petito, a young white woman who went missing and was eventually found to be murdered by her boyfriend. In 2021, Gabby and her boyfriend were travelling across the United States in their van when Gabby disappeared (Furey et al. 2023). She was a low-level influencer who was largely unknown to the average person. Yet upon going missing, her online profile grew substantially. The media quickly latched onto Gabby's case, and the story spread around the world in an instant. This not only pushed the police to dedicate vast resources to finding her but also motivated the public to take the search into their own hands. Gabby's name spread like wildfire. This prompted a couple who had been camping in a similar area to Gabby to search their camera footage (Chang-Yeh 2022, 2). In doing so, they found a video of Gabby's van, ultimately leading the police to her body (Romano as cited in Chang-Yeh 2022, 2). As a result, within 8 days of her disappearance, Gabby's body was found along with a journal in which her boyfriend had written his confession (Furey et al. 2023, 1538). It is due to the vast media attention afforded to Gabby that an otherwise unrelated member of the public was able to play a significant role in her case.

This phenomenon is also evident in the case of Natalee Holloway, a young white woman who went missing in 2005 while on a school trip to Aruba. Leaving the bar one

night, Natalee was seen getting into a car with a group of young local men and was never seen again (Tucker 2009, 72). Following her disappearance, and for many years after, the media homed in on Natalee's case. Countless articles were released spreading awareness of Natalee's case and urging the public to share any information that could help in finding her (Tucker 2009, 71). While not all the media attention was positive, there was nonetheless ample media attention, so word of Natalee's disappearance spread. 20 years later, her body has never been found, no one has officially been charged, and Natalee has been declared deceased, yet she remains a popular topic for news media and television documentaries (Moss 2019, 746). Online chat forums and interactive websites continue to garner attention for Natalee's case years later as people discuss her disappearance with hopes of solving the case themselves (Tucker 2009, 71-2). Despite the years that have gone by, society, and consequently the media, continue to latch on to Natalee's disappearance, novelizing her and influencing who is seen as newsworthy.

In contrast to the media attention given to Gabby and Natalee, the cases of Cindy Gladue and Pamela George highlight stark disparities. Cindy Gladue, an Indigenous woman living in Edmonton, went missing in 2011. Ultimately, when found, it was concluded that Cindy had been murdered by a white male truck driver after paying for her services as a sex worker (Makepeace 2023, 1; Razak 2016, 286). Cindy was found having bled to death after the offender left an 11-centimeter wound in her vagina (Madigan et al. 2025, 120). Unlike Gabby and Natalee, little media attention was initially afforded to Cindy, and it was only after a controversial court even that coverage increased. Even then, the coverage overtly blamed Cindy for her victimization and

blatantly ignored the dehumanization that she faced (Razak 2016, 287-88). Labels such “as ‘native,’ ‘hooker,’ and ‘prostitute’” (Madigan et al. 2025, 120) were frequently used to justify the offender’s treatment of Cindy and depict her as lesser. Cindy’s case has been studied by many to investigate how colonialism continues to manifest through settlers’ possessiveness towards Indigenous women’s bodies. How Cindy was treated via the media shows a clearer picture of the role the media plays in the dehumanization of Indigenous women.

In 1995, Pamela George was murdered by two white men in Regina. Pamela was working as a sex worker when the two men persuaded her to get into their car (Razack 2000, 92). After driving to an isolated field, the men took turns beating Pamela, ultimately leaving her in the mud to die (Razack 2000, 92). Like Cindy’s case, racial stereotypes propagated narratives around Pamela’s death. These narratives drew on the contrast between the space that Pamela came from, a space where violence was regular and violations of bodies routinely occurred, with the space that the offenders came from, one of wealth, whiteness, and privilege (Razack 2000, 93). The media reproduced biased narratives and created further stereotypes where ‘Indigenous woman’ was synonymous with ‘sex-worker’, thus validating the degradation of her body. Through this, the media reduced Pamela to a lower-class body that was to be paid for, used, and disposed of. This reinforced the offenders’ identities as superior white men.

The media ignored the intersectional nature of Cindy and Pamela’s victimization and failed to account for the ongoing legacy of colonialism that impacted their cases. By not contextualizing their positionalities as Indigenous women, the media left out the colonial and gendered entitlement that the offenders felt towards their bodies (Razak

2016, 292-93). In ignoring both the historical and modern contexts surrounding the crimes, the media replicated the colonial narratives that have subjugated, dehumanized, and labelled Indigenous women as the other for decades (Makepeace 2023, 2; Razak 2016, 290; Simpson 2016, 14). The continued lack of recognition of missing and murdered Indigenous women creates a cycle in which Indigenous bodies are viewed as less important than their white counterparts. Society sees Indigenous bodies as disposable, whereas it depicts white bodies as invaluable (Furey et al. 2023, 1542; Simpson 2016, 13; Slakoff and Fradella 2019, 82). When society sees them as lesser, the media is not as likely to cover their stories, further perpetuating the idea that Indigenous women are not newsworthy. This reinforces a damaging cyclical process. Comprehensively, genocidal pasts and colonial presents embed the lives and deaths of Indigenous women in North America; they are not random acts in an otherwise model state (Midzain-Gobin and Smith 2020, 487; Razak 2000, 129; Simpson 2016, 13).

Looking more broadly, this epidemic also poses great barriers to legislative and policy action. Research on Missing White Woman syndrome shows how the media influences public consciousness and crime control policy (Furey et al. 2023, 1540; Slakoff and Fradella 2019, 83). The media, as an institution, plays a role in depicting what the public should consider a problem. This directly impacts policy. Government officials are significantly more likely to implement reactionary policies on issues that the public deems important. The common use of language to paint narratives around white women as perfect victims creates a moral panic within a society where the public puts pressure on governments to implement policy changes. Moral panics occur when something is framed as a threat to societal values and interests (Slakoff and Fradella

2019, 83). The media, as well as other agents of social control, sensationalize these threats to manipulate what people see as an emergent issue (Slakoff and Fradella 2019, 83). With this, the media can control what factors surrounding missing women people deduce to be important, thus defining where the panic lies. This provides an important revelation when attempting to dissect how institutions define who deserves societal panic.

3. Methodology

This research used a mixed-method approach incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods through content analysis and critical discourse analysis. This approach was chosen to utilize the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

First, the quantitative content analysis provided a broad view by looking at what stories news algorithms promote. For this, a Google search was conducted with the search words “missing women in Canada in 2024 and 2025”. The results of the search were then looked through. Notes were made about the order of the stories, as well as the number of stories that addressed missing white versus missing Indigenous women. For this, n=35 stories, which covered all the news articles about missing women in 2024 and 2025 retrieved by the engine. Next, 5 online news outlets were scanned with the search word “missing”. It was then looked at how many of the top 10 search results were stories of missing white women, stories of missing Indigenous women, or unrelated news stories that had the word “missing” in their headlines. Here, n=50, which accounts for the top 10 search results on each of the 5 online news outlets used. These news outlets included: CBC, CTV News, City News, Global News, and the Vancouver

Sun. Next, the official statistics on missing people and homicides in Canada in 2024 were pulled to compare the number of news stories per race with the actual number of missing people. Interestingly, there were barriers to finding data on missing people in Canada that were sorted by both race and gender, which will be further discussed later. Quantitative methodology was also used to see the number of articles written about each of the previously discussed cases. For this, $n=830$, which accounts for all the articles that came up when searches were made for Pamela George, Cindy Gladue, Gabby Petito, and Natalee Holloway.

Next, the qualitative discourse analysis created a focused view on each specific article and how it depicted different stories. A comparison between the vocabulary used in stories about white women versus Indigenous women was conducted using the website Flourish Studio. Articles about missing white woman were entered into the website to create a word bubble from the words used in the articles, and the frequency with which certain words appeared. This was then done a second time with the articles about missing Indigenous women. For this, the 28 articles about missing white women and the 7 articles about missing Indigenous women that were initially gathered above were reused. The two-word bubbles were then compared to identify the differences in the most frequently used words.

4. Limitations

Overall, the study had some limitations. This was largely due to the use of secondary research and data analysis. By only using pre-existing data, gaps in the research emerged, which made it difficult to thoroughly apply the data to the research question. Since the research question was framed within the context of white women

and Indigenous women, and the pre-existing data did not break down the quantities of missing women based on race, it was difficult to comprehensively analyze the data. This means that some limitations arose when trying to directly compare the number of news stories with the number of reported missing women based on race.

There was data on the number of missing people in Canada in 2024 who were Indigenous. As well, it was indicated what percentage of these missing Indigenous people were women. So, while they did not supply specific datasets on what percentage of the total amount of missing people were represented by Indigenous women, this was roughly calculable by combining the percentages provided. Thus, while the use of secondary data is helpful in getting a general idea of the statistics on missing people in Canada in 2024, the lack of specificity about how many missing women were Indigenous, white, or other races created limitations for the research. It was not feasible to assume that the number of missing women subtracted by the number of missing Indigenous women equalled the number of missing white women because this would not account for the possibility of missing women in Canada who were neither white nor Indigenous.

Further, the data supplied by Statistics Canada is not comprehensive, as a vast majority of missing persons cases in Canada go unreported both to the police and by the police to government information collection agencies. In fact, according to the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains, anywhere from “25%-75% of missing persons reports made to police are not entered into the Canadian Police Information System” (Canada’s Missing 2024, para.12), resulting in discrepancies

between the number of missing person cases opened by police and the number reported to the government.

Qualitatively, there are some limitations with the findings due to the number of articles used. It was not possible within the confines of the project to thoroughly investigate every article written about missing women in 2024 and 2025. Furthermore, barriers to finding articles arose because not every article was retrieved by the algorithm. This was difficult to get around. Thus, the qualitative findings are not comprehensive of all the articles written across 2024 and 2025 on the subject.

5. Positionality

When conducting research, it is important to recognize potential biases that may arise from pre-existing attitudes, beliefs, and experiences. Firstly, as a white woman who is a settler in Canada, I will never understand the lived experiences of Indigenous women, nor will I understand the colonial hardships that they continue to go through. While, as a woman, I understand to some degree how it feels to be scared when walking alone at night and sometimes grapple with fears of being taken, I lack a personal intersectional perspective and thus do not personally understand the nuances of the issue. Further, I grew up in a white family, learning at a rich, white school where certain privileges were often taken for granted by many. This has likely impacted both the way I think and the issues that I see as shocking. As well, as someone who is pursuing a master's degree, there is a degree of wealth and privilege that undoubtedly informs my perspective when researching and writing. Lastly, both my undergraduate degree and prior work experience at Legal Aid has fostered a passion for advocacy for individuals accused of crimes. This apathy fuels much of what I do politically and

academically, and it’s something to be aware of when writing a paper on the victims of crimes instead of the offenders.

6. Findings

Overall, it was found that there was a large discrepancy between the number of news stories focused on missing white women versus missing Indigenous women. Based on Table 1, among the 35 articles retrieved when searching for missing women in 2024 and 2025, 80% of the articles were about cases involving white women. In contrast, only 20% regarded cases of Indigenous women.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Online News Stories

	Frequency	Mean or Percentage (%)
Question: Does article frequency differ based on the race of the missing woman?		
Total Articles for Missing Indigenous Women	7	20%
Total Articles for Missing White Women	28	80%
	n=35	

Table 2 highlights the differences in which news articles are pulled to the top and label as “relevant” or “priority” when searching for the word “missing”. The algorithms often prioritized articles unrelated to missing people but containing the word “missing” in their headlines, as well as articles about missing men. Among the websites that showed articles of missing women, the results mirrored the general Google search. Articles about missing white women were labelled as important at a ratio of 7:1 when compared with missing Indigenous women.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Online News Searches

	Frequency	Mean or Percentage (%)
Question: Does the race of a missing woman impact where the news story is placed online?		
Articles of Missing Indigenous Women appearing as one of the top 10 results when searching on news websites	1	2.00%
Articles of Missing White Women appearing as one of the top 10 results when searching on news websites	7	14.00%
Articles of Missing Men appearing as one of the top 10 search results when searching on news websites	13	26.00%
Articles unrelated to Missing People as one of the top 10 search results when searching on news websites	29	58.00%
	n=50	

Tables 3 and 4 were compiled from the data that Statistics Canada published about cases of Missing people in Canada in 2024 and homicides in Canada in 2024. Table 3 shows that of the 35,109 missing people advisories issued in 2024, 88% of those alerts were issued for non-Indigenous people of all genders. Among the 35,109 people, 44.33% were women of all races, and 12% were Indigenous people of all genders. Among those 4213 Indigenous people, a staggering 58.98% of the alerts were for Indigenous women (Canada's Missing 2024, para.10), which means that 7.08% of the total number of alerts were for Indigenous women. Lastly, Table 4 shows the number of homicides discovered in Canada in 2024. Of the total homicide victims in 2024, 28.59% were Indigenous (Government of Canada 2025, table 1). Thus, as per Table 4, of the total homicides in Canada in 2024, 9.01% were Indigenous women despite them making up only 3.08% of the total Canadian population as per the 2021 Canadian Census (Government of Canada 2022, table 1).

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Reported Missing People in 2024

	Frequency	Mean or Percentage (%)
Question: What is the demographic makeup of missing people in Canada?		
Total number of Missing Indigenous men	1728	4.92%
Total number of Missing Indigenous women	2485	7.08%
Total number of Missing non-Indigenous men	17,817	50.75%
Total number of Missing non-Indigenous women	13,079	37.25%
	n=35,109	

Source: Canada's Missing. "2024 Fast Fact Sheet". Last Modified March 6, 2025.
<https://canadasmissing.ca/pubs/2024/index-eng.htm>.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Homicides in 2024

	Frequency	Mean or Percentage (%)
Question: What is the demographic makeup of murdered people in Canada?		
Total number of Indigenous Women	71	9.1%
Total number of non-Indigenous Women	169	21.67%
Total number of Indigenous Men	152	19.49%
Total number of non-Indigenous Men	388	49.74%
	n=780	

Sources: Statistics Canada. 2024. "Number of Homicide Victims, by Indigenous Identity and Missing Person Status". <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510012601>; Statistics Canada. 2025. "Number, Percentage and Rate of Homicide Victims by Gender and Indigenous Identity". <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510015601>.

Table 5 shows that when searching for news articles about Cindy Gladue and Pamela George, 160 and 70 articles, respectively, were pulled by the algorithms. In contrast, Gabby Petito and Natalee Holloway had 300 articles each in the search results. Of the total 830 articles that came up when searching for all 4 women, 27.71% of the articles were written about the missing Indigenous women, whereas 72.28% were

written about the missing white women. Here, articles were written about missing white women 2.6 times more than they were written about missing Indigenous women.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Articles Written about each Case Study

	Frequency	Mean or Percentage (%)
Question: How many articles were written about each of the following missing women?		
Articles about Cindy Gladue	160	19.28%
Articles about Pamela George	70	8.43%
Articles about Gabby Petito	300	36.14%
Articles about Natalee Holloway	300	36.14%
	n=830	

Shifting to the qualitative findings, there is a large difference between the words frequently used by journalists when writing stories about missing and murdered white women versus missing and murdered Indigenous women. Looking at Figure 1, the words “lifestyle”, “environment”, and “health” stood out as some of the commonly used words. These words all imply some level of blameworthiness to the missing person, whether that blameworthiness is based on the person’s lifestyle choices, the environment they were in, or their unsatisfactory health choices. Notably, the word “missing” is missing. There appears to be a lack of recognition that the person is missing if they are Indigenous, but rather justifications based on stereotypes that associate Indigenous people with unfavourable environments and lifestyles, making their disappearance less newsworthy.



Figure 1: Word Bubble based on New Stories of Missing Indigenous Women developed on <https://flourish.studio>

Figure 2 shows the most common words in articles about missing white women. In contrast to Figure 1, some of the biggest words in Figure 2 include “missing”, “help”, and “last”. These are words that one would generally associate with a missing person. The articles are quick to mention that the person is missing and do not hesitate to frequently remind readers of this through repetition of the word. The articles often include key details like the last time the missing person was seen, or who they were last seen with, demonstrated by the prevalence of the word “last”. The word “help” also appeared often, indicating that the news articles frequently stressed the importance of finding the missing person by emphasizing how the public could assist. To reiterate, Figure 2 presents no surprises. It shows the common words one would associate with a

Indigenous. The articles lacked words that depicted the severity and urgency of the case. They tended to infrequently mention that the woman was missing. While this is what previous literature depicted, it is shocking to see not only what words were selectively used for articles about Indigenous women, but also which important power words were 'coincidentally' nowhere to be found. The word bubble for missing Indigenous women's articles shows how race-based stereotypes are reproduced as the media blames Indigenous women's victimization through intentionally tailored stereotypes.

Also, certain cases were written about more than others. While searching both the internet and specific news databases, the 2024 cases of Kelsey Watt and Chantalle Moore had higher rates of articles written about them. Interestingly, these were both cases involving missing white women. Conversely, when searching, none of the cases involving missing Indigenous women had more than 1 article pulled by the algorithms. Thus, it appears that while certain cases gain more traction in the media than others, these cases always seem to involve a missing white woman.

This lack of concern for missing Indigenous women is also seen in the quantitative results. Articles written about missing Indigenous women occurred at a ratio of 1:4 when contrasted with missing white women. This stark difference was also observed when searches for news articles about Cindy Gladue, Pamela George, Natalee Holloway, and Gabby Petito were conducted. Similarly to above, there were significantly more articles written about the missing white women than there were about the missing Indigenous women. Further, the online algorithms were significantly less likely to categorize a news article about a missing Indigenous woman as important.

Since algorithms are powered by artificial intelligence networks that inform them of what to prioritize based on the average person's priorities, these search results reflect larger societal values. Since algorithms mirror society, if the algorithm does not feel that an article about an Indigenous woman is worth sending forward for people to see, this is likely because people have programmed the algorithm to think this way. As well, there was a stark difference in the number of articles written about missing white versus Indigenous women. Similarly to the algorithms, this demonstrates that journalists do not prioritize writing about Indigenous women. Homicides of Indigenous women account for 9.01% of the total homicides in 2024, and cases of them going missing accounted for 7.08% of the total missing people in Canada in 2024, despite Indigenous women only making up 3.08% of the total population (Government of Canada 2022, table 1). This means Indigenous women are being murdered 3 times more than what is proportional for their population makeup and going missing 2.3 times more. Yet, despite these staggering numbers, which indicate that Indigenous women are disproportionately affected by violence, the news media continues to brush the epidemic aside and not prioritize their stories.

It is also important to recognize how difficult it was to find official Government of Canada statistics on missing people based on race. There was no online information about missing people in Canada separated by race, and while there was some information about Indigenous identity, it was small, at the bottom of the website, and not incorporated into the larger depictions of the results. This meant that it was up to the reader to convert the percentage provided to properly understand the number of missing Indigenous people in 2024. As well, this left out any further classifications and

made it difficult to decipher how many missing people in Canada fell under different racial categories. Furthermore, while the data was organized by gender, again, there were barriers to properly understanding what percentage of the missing women were Indigenous. Here, too, there was a small note that explained 59% of the overall larger Indigenous percentage was represented by women. Despite this, the onus is on the person reading the results to conduct calculations and figure out how many Indigenous women went missing and what percentage of the total missing people were Indigenous women. While there was data on the homicides of Indigenous women, it is interesting to think about why, in the light of the Truth and Reconciliation's 94 Calls to Action, data about missing Indigenous women is not being overtly published. It is difficult to believe that the government is struggling to publish this data for any reason other than to hide the results. It certainly fuels the idea that Canada is not as post-colonial as it wants the public to think.

8. Conclusion

Comprehensively, this paper has worked to explore the issue of Missing White Woman syndrome and the impact it has had on societal perceptions of Indigenous women. It has worked to explore how the media reproduces biases of Indigenous women by differentially assigning humanizing words to white versus Indigenous women, as well as writing articles about missing Indigenous women at a lower rate. With the growing prevalence of the media and its continued influence, more people need to be taught about its biases. The multifaceted way in which the media can simultaneously perpetuate racist narratives while garnering sympathy for certain women demonstrates their influence. Without a proper investigation into these echo chambers of information,

the public will continue to go down a path where colonial and racialized histories are reproduced. Ultimately, it is through the meticulously chosen narratives around missing women that racist stereotypes are reproduced; through this, institutions, like the media, work to reinforce both a gendered and a racial hierarchy.

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