

A TIMELINE OF HOW NATIVE AMERICANS/INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
HAVE DECOLONIZED & INDIGENIZED:
OPERA, JAZZ, & BLUES

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION:.....	1
2. CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW:.....	8
3. CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGIES:	16
4. CHAPTER FOUR THEORIES:	22
Indigeneity Theory	22
Decolonization	28
5. CHAPTER FIVE BOARDING SCHOOL ERA:	33
6. CHAPTER SIX OPERA:.....	39
Tsianina Red Feather	41
Zitkala-Sa	42
7. CHAPTER SEVEN JAZZ AND BLUES:.....	47
Jazz.....	47
Mildred Bailey	50
Blues & Delta Blues.....	53
Charley Patton.....	54
8. CHAPTER EIGHT INTERVIEWS:.....	57
Interview with Mario Minor Junior	60
Interview with Sarah Singer.....	77
9. CHAPTER NINE CONCLUSION:.....	95
REFERENCES CITED:.....	105

ABSTRACT

At the beginning of the assimilation era, Indigenous Tribes in North America were suppressed into western civilization. Suppression of Native American culture was rampant and still is. The art of music has come back with a vengeance and has helped the progression of decolonization and indigenization within many cultures, especially indigenous ones across the United States and Canada. The purpose of this thesis is to explore how Native Americans and Indigenous people have been able to decolonize and indigenize music between 1879 and present day — specifically in genres such as opera, jazz and blues. The specific start date of the year 1879 enables us to engage and learn about the effects of missionary schools, more commonly known as boarding schools, and the effects that these schools have had on the culture and music for these communities. The activism in this paper is gauged on a scale of minimalism and maximization. These two spectrums will be explored in every genre provided and will present a preview of how native artists define the term activism and how they use or do not use it. Within indigenous activism, the terms “Indigenization” and “Decolonization” are vital and need to be established because some musical forms such as jazz are already decolonized in a historical sense. These forms of music stemmed from Black communities rebelling against the Westernized system that enslaved them thus forcing Black Americans to assimilate as well and adapt to new settings, create new cultures and with that new music. Decolonization can take place in European or Western forms of music such as opera and classical music. The timeline and interviews with current indigenous musicians will help show changes over time (even though timelines are a colonial or Western aspect), what being indigenous looks like in music, and how decolonization and indigenization have evolved as theories.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION:

Native Americans have always had a presence and influence within the music industry. When thinking of Native Americans in music, the paradigm shifts into a narrow-minded view of what Native Americans should be and how they have been presented through pop-culture. Sadly, most of the population still does not see Native Americans/Indigenous peoples in a modern sense, due to a lack of proper education, the continued stereotypes projected by the film/audio industries, and outdated or misleading textbooks. As a case point, students from Montana have Indian Education for All implemented in their classrooms, however, many still do not know what Native American music is, what it consists of, and how it is related to the shaping of Montana's vast cultures. When students think of Native Americans in music, the general stigma is to group Native Americans into two categories: a drum group at a powwow or a traditional ceremony singing or playing an indigenous instrument. The stereotype of pastness can unintentionally be cemented further in minds when these same Montana students conduct research in an Intro to Native American Studies course, in which they are asked to research a topic related to the assigned novel in the course. The novel assigned in this case is "*There, There*" by Tommy Orange. "*There, There's*" plot consists of telling multiple stories that follow up to a fictitious event called "The Big Oakland Powwow." The students' research must consist of a response paper they turn every two weeks, consisting of outside research related to the topics discussed in "*There, There.*" Students tend to explore the history of Powwows and what the word Powwow means because of its vital role in the story. Very rarely do students dive deeper, to find modern Native or Indigenous artists

that have stepped out of the traditional space, even though Orange explicitly explores Native American artists such as A Tribe Called Red in his novel. The reading response assignments can lead students to reaffirm their stereotypes of Native Americans being stuck in the past and create even more problems for them in the classroom. The usage of stereotypes from students is a form of othering that is harmful to indigenous communities and adds to the colonialism that dehumanizes indigenous communities (Smith 1999 pg. 7). The students' assignments exhibit stereotypes that make it frustrating to witness as Graduate Teacher's Assistants who get tasked with grading these reading responses. An Intro To Native American Studies class can be the students' only experience within Native American cultures, and if we do not work to reform their preconceived stereotypes, it means we fail as teachers. There are many opportunities to come across Native American musicians and artists who have done so much for their community, nevertheless, they do not get discovered because of the preconceived stereotypes students have of Native Americans in music combined with lazy research conducted that does not get corrected or is overlooked. It can cause anxiety for us as a Teacher's Assistant, knowing that an introductory class and a couple of 600-word assignments on Native Americans are the only instances of this topic a student will encounter, which helped to inspire my reasoning for my work. Correcting the stereotypes, a student proposes in a way that does not reaffirm their opinions can be a daunting task for teachers who have little experience in this area, improper training, or little time to make sure students fully understand their mistakes.

Occasionally, a student's only grasp of America's indigenous world is attending a Powwow at their college or a primary school outing. Attending a Powwow, while only grasping the cultural stereotypes of what Native American culture is further feeds the notion that Native Americans are

stuck in the past. Never mind that Powwows today are thoroughly modern, held in arenas or outdoor venues, with quality audio, visual and recording systems similar to many popular music events. Songs and dances that are performed at powwows are not just the traditional but are also contemporary and are continually added to. Native Americans are not stuck in the past culturally or artistically. Music is an important element to a culture. Music helps form the identity of that culture and as the culture evolves, so do the arts to better express the identity of its people. Identities are always changing with each generation, and that inherently changes culture. Students should already understand the concept that cultures shift and change with technological advances and exposure to outside sources when entering a university setting and should not be learning about that concept for the first time in an introductory course. The teachers, education boards, and government have neglected imparting true Native American history, culture, arts, and music to students for generations. A basic understanding of the Native American/Indigenous communities, cultures, and governments can, and needs to be, taught at lower levels. Teachers must be able to educate students on diversity so students have an opportunity to gain a vast knowledge of different cultures, allowing for them to become more understanding of others who may seem different than themselves. If students do not have cultural competency in other cultures that are not their own, and are neglecting classes geared towards other cultures, it can only hurt them in the long run. Knowing different cultures and how they all contribute to society is vital to understanding how and why the world works the way it does and why the world does not work from another's viewpoint. A timeline project showing how Native Americans and Indigenous peoples decolonize and indigenize music such as opera, jazz, and blues can bridge that gap for young students allowing them to understand the importance of indigenous music in the world and the impact Native

American musicians have had over the years in the music industry. Within the thesis's conclusion, there will be an outlined class that Native American Studies programs, Music programs, and History programs can use as a template. The topics can be interchangeable with the tribes in their region; however, the class will have a general survey of artists and musicians from across the United States and Canada's First Nations.

We must be willing to find a way to communicate the decolonization and indigenization of music differently to those who may not always listen (Trudell, Lee 2007). Teaching young students about the evolution of Native Americans in music may be challenging due to the colonial mindsets students are often put in. Still it is necessary, and educators have no excuses when it comes to this work, changing the stereotypical views people have about Native Americans. Research that explores the decolonization and indigenization of music can be one way to provide that steppingstone. Looking at the history of a culture is a great starting point, but can be dangerous and limiting if one does not consider how it has evolved over the years or the elements of culture that change with the times.

The genres discussed: opera, jazz and blues will be highlighted by Native American/Indigenous individuals who have helped develop the genre and shape it into what is seen as today. All of the genres discussed, opera, jazz, and blues, are immensely complex and have many layers of history to them. These layers contribute to their definitions and what makes these genres unique. I will attempt to broadly define them in hopes to set a guide to understanding these different genres. Most of these discussed individuals have been part of the boarding/residential school era or have had family in this system. A product of these boarding/residential schools is that individuals become highly educated but are still connected deeply within their cultures. The

boarding school education backfired on the United States, and instead of "killing the Indian to save the man," these individuals have used their education and turned it into a form of activism to tell the truth of American history and perform across the world, educating their audiences and bringing awareness to what the government has done to the nation's first people.

Indigeneity, decolonization, and activism within these individuals are different, and each person's definition and biography will challenge the theories of indigeneity and decolonization. Before presenting interviews, there will be case studies of previous musicians in each genre, such as Mildred Bailey, Charlie Patton, Tsiania Redfeather Blackstone, and Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin). Some of these artists that came beforehand were not activists but still indigenized their music in subtle ways. Sneaking in culture within popular music genres is a value that can be overlooked, but it does change the outcome of the genres over time. Activists may shun these artists for not portraying what is happening to cultures, but it makes the prospective audience curious and can lead the audience to conduct their own research to find out more about that artist, where they come from, and what that place means to the artist. When looking into the past, we also have to keep in mind the era that these artists are in because showing one's culture in specific periods could have gotten them or their families killed by racist bigots.

As previously stated, there will be interviews with a musician from each genre as a case study. These individuals have the opportunity to tell their stories, share their goals, and impart what they hope to accomplish. The range of these musicians is vast; some may already have a career within the music industry, and some may be a musician as a hobby. The point of these interviews is to shed light on these forms of music and demonstrate that Native American musicians are alive and well. The genres may have changed over time, but they have a deep-rooted

presence within these Native American/ Indigenous communities, have never left, and are solidified in the culture. When conducting these interviews, they are to be recorded professionally. As a thank you to the interviewees, small gifts will be distributed as compensation for their time.

As a non-native person, I acknowledge the space that I am in. My justification for being in this field is to be the best ally I can be. My work helps amplify the Native American and Indigenous artists I have worked with and wrote about. I realize that there are boundaries to my research as a non-native within this field, and there are topics that are not open to me, as I am not a part of that community. Being aware of this, and out of respect for the indigenous community, I will avoid presenting research on traditional music, dances, and ceremonies as it is not a part of my own culture. Even if I gain access to these topics properly, some people still may not be okay with a non-native writing a thesis on a significant part of their culture. Some of the artists that are discussed in my thesis do have connections to the traditional music of their tribes; that is how some of them started their musical careers, and that will be one of the only instances when traditional music, dances, and ceremonies are presented in my research. To have their personal experiences with the traditional aspects of their culture left out would be unjust to the artists and not convey their story truthfully.

The second way I will be talking about traditional music concerns the boarding school era and how traditional methods of being were outlawed because of the fears colonizers had towards Native Americans and Indigenous peoples. The boarding school era is a crucial part of learning about how Native American and Indigenous communities were able to adapt to the situation at hand, provide a space for learning about the trauma that Native Americans suffered during this period, and the generational trauma sustained by artists today. With the space provided, we have

to be respectful of the potential trauma that may come out, as it may be triggering to others. The information on boarding schools must be treated with the utmost respect, sensitivity, and awareness when reading, presenting, debating, or discussing. The intent of boarding schools was cruel and should have never been emplaced. Still, if we do not acknowledge our predecessors' mistakes, we endanger ourselves by falling back and repeating ourselves.

CHAPTER TWO

LITATURE REVIEW:

Indigenous music has had many roles; these indigenous music roles have shifted from being a part of the culture to presenting themselves into politics. Indigenous music can elevate one's sense of individuality while subsequently contributing to the make-up of a culture. Individual artists are championed as success stories and can expose their culture to the rest of the world. The study of indigenous music and its decolonization and indigenization in genres will help communicate the importance of indigenous music and its impact on the world. The literature review will expand on indigenous music, its connection to politics, and what indigenous artists contribute to society.

Indigenous Popular Music Native American Music from Jazz to Hip Hop edited by Jeff Berglund, Jan Johnson, and Kimberli Lee explores the world of popular American music forms and each genre's connection to the "Red Roots" of America. The "Red Roots" are the first Native Americans to help influence and shape popular music into what it is today. Not only does it expose its readers to the red roots, but it promotes current artists. The title of the book "Indigenous Pop" has inherited the purpose of why the book was written. The Indigenous theory is connected with "pop" or popular to bring together a sense of modernism. The use of pop allows writers to blend innovative transformations in music and connect them to native traditions. Pop is forever changing and is an elusive term thought to be a part of consumerism. However, linking it with the Indigenous challenges that stigma and connects it to a cultural place (Berglund, Johnson, Lee pg. 4). By linking

the Indigenous challenges and place, the editors can join the musicians they write about to cultural impacts, and the editors have their working definition of pop.

Areas within *Indigenous Pop* that can be disconcerting are still the editors' definition of popular. The editors leave the term popular as vague, though proclaiming that it is forever elusive and ever-changing is true. Nevertheless, using the genre spectrum is where lines can be blurred for readers such as myself. Popular music changes from genres such as jazz, country, rock, metal, hip hop, and even K-pop and is never stagnant, and due to this constant change, the term popular will see a change within the next century and redefine itself from hip hop being popular to another form of music. Consumers and capitalism can help define the term popular and what sells most is what is popular. For example, the top 100 charts examine the popularity of songs and what consumers are listening to at that time. If popular music were homed in on just exploring what genre is most popular, today's most consumed form of music would be hip hop, and hip hop would be the only genre discussed in the book.

Complications arise in trying to define popular even just by the standard of consumerism. For example, one difficulty stated by Gaynor Jones and Jay Rahn in their article entitled "Definitions of Popular Music: Recycled," is that in any attempt to define popular music the term itself does not have a detriment meaning, popular is forever changing and its definition cannot be pinpointed to one explanation. Jones and Rahn continue to say that popular music will change with culture and the one it is embedded in. Each culture has its definition of popular, and there is not one particular outcome. It is challenging to have a singular outcome in American popular music in any case. The popularity of diversity can be seen in popular music as America's cultures change drastically due to geography and the fact that America is one of the enormous cultural melting pots

in the world. A more appropriate title for the book *Indigenous Pop* would be indigenous influence and presence in genres from jazz to hip hop. Jazz to hip hop leaves room for the authors and allows the book to be open-ended. The development will enable us to explore the transformation and progression of music while simultaneously having the term indigenous have the same meaning as before.

Activism, indigeneity, and music are all linked together in *Indigenous Pop*. Activism can have minimal impacts and large impacts not just within identity issues but also in activism in the political sense. Indigenous activism can stem from environmentalism, traditionalism, culturalism, sovereignty, and many more forms of being an activist. The political aspects of music and indigeneity are documented well with lyricism. Bands such as Red Bone and XIT are famous for this, exposing their indigenous roots to the world and being vulnerable to their critics. Disco rock was not known for its flair in activism, but these bands changed that rhythm. Their songs' power projected a new outlook on what it meant to be Native American (Berglund, Johnson, Lee pg. 100)—adding a critique of lyricism adds the "so what?" question. The problem of "so what?" means what are these bands doing outside of lyricism? What are they doing to help their tribes? Their communities? Neighbors? And Native Americans in general? Diving even further, with their fame and notability platform, is it their job or duty to do this? Or do they have the right not to have that added pressure on their shoulders? Are they just appropriating their own culture for monetary gain? Affirming and validating oneself and culture through lyrics is a valid expression of activism, but these difficult questions are ones that musicians must ask themselves when exposing their own identity culturally.

Indian Blues by John Troutman promotes music's politics and how the government influenced Native American culture. Troutman is a non-native author, but recognizes his position in his writing by stating so in his introductions. Troutman is able to give credit where it is due and uphold his indigenous teachers and the artists he has written about and the history of indigenous music and dance. The in-depth exposé of government policies creates a framework for Troutman on how Native Americans could persevere through unjust hardships and adapt to the new normality that Native Americans were faced with. *Indian Blues* by John Troutman reasserts the theories stated by *Indigenous Pop* of assimilation and even the specifics of Wounded Knee being a setting for the ghost dance, yet OIA (Office of Indian Affairs) officials and outsiders misinterpreting it as a war dance and using the fear of the settlers to have a reason to attack an innocent camp of Lakota.

These books accentuate each other when discussing boarding schools as a place of erasing native culture and replacing it with European or Western culture. *Indian Blues* develops further and states the OIA, and Federal government legalizes Native American dances and traditionalism as long as it fascinates the settlers or it tours worldwide. Even still, OIA and BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) officials are heavily concerned about this ordeal and still prefer Native Americans to be fully assimilated into western culture. Troutman continues his argument by saying, "musical performance was implicated in the design and execution of the citizenship agenda, which through the 1920s mandated the assimilation of Native peoples into the body politic of the United States along with the allotment and liquidation of tribally controlled lands." Troutman intertwines music and politics by proclaiming that the OIA officials' goal was to assimilate the boarding schools' indigenous population. However, Native Americans used music as a vehicle for expressing political dissent or for reconfiguring the meaning of U.S. citizenship.

Identity is one of these books' foundations and is brought to light in *Decolonizing Methodologies* by Linda Smith. Her work is held on a pedestal for both native and non-native peoples. These parameters that Smith has provided us with are even explored in Lee's essay in *Indigenous Pop*. Sarah McDonough perfectly outlines these parameters in her review when she states: "Decolonizing at the level of research methodologies means to learn, think, listen, and work in ways that are "centered" in community" (McDonough pg. 460). She further states that decolonization is power, and Linda Smith's work originally was intended for indigenous communities to work on how to research within their communities, but non-natives and western research have taken these frameworks and put her work into their ethics on how one should be researching with indigenous people and for the communities instead of their gain. The importance of community crossover corroborates the expressions in lyricism when referring to Buffy Saint-Marie. The song "Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee" explores the colonial experience Native Americans have faced and the assimilation forced on them by the United States Governments. Saint-Marie can connect with her indigenous community and acknowledge her identity and culture. Lee ties this in with Smith's quote: "Indigenous communities have struggled since colonization to be able to exercise what is viewed as a fundamental right, that is, to represent ourselves. The representing project spans both the representations as a political concept and representation as a form of voice and expression. In the political sense, colonialism specifically excluded indigenous peoples from any form of decision-making. States and governments have long made decisions hostile to the interests of indigenous communities. (Id. pg. 150)" Lee promotes this idea further by saying that this idea is in her lyrics and closes her statement by saying that Saint-Marie will always remember Wounded Knee. Saint-Marie can represent herself fully

and express the harm done by colonialism, westward expansion, manifest destiny, and a lot more through her songs.

The film *Rumble* is a provoking documentary that provides a visual medium for learning about Native American music and its roots in today's music. The movie's theories shape musicianship's validations through non-natives who are well recognized within the respective genres. Their theories are presented in two ways. First, the theory that Native American music, in general, has had a strong influence on contemporary music (Blizek 2017 pg. 2). Second, Native American musicians themselves had a considerable influence on jazz, blues, rock, and hip hop (Blizek 2017 pg. 2). *Rumble* is a 1 hour and 43-minute film that explores nearly every genre in modern-day music and touches on many social issues surrounding race and Native American rights. These social issues include discrimination, racism, environmentalism, and self-identity vs. cultural identity. Those aspects' historical facts are diminished by promoting interviews of white allies within the space and giving them more screen time instead of listening to the actual artists themselves or Native Americans who have been affected by these artists.

Cross-culture aspects are presented everywhere within the film and personify the acknowledgment of creation. Thus, this film honors those at the forefront of their genres, specifically Black Americans. *Rumble* lacks much of the policies and laws around race, religion, and culture that affected many Native Americans and Black Americans. The left-out policies and regulations are not the directors' fault as one can only make a film so long, but instead of pandering towards white allies, time and resources could have been focused on looking at the history of politics and music surrounding indigenous peoples.

Zitkala-Sa's autobiography *American Indian Stories* helps set the stage for what would become the Native American genre in literature. Her work never shies away from her opinion and how she feels. She examines her own life and portrays her theories of identity through stories. She is able to provide unique theories of distrust towards government, assimilation and the boarding school era because she is a survivor. Zitkala-Sa's writing passion allows readers to be fully consumed by her education process of the boarding school era's real history and assimilation because she tells it from her childhood perspective. It gives the reader a sense of anger, sadness, and guilt for non-natives who have not dealt with identity issues and the government to the extent Native Americans have. Zitkala-Sa's story is a familiar story throughout the boarding school and assimilation eras as many indigenous people have had similar experiences; her story is unique in a sense as she is one of the first to publish her experiences and tell of the United States Government's horrors and what it has done to the indigenous population. Her vivid story of getting her hair cut on the first day of arrival to the boarding school is a provocative example of assimilation and necessary to tell. Zitkala-Sa states that:

"I cried aloud, shaking my head all the while until I felt the cold blades of the scissors against my neck, and heard them gnaw off one of my thick braids. Then I lost my spirit. Since the day I was taken from my mother I had suffered extreme indignities. People had stared at me. I had been tossed about in the air like a wooden puppet. And now my long hair was shingled like a coward's! In my anguish I moaned for my mother, but no one came to comfort me. Not a soul reasoned quietly with me, as my own mother used to do; for now, I was only one of many little animals driven by a herder."

This scene draws on the pain and suffering many indigenous people felt caused by the boarding school era. This heart-wrenching statement of her loss of culture adds to the fueled rage all of us as educators should implement when looking at the boarding school era's history. The truths are horrid but, again, are necessary, so humanity does not fall back into its old ways. Being

one of the first activist musicians, Zitkala-Sa has opened countless doors to the writers, authors, musicians and indigenous people talked about previously. Her willingness to be vulnerable allows non-natives to grasp what happened during the boarding school era from a first-hand experience.

The sense of modernism and evolution is prevalent within these books, movies, and articles and is vital for erasing stereotypes of Native Americans being stuck in the past musically. The work done in all of these books and films helps affirm that Native Americans are still here and can evolve with times and still have their own culture. It is essential to acknowledge the past, and without doing that, we cannot progress into a better future. *Indigenous Pop*, *Indian Blues*, and *Rumble* have a format geared towards a more colonial timeline, but addresses the past with dignity and respect. Their research is geared towards western views of learning and is reflected in this writing concurrently; Zitkala-Sa's *American Indian Stories* and Linda Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* fuel an indigenous sense of methods and theories that contribute to indigenous voices' necessary in this research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGIES:

Methodologies are merely thinking and doing, but indigenous methods take so much more than that (Kovach 2019). How you go about that thinking and doing is a necessary part of that process. The belief system in indigenous theory or methodology should be a holistic approach and the research being done in the academy needs to be conducted with sympathy, not out of pity. Research on Native American/Indigenous Peoples cannot separate from the community it is about. Many Western research problems disconnect from people, people become a statistic, and research is used only for personal gain. Researchers tend to present data and leave out the people who are involved and who the study is about (Kovach 2019). Disconnect causes distrust between non-natives and the Native/Indigenous people non-native academics research with or about.

Pursuing a genuine connection with the people academics research is necessary, so researchers can ground themselves, not become detached from their research, and hold themselves accountable to anything they publish. Methodologies are one of the most important aspects of indigenous research; clarifying and justifying one's intentions is necessary for indigenous research (Smith 1999 pg. 17). Outlining one's intent is essential, so one can be candid with the people they are researching, and so indigenous people feel at ease with the research being conducted. There are no blind spots or grey areas when researching indigenous people. It *should* and *will* be conducted in a manner in which every instance of research is given back to the tribe or person I interview before being published and after so that they can have a proper representation of themselves in the study. Indigenous methodologies are a combination of approaches and practices, and we see that frequently through this storytelling process and interviewing (Smith 1999 pg. 175).

Smith states that storytelling is a valid form of history; just because it is not written down does not mean that it is invalid. It is crucial when translating, not to lose what is said in the storytelling process as well, doing this will help keep the translation from being fully Westernized. Putting the interviewees as authors in my thesis helps to acknowledge their work, without discrediting their efforts and time to share their information. Their information is valuable and should be treated as such by any means necessary. Writing these stories down and publishing them does not mean to water them down in any aspect, these stories will be left in their rawest form when transcribed into a document for westernized research. One must realize that the word research in the indigenous realm is probably one of the dirtiest words (Smith 1999 pg. 1). The research in this project aims to help people's paradigms shift and realize that Native Americans are still here, and their culture has evolved within the music. Research is connected with imperialism and colonialism and takes away indigenous communities' identity when a non-native person does not have a proper methodology and does not consider indigenous methods in their framework. Being a non-native in indigenous space, our research must uplift Native American/Indigenous people's voices instead of tearing them down and whitewashing their words.

The knowledge learned during writing my thesis has been passed onto me and is a gift, and I have to treat it as such (Kovach 2018). Letting someone in your life, and telling your story to them without knowing them, is a privilege as a western researcher in an indigenous field and space. With the privilege I carry as a non-native researcher, I can honor the interviewees and past musicians by translating what they say precisely. Doing these exact translations leaves no room for information to get misunderstood and misinterpreted by people who read my work. Interviewing these artists in this sense of asking who they are and where they come from is a very

raw form of questioning, and I have honored that as much as possible by being able to record this and share their voices in this research. Dustin Craig (White Mountain Apache/Navajo filmmaker) stated:

"It is important that Native Americans get a chance to get their voices heard because American Indians (as well as other people of color) have historically had their images distorted by those who oppressed them. As a result, so much of what is distributed about them is misinformed or distorted. So Native people owe it to themselves and their posterity to reclaim their images, stories, and perspectives." (Landrum 2012 pg. 182)

Reclamation of culture is vital, and music is a part of that correction. The interviewing of these Native Artists helps distribute accurate information and also correctly informs public views. Not only do Native people owe it to themselves and their posterity to reclaim their culture, we as non-natives owe it to them as well to promote this behavior and champion their efforts. As Bruno Nettl stated, applied ethnomusicology helps promote ideas of repatriation and reclamation, through the cooperation of ethnomusicologists and Native American tribes. The two groups have been able to compile recordings of language, music, and culture, and archive the recordings so tribal individuals can learn about their cultures (Nettl 2015 pg. 431). We as non-natives need to carefully consider where we get our information and how we obtain that information; if it is not done authentically, and with compassion that work should be considered dangerous.

There is a vast amount of harmful work one can look at when researching Western academia. For example, when looking at ethnomusicology's early history, the question of "where is the Indigenous voice?" can be misplaced and overlooked by many in this field, as it is a colonial practice. The first field recordings using the Phonograph were recorded by Jesse Walter Fawkes in 1890. Fawkes, at the time, was an anthropologist studying with, or in, the Passamaquoddy nation in Maine. Fawkes became obsessed with Native American religion and traditional aspects of

music, leading to him to partake in living amongst the Hopi and participate in tribal traditions for four years (Nichols 1919 pg. 2). Ethics of asking, "Is this okay?" "Do the people I am recording get an actual voice in this process?" is not seen in Fawkes research. Most researchers during this era were notorious for not having ethics and purely conducting their research on people, not with the people. The ethics at the time were vastly different and highly inconsiderate of the cultures themselves. Thanks to a push of ethical movements in the 70s, today we have seen a shift in ethnomusicology (Shelemay 2013 pg. 11). The shift in thinking caused ethnomusicology to be added to and rebranded as a study; creating establishments such as The Society of Ethnomusicology, which was founded by Bruno Nettl in 1955, and promoted the methodic and theoretic shift. Nettl defines ethnomusicology as "the study of all world's musics from a comparative perspective and it is also the anthropological study of music;" while The Society of Ethnomusicology defines ethnomusicology as: "the study of music in its social and cultural contexts." The Society of Ethnomusicology has emplaced a code of ethics that ensures ethnomusicologists are going about their research in the right ways. The field research ethics are the following:

1. Responsible conduct in field research in ethnomusicology is guided by the following obligations:
 1. Honesty in the representation of oneself and one's work.
 2. Cultivation of relationships based on informed consent, rights of privacy and confidentiality, and mutual respect.
 3. Sensitivity to other cultures and individuals' ethical values.
 4. Sensitivity to proprietary concerns regarding recorded materials, photographs, and other documentation.

5. Awareness of the connection between proprietary concerns and economic interests, as well as anticipation of future conflicts that may be caused by one's research activities.
2. Ethnomusicologists acknowledge that the responsibilities of field research extend beyond the fieldwork setting and often involve a long-term commitment to the rights and concerns of field consultants and their communities.

The Society of Ethnomusicology is not the only organization that has provided new ethics regarding ethnomusicology; scholars themselves have been able to add their sense of activism into the field (Shelemay 2013 pg. 12). These ethnomusicologists conduct studies with community members to benefit the community they research on. Using this code of ethics, cultural connection, and getting permission from musicians, artists, and others to share their personal stories have become normalized in research and have been one of the pinnacle philosophies of ethnomusicology and applied ethnomusicology. Applied ethnomusicology, a subgenre of ethnomusicology, allows for activism to occur within the study. Applied ethnomusicology was constructed in the 1970s to enable ethnomusicologists to "utilize their knowledge of cross-cultural musical styles within a full range of governmental agencies and cultural institutions" and consider the ethical responsibilities and acknowledge their position as a researcher (Shelemay 2013 pg. 11). Maureen Loughran from Brown University adds to the definition of applied ethnomusicology by stating that applied ethnomusicology is: "a philosophical approach to the study of music in culture, with social responsibility and social justice as guiding principles." Bruno Nettl also stakes his claims in applied ethnomusicology by stating "We should all, many of us believe, do much more, take a position of engagement; we should be active advocates in behalf of our belief; we should do things about situations that require rectifying and that are intolerable. (Nettl 2015 pg. 427)."

Scholars can use this code of ethics to help counter imposter syndrome, ensure that non-natives in native research are going about their studies respectfully, and ensure that they carry themselves in the right way. When using social justice as a principle, it can help ensure that one's work is done with compassion, which, as previously discussed, is an absolute necessity when working as a non-native in an indigenous space.

The ethics within indigenous methodologies, ethnomusicology, and applied ethnomusicology give non-natives a sense of place in indigenous research and how we need to be conducting ourselves around a culture that is not ours. Those that research within indigenous fields have more nuanced layers to research than their counterparts in western research fields. Western research has legal ethics that when someone gives consent, the researcher has complete autonomy over their research and projects. In indigenous research, the researcher is just providing a framework for the interviewee and the interviewer's indigenous research is still owned by the interviewee (Kovach 2018). My goal has been to step back and listen and let the indigenous voice be heard over mine, which is non-indigenous/non-native.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORIES:

Indigeneity Theory

History as a paradigm can be skewed; it is dangerous yet easy to indulge in the western colonial mindset on how we view history in the academic world; after all, academia is rooted in colonialism and westernization. Academia has yet to become fully indigenized, and it will never be able to be fully indigenized because of its fabrication by western society. However, as academia has become more progressive, more academics from indigenous backgrounds have inserted themselves and elevated their voices into universities' elite spaces, thus making academia indigenous; non-natives are becoming more aware and accepting of this change than they have been in the past, but there is still resistance from colonizers. The statement of indigenous people inserting themselves into a western space and making that space indigenous proceeds to be problematic as it does not provide a clear answer as to what the actual definition of indigenization is. It should be noted that indigenization and decolonization are complex theories that are multifaceted, constantly challenged and continually changing (Attas 2020 pg. 1). As we know, there are indigenous peoples all over the world, so the definition of indigenization will never be the same and remains elusive. Linda Smith states in her 25 Indigenous projects that the term, "indigenizing," centers on the politics of indigenous identity and indigenous cultural action (Smith 1999 pg. 146). By centering on indigenous identity and indigenous cultural action it allows indigenous people to have their own space.

The evolution of indigeneity in academia has come with massive amounts of struggles with advocacy by many indigenous academics. Indigenization in Academics is a process similar to decolonization and follows the theories of “The Four Rs;” these four Rs in indigenous education are respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility (Thorne 2019 pg. 1). To start, respecting cultural integrity of Indigenous nations can be achieved by educators through keeping up to date and reading current publications by indigenous authors and learning key concepts that effect Native American communities such as colonialism, racism, imperialism, assimilation and so on. The second r being relevance is achieved by making sure what is being taught is relevant and benefits not only ones’ students, but the communities it is about (Thorne 2019 pg. 1). The third R, Reciprocity, means that relationships built in education are not a one way street and learning can happen on both sides by students and educators alike (Thorne 2019 pg. 1). Lastly, but also being very important, is responsibility. Educators and scholars must have a sense of responsibility to the community they do research on and be a part of that community. Being a part of that community means supporting indigenous students; attending community events hosted by indigenous people; talking about decolonization and indigenization in the classroom and to peers; seeking out indigenous research; and implementing it as much as possible (Thorne 2019 pg. 1). The struggle of indigenous academia has been illuminated by musical artists such as Tsisiana Red Feather and Zitkala-sa in their pursuit to present Native Americans as current and present social issues surrounding Native Americans during their performances and hosting lectures after their music career thus trying to indigenize their space and participate in Linda Smith’s idea of indigenizing. Non-natives owe it to these indigenous academics and musicians for laying down the foundations

to build upon indigenization. Indigenization and decolonization can go hand in hand simultaneously, but both can have very different meanings.

Indigeneity tends to have a bad rap within Native American and indigenous communities as it is more accepting of non-natives heritage claims. Indigeneity like this can also discredit critical race theory by being more inclusive (Smith 1999 pg. 6). One of the most famous quotes around indigeneity that adds to the discreditation of race is, "We all come from different backgrounds, we are indigenous to somewhere and should celebrate it as one human race and that there is no such thing as race. What do we bleed? We bleed red. Not brown, black, yellow, green or whatever." Color blindness will only add to the problem and ignoring race like this does more harm than good; putting on blinders leads people to ignore history and what has happened to different races other than their own. Color blindness may be used as a coping mechanism that people create in their minds, so they do not have to be guided by race or their position in life. Color blindness can be troubling to many academics, as racism is still seen today and even within the academy. It is problematic to dismiss race; saying we are one race dismisses our differences and has the potential of us not being able to learn from our past, but in turn deny it. Humans must acknowledge race and appreciate race for what it is and see the value and beauty in race; race makes humans unique and distinct from any other animal. A theory promoted throughout this thesis is that we must be willing to learn from the past; if scholars have color blindness and do not acknowledge race, they cannot do that necessary learning and make headway.

Being indigenous to a place is something we all have, although, as Americans, we are not all indigenous to America, even if we are born here on American soil. Indigeneity comes from your bloodline, and it makes up what and who you are as a person. For example, even though I

was born and raised in Cupertino, California, I am not a *true* Native Californian. Just because I was born in California does not make me a Native Californian, even though my family goes three generations back in California. If you are not part of an indigenous nation, you are *not* native to your home state, no matter how many generations your family goes back. Native as a terminology has been designated to indigenous people of that said country; to be indigenous or native to what is now called "America," you have to be from or a part of an indigenous tribe here. These tribes have been here for time and millennia and will continue to survive and thrive here; calling a person native, when they are not, is dishonoring to the sense of place and the visibility of indigenous people.

Indigeneity and being indigenous are more than just a bloodline; it is a part of who one is and makes up that person's cultural integrity. Cultural integrity can be seen within many indigenous research projects and is a cornerstone of indigenous theory. Native Americans and other indigenous communities such as the Māori have been working tediously to deconstruct and indigenize western academia and reformat it into indigenous ways of knowing, and shifting the academy's paradigms into accepting cultural integrity. Many indigenous people carry extra weight on their shoulders when they commit to writing history papers. Indigenizing scholarly space comes with the process of being connected with the environment they are in. Carrying their culture into everything they do, being aware of what they are saying, and who they are, and how they are telling their stories helps indigenize that western space. Indigenous people have sacred responsibilities and their goals of asserting legitimate historical and spiritual connections to their homelands; they promote justice and sovereignty within their work (Killsback 2013 pg. 127). Non-natives have the responsibility to listen to indigenous peoples in this aspect; non-natives should have the same

awareness as natives concerning connection to land and culture. If we as non-natives do not uphold ourselves to these standards, then our work in this field is pointless and only betters one party and still falls into the western paradigm of research and old anthropology. Some anthropologists conduct their research well and go about it in a good nature with ethics; however, overall, as a whole, the intensions of anthropology do not align with the ethics within Native American Studies. Ethnomusicology and Applied ethnomusicology theoretically align themselves with indigenous studies and promote the use of community building and relationship. However, non-natives have to be careful of falling into the western spectrum of academic standards and always have to be walking on eggshells when we research with native communities.

Within indigenization, there is a sense of agency; agency helps provide a voice for Indigenous people. An absent voice and the narratives that are provided within academia continue to privilege European perspectives. Western scholars tend to ignore the Indigenous perspective even if they are writing on Indigenous peoples, theories, and beliefs (Killsback 2013 pg. 127). Having indigeneity in research forces scholars always to be aware, keep in check with their surroundings, and ask themselves questions. These questions are ethical and should be in every researcher's mind when researching a group of people. Satoru Nakagawa makes it a point to make sure that researchers are consistently asking themselves these questions, especially if they are non-native or non-indigenous, in his article "Indigenous Research Methodology and the Indigenous Academic." These types of questions are: So, what? Why are you doing this research? Who are you doing this research for? All common questions that people tend to forget while conducting their research. He also asks, "Is it my place to say to my people what I think? I wonder if what I say is for them or me? Who am I doing this work for, and who is it benefitting, and does it help these communities

that I am in?” Nakagawa states that all research must be done with a view of accountability. Not just for this generation or the next, but at least seven generations down the line. It must be clear and concise, so history is upheld, and its integrity is not lost in translation. If it is not there, then why are you doing this work at all? Are you indeed an ally to Native American Studies and the people who are in it? Linda Smith also echoes these questions and says there are major research issues and indigenous activists can ask questions that combat the issues by asking, “Who’s research is it? Who owns it? Who’s interest does this serve? How will the research be disseminated? (Smith 1999 pg. 10).

Indigeneity in music can be hard to identify because it is not always obvious. Indigenous people are not stuck in pastness. Indigenous people are linked to trends and interests and forever evolving. That goes for popular music as well, it is always changing and is fluid with time, so the definition inherently changes. With indigenization in popular music, it can challenge the stigma that Native American tribes are static cultures (Berglund, Johnson, Lee 2016). When thinking of individual musicians' ethnicity/race/culture is usually put on the back burner, and the music comes first. This is not to say that race and ethnicity are not factors for musicians and immune to them. Instead, there tends to be an erasure of race and ethnicity when documenting musicians' lives and only looking at their music and not where the musicians came from and who was a part of that musician's lives. For example, Mildred Bailey was thought to be white, but she was a part of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. Jimmie Hendrix, mainly known for being one of the most influential Black American guitar players from Seattle but, is also ¼ Cherokee and heavily identified himself as Native. Charley Patton is known as the king of the delta blues from Georgia, he too is overlooked and thought to be only Black American, but is a part of the Cherokee nation just like Jimi Hendrix.

Indigeneity in music can be subtle or pronounced; a term generally connected to indigeneity and decolonization is activism. Using activism is how artists can put their heritage, culture, and identity at the forefront; personifying activism allows for audiences to see who an artist is and what that artist believes in. Every artist has different perceptions of the term "activism" and what it means, that activism can take many different roles within music and the artists themselves. Musicians can be upfront with their indigeneity and activism, such as the band XIT did in the 1970s through their lyrics and self-presentation, and promote indigeneity through their music. Simultaneously, some artists like Mildred Bailey coin her famous vocal swing back to her youth days and singing traditional songs (Berglund, Johnson, Lee 2016). Activism is all a matter of perception and left to the artist to decide how they would want to be viewed, whom they want their core audience to be, whom they want to reach, and what story they want to tell. Nevertheless, Native American communities adopted these forms of music and they made them their own. Thus, they have committed to indigenizing these forms of music and making them a part of their communities.

Decolonization

In a modern sense, research is linked to imperialism and colonialism; research on or about indigenous cultures usually involves a theft of knowledge appropriated for the colonizer's gain. Research conducted through appropriation helps deny the Native's identity and having the indigenous story told (Smith 1999 pg. 17). I need to recognize that decolonization is vital, and the ownership of this knowledge is not mine, but of the native and indigenous artists I interview or have read on. I recognize my privilege as a non-native in academia and how colonial the format of my research is. I acknowledge my predecessors' faults and what we have done as a whole to the

indigenous population. I accept that I cannot be fully decolonized as a half-white man and upbringings in a colonized school system; the intention of having decolonization in my works is to educate others on how Native American, Indigenous, and Black American peoples have impacted music throughout time and have made music a unique space for listeners.

As a non-indigenous person in Native American Studies, I can see how it can be challenging for indigenous folks to see my allyship for the music's decolonization process. Many of these spaces within music were unjustly appropriated from Native American, Indigenous, and Black American communities. Our job as non-natives is to teach other non-natives the real history; otherwise, how do we call ourselves loyal allies? It is not the job of Black Americans or Native, Indigenous Americans to hold us Non-natives accountable for our learnings; we have to educate ourselves on these matters and put in the effort.

Part of the history that needs to be learned is decolonization; decolonization is a touchy subject even amongst Native American and Indigenous communities because of the potential of excluding their people. Arguments tend to break out within the discussion of decolonization of if someone is "native enough" to be promoting this idea within their work or just in general. It is problematic when decolonization gets derailed into thinking this way; discriminatory thinking harms the process of decolonization and sovereignty and ironically is a colonial state of mind. When academics begin to think like this, then scholars are just falling back into a trap and not promoting potentially great ideas that can be put into action and better communities. There will always be nay-sayers with decolonization, but it is a necessary movement and process within Native American Studies.

Even though there are efforts to revise and rethink Indian history, the Indian voice remains absent, and these narratives in history continue to privilege Eurocentric perspectives (Killsback 2013 pg. 127). Defining decolonization in an indigenous or native perspective can be hard as it is a fluid and complex concept, and due to the many nations that are indigenous it is changing constantly. One of those attempts to define decolonization comes from Robin Attas from Queens University, she states simply that decolonization is the removal or undoing of colonial elements (Attas pg. 2). Linda Smith echoes this sentiment throughout her book, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, and elaborates that decolonization is a euphemism that only describes the formal handing over of the instruments of government, when in reality it must be a long-term process involving the cultural, linguistic, and psychological divesting of colonial parameters (Staehelin 2000 pg. 1). The colonial parameters in this case can range from anything in government, culture, arts, and music. Decolonization is a different process and is looked at as the enemy within the academy, especially in colonizers' minds. Decolonization is thought of as idealizing indigenous peoples, holding less favorable views towards settlers, and unfairly representing mainstream and colonial histories. The decolonization process is a truth-telling theory that exposes colonial practices for what they are and what they have done to indigenous nations throughout history. Decolonization allows for historians to hear voices with respect and humility, and acknowledge the past. Decolonization is not purely a study that hunts the heads of evil colonial participants; it allows the non-indigenous to recognize what they have done and help correct their ways of being and knowing, similarly to indigenous theory.

Decolonization of music forms such as European classical and opera help set a tone for storytelling within indigenous communities. Decolonization can bring a sense of ownership to a

music genre that was not once theirs or was forced upon them through policies such as the boarding school era in the United States or residential schools in Canada. Due to this era, indigenous communities in North America saw first-hand the near extinction and execution of their arts and music. Western governments were afraid of what they saw within Native American reservations regarding music and arts, so they banned them and enforced European mediums to replace them. Musicians of this era would soon influence these genres with styles of their own and connect the arts back to their indigenous roots and not lose that sense of who they are and where they came from.

Many scholars do not see the decolonization process with Black culture in the United States. I argue that this is not the case and Black Americans can participate in decolonization and have. Colonialism has affected more than just Native Americans, and by stating this obvious fact, allows others who have suffered at the hands of colonization to participate in decolonization. Acts of colonialism committed by Euro-American settlers in America towards Indigenous and Black communities are complex and destroyed these communities. These acts when looking at an indigenous perspective include manifest destiny, westernization, assimilation, and genocide; while in the Black communities it involves westernization, assimilation, slavery, and genocide. The aspects of colonization, such as genocide and settlement, work in tandem with slavery and anti-black racism (King 2016 Vol.19). Due to the different aspects of colonization that happened to these communities, decolonization roots itself differently, but has a lot of the same goals and processes. As we know, Indigenous decolonization is a truth telling process, but at the same time dismantles western societal norms and policies to reconstruct aspects of western society with indigenous methods and theories. Black decolonization leads itself to do the same thing; while

aligning itself with indigenous decolonization, black decolonization does have aspects of truth telling and reconciliation while at the same time makes sure full aspects of black history in the United States is told and also makes space for Black people in arts, culture, politics and academics. An example of Black decolonization in music is the genre of Blues, with its vocals stemming from African traditional music and its lyrics deriving from Black singers telling stories from Black or African folklore and sharing stories of the Black experience at the time.

CHAPTER FIVE

BOARDING SCHOOL ERA:

The boarding school eras in the United States, Canada, and many other nations that forced indigenous suppression, brought many hardships to indigenous peoples; those hardships are still endured today through trauma of survivors and generational trauma passed down to current generations. This chapter proceeds to inform readers on the boarding school era and the effects it has had on indigenous peoples; the history is dark and might be triggering for some of those who are currently reading. If this is the case and you do not want to open these wounds it is perfectly okay to skip onwards to the next chapter. The hardships that are experienced in these eras can be communicated through the music that we see today, and in the past when looking at indigenous peoples in music. To truly grasp what is going on in the music we must understand the era of the boarding schools and what ideals came with it. Assimilation through boarding schools meant to enslave and enforce ideas such as cultural genocide, genocide, Christianization, imperialism, westernization and manifest destiny.

“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 Indians there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him and save the man.”
– Captain Richard H. Pratt

Richard Henry Pratt set one of the worst legacies in American history; the boarding school era was inherently a racist movement that was a mass cultural genocide; during the process Pratt’s legacy killed and suppressed many, if not all, indigenous cultures in America. These boarding schools were built to strategically rip away Native American children from their families and to

brainwash them into teaching them that their culture was wrong, and they should act more “civilized” like their European counterparts. Pratt’s justification for “killing the Indian and saving the man,” was a rebuttal towards more radical parties that wanted to commit genocide completely and exterminate the indigenous population (Smith 1999); the losses suffered during the Indian Wars left politicians bitter and wanting revenge. Richard Henry Pratt and his colleagues were regarded as friends of the Indians and Carl Schurz who was a former commissioner of Indian Affairs stated that Natives had a stern alternative: extermination or civilization thus, creating the boarding school era.

The first of its kind, Richard Pratt’s prized creation, Carlisle Indian School became a model and set an example for how all Indian boarding schools should be; it was a new steppingstone into the world of genocide and cultural suppression. The Carlisle Indian School was set up like a military boot camp where there were strict schedules down to the minute and if they were not followed students could be reprimanded and punished. The school would start at 5:45 a.m. with exercise drills, breakfast at 6:45 a.m., industrial work began at 8 a.m. sharp, then formal school at 9 a.m. They would break for lunch, then back to strict lectures in more of a college-style format. Then it would be lights out by 9 p.m. every day after dinner. The strict schedule allowed little time for free thought and expression, thus conforming them to western culture and a life of obedience.

Although these boarding schools were titled schools, the Native American children were treated as slaves and were forced to learn labor jobs; Native American girls were taught how to become housewives for middle- or high-class white males. Likewise, most children were also forced to stay during the summers even though they were promised that they would be able to go home; the government officials running schools feared if the children went home, they would turn

to their old ways and that they would have to re-train them in everything that they had learned during the long winter season. Children who were not housewives, worked on farms and did labor-intensive jobs in surrounding areas of the school, so they would stay civilized. In comparison to a military style school such as Carlisle, the Tulalip school was run on a strict schedule by ringing a bell. Students had early wake-up calls and would have extensive inspections and drills that took place outdoors. The students were grouped by age and their platoons would have to march the grounds like a formal military. As Marr explains further some of these schools were a “half and half” system; these half-day systems would be spent by the first half being educational while the second half would be work assignments. These work assignments were intensive labor which was a form of slavery (Marr pg. 1).

Not only were these boarding schools a place for forced assimilation and slave labor, they were a place for disease; many schools had reports of measles, mumps, tuberculosis, meningitis, trachoma, and smallpox. The contributions that lead to heavily diseased schools mainly were overcrowding and malnutrition due to lack of food supplies. Boarding schools also had inadequate payment for their staff members who irregularly checked on the well-being of students, so it led to neglect. For example, during this era in Minnesota, the Ojibwas had diagnosed over 1,000 children with trachoma that went to boarding schools; likewise, at the Tulalip Indian Schools, several students were sent to sanitariums in Idaho or Nevada. It was reported that boys spent a total of 110 days and girls spent 125 days in these sanitariums; these students never came back from the sanitariums. The death toll during the boarding school era is unknown due to the negligence of governments and staff of the schools, but headstones are visible at these boarding schools (Marr pg. 1).

Most boarding schools were disguised as Christian schools or missionary schools and promoted religious suppression and were legalized by federal governments. The forced education of western religion was a way to help eliminate tribal belief systems, enforce the western ideology of what it means to be a civilized Christian, and expand on the church's imperialism of the new world. Many government employees saw traditional ways of being from tribes as heathenish and outlawed many traditional ceremonies such as the ghost dance (Troutman 2012 pg. 108). Violators that committed atrocities against the church, such as traditional ceremonies (giveaways, ghost dances, etc.) and even wearing regalia, could be sent to prison, and if they had children, the children were sent to boarding schools (Gunderson, Robinson 2003 pg. 2). These violations were labeled as "Indian offenses" by the federal government; the federal government worked with the church to use propaganda that would educate the public on such offenses. With the educational propaganda set forth by the government and churches, Americans became compliant and complacent with boarding schools and their practices of suppression and genocide. Native Americans were not permitted to practice their beliefs, music, and traditions freely again until 1978 when The American Indian Religious Freedom Act passed to eradicate religious suppression suffered by Native Americans (Gunderson, Robinson 2003 pg. 1).

The assimilation process even contributed to art and music; boarding schools were notorious for creating military-style bands, classical quartets, choirs, jazz bands, and symphonies. The assimilation process was started at a young age, so the Native American children would prefer these forms of music to their own, bring it back to their community, and it would change throughout the next generations. With time, they hoped dances like the Sundance would disappear from tribes' culture; if not dances, songs and instruments were to be banned (Troutman 2012 pg.

108). Many famous artists were assimilated by the boarding school era; these prominent artists are Mildred Bailey and Tsianina Redfeather Blackstone. With their assimilation these artists were able to persevere and rise against their oppressors; these artists took what they learned and promoted their talents and helped their community, while making outsider communities aware of what was going on within their community and how the government was treating them as people. For example, the artists in opera such as Red Feather, and Zitkala-Sa dressed in traditional regalia to represent “authentic Indianness” while they were performing to appeal to white audiences; the artists then used their education and platform to help set a new precedent for Native Americans and destroy stereotypes, and would host lectures on American Indian issues before or after their performance (Troutman 2012 pg. 233). These artists shocked the western world in a way that helped new artists find avenues of activism that had not been touched before. The government built boarding schools to remove and “educate” Native children in what is considered the proper arts, language, and labor of the American citizenry. This would transform the children into preferring white culture and the European arts (Troutman 2012 pg. 7).

The intent of influencing Native children with European arts in boarding schools was so that the children would go back during the summers and introduce their families to this new “great” art. Hopefully with this exposure colonists would see the extinction of these heathen dances and songs within the reservations (Troutman 2012 pg. 6). The schools had many forms of artistry that students could be involved in; the artistry ranged from string quartets, harmonica, and mandolin clubs, choirs, and bands (Troutman 2012 pg. 108). The vast options of music helped the erasure of the students ever thinking of their own culture as an option. The goal was to have students end

up preferring American and European forms of music, but some did not lose their connection to their homes and who they were as people such as Mildred Bailey and Red Feather.

CHAPTER SIX

OPERA:

Opera is a colonial art form due to its establishment and creation in 16th century Italy; over time, it has been adopted into many cultures and has expanded into the indigenous realm. Opera has been one of the foundations and cornerstones of European/Western music and profoundly affects European culture. As an effect of opera being established in European society, opera inherits attributes and attitudes of Western society's foundations and how it views people. Opera's culture has never shied away from politics, and it is the nature of the genre to gravitate towards politics (Rabb 2005 pg. 321). Politics in opera can date back to the eighteenth century and has been used both as a rebellious state and a tool to enhance nationalism (Rabb 2005 pg. 321). One prime example of this political rise as an upheaval in opera was how the Parisians were able to stage opera houses as a place of protest. Before the French Revolution, over 3,000 Parisians were able to confront the current prime minister, Jacques Necker, and show their displeasure by interrupting the opera and stopping the show for nine days (Rabb 2005 pg. 322). The genre of opera has always had a controversial side due to the inherent nature of it aligning itself with politics; for the purpose of this chapter, we will explore how Native American opera singers were able to not only have a stable career in opera, but help their communities in a political atmosphere.

In the 21st century, politics has naturally shifted in opera to fit with what is contemporary, and we have seen a surge of activism for racial injustice, sexual discrimination, and unethical practices that are outdated. The elite rich and powerful are thought to be one of the few that have access and control over opera; these elites can set the tone when it comes to issues such as racism,

bigotry, and anything that happens in opera houses as they are the donors and leading contributors to the houses. These issues are still in opera, and singers and audiences have taken notice, for example, racism and bigotry have been called out because of people who perform in "black face" or "yellowface" (painting one's skin darker to fit the role when your skin is lighter). Though people of color and indigenous groups are members of opera houses and are available to play roles that call for a person of color, we tend to see a trend of these roles being played by European or white singers due to old standards. It was not until the 21st-century that audiences saw a banning of this practice; in the wake of what has happened to Black communities across the world, and especially the United States, with uprisings in Black Lives Matters movements, and other movements like #MeToo, opera houses have started to make it a point to reset the standards they have for their companies (Marshall 2021 pg. 5). We have recently seen the Paris Opera House come out with a 66-page statement on diversity and their plans to eradicate racial standards from their practices (Marshall 2021 pg. 5). Appropriation of skin tone is no longer tolerated in the arts, and the people leading the charge are the people of color or indigenous people within the industry themselves.

The calling out of racism and sexism is not the first time we have seen activism within opera houses. We have seen activists during the 20th century in opera who are indigenous singers, such as Tsianina Red Feather Blackstone and Zitkala-Sa, using their platform to advocate for indigenous rights and providing lectures on Native American history. The political artform was a part of the assimilation and boarding school era tactics of American Indians to promote western civilization ideals. Ironically, to the government's dismay, retaliation and perseverance came tenfold, and Zitkala-Sa and Tsianina Red Feather Blackstone were able to harness opera's rebellious nature and show their displeasures of the United States Government and its policies. As

we will explore through the case studies, Zitkala-Sa and Blackstone are able to decolonize the western artform through their establishment of Native American operas and removing a sense of colonialism with their productions by presenting the operas in traditional regalia and using Native American casts in their productions.

Tsianina Red Feather

Activism within opera started way before the 21st century, and one of the first instances we see this is with Tsianina Red Feather Blackstone, who, although she wore her regalia on stage, took the role of an informant to non-natives who had no idea of what was going on in the reservations and the problems they were having with the government. Tsianina Red Feather Blackstone was a Creek/Cherokee from the Muscogee Creek Nation in Oklahoma (Troutman 2012 pg. 234). She was known for her opera efforts as a singer, but she also was a pianist and a composer. Tsianina co-wrote an opera with Nelle Richmond Eberhart and established pianist/ethnomusicologist Charles Wakefield Cadman; the opera the two wrote together was entitled *Shanewis* published in 1918, a loosely based story on Red Feather's life (Lush 2008 pg. 1). During their performances together after each show, the two would conduct lectures on what is happening in Native American societies and the role the government had played. After they were able to publish *Shanewis*, the three were able to perform the opera in cities such as Denver and Los Angeles; touring would eventually be halted by the U.S. entering World War One.

Red Feather devoted her time to touring in Europe, performing shows for those that served during World War One (Muskogee Times-Democrat pg. 3). For her efforts in providing entertainment, she was honored by General John J. Pershing as one of the first women to volunteer for the job. Her volunteer efforts did not stop after World War One. She retired from singing in

1935 and helped found the American Indian Education Foundation. After her endeavor as a founder, she pressed forward and served for 30 years as a board member manager for the School of American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The school's intent is to promote archeological and ethnological research in the U.S. involving Native Americans. Tsianina was able to be at the forefront of change and break the glass ceiling by being a co-writer of an opera.

Zitkala-Sa

Zitkala-sa (Red Bird Woman), one of the influential figures in the literary world, musical world, and indigenous world, forged a path for future activists and indigenous scholars who wanted to have their voices heard. Zitkala-sa overcame her traumas during her time at the White's Manual Institute in Indiana, attended college and a music conservatory, and pursued multiple careers as a writer, musician, government agent, and political activist. Her life was met with many challenges, yet she endured and decolonized her world. If an academic should look for an example of what being decolonized means to its fullest extent, Zitkala-Sa is a reference that comes to mind.

Zitkala-Sa or Gertrude Bonnin was an enrolled member of the Yankton Dakota Tribe, which resides in what is now known as South Dakota. Born in 1876, Zitkala-Sa assimilated herself unknowingly into American life against her mother's will and volunteered to get an education at a Quaker boarding school funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs called White's Manual Institute in Wabash, Indiana. During her time here, we see her first struggles of being introduced to western culture. Zitkala-sa recalls in her autobiography entitled "American Indian Stories," that she is thrown into the harsh realities of white society upon arrival. The first instance trauma is inflicted with her hair being cut. Cutting one's hair in many Native American cultures could translate as the loss of a family member; Zitkala states: "Our mothers had taught us that only unskilled warriors

who were captured had their hair shingled by the enemy. Among our people, short hair was worn by mourners, and shingled hair by cowards!” (Zitkala-Sa 1921 pg. 47). When cutting a child's hair happens to Native American children in boarding schools, it leads to a fear that caused them to think that they have lost someone important to them. Other trauma instances include language barriers and being beaten for not speaking the correct language (Zitkala-Sa 1921 pg. 47). Zitkala-Sa persevered over this language barrier and became one of the most substantial writers the school had seen. Her essays translated her life vividly from her time as a child to her university experiences and advocated for Native Americans. Her articles dazzled scholars and won many awards due to the rawness and authenticity she conveyed of what it truly means to be Native American.

Consequently, by the time of her graduation from White's Manual Institute and her successful writing skills, Zitkala-Sa was able to attend on a scholarship Earlham College, located in Indiana, where she would pursue a degree in higher education (which she would not finish due to health concerns and financial struggle). Her childhood traumas and educational experience at the boarding school quickly hardened her and potentially alienated her from her family. Whenever she would return home, she never received the same treatment from her family and tribe due to her status in higher education and a sense of abandonment of the tribe on her part (Zitkala-Sa 1921). The education she did learn was also divisive in its colonial knowledge and not Yankton Dakota knowledge. The different learning experiences provided by the boarding school and college alienated her even further from her family, so yet again, the boarding school inflicts another form of trauma (inflicted imposter syndrome) where she is forced out on her own and culturally disconnected from her tribe. The strength and resilience Zitkala-Sa had helped her writing career

become a fruitful venture, and over time Zitkala-Sa would publish at least eight scholarly works, including a co-writing an opera.

Zitkala-Sa became an established composer and musician during her life due to her classical violin training during her years in boarding school and college. Zitkala-Sa was also able to attend the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston from 1897 to 1889, where she would hone her violin skills. Because of her musical experience, she eventually became a teacher at the Carlisle Boarding School when it was run under Pratt. However, she and Pratt ended things on a sour note; with Zitkala-Sa's publication in a magazine about how boarding schools contributed to the profound loss of Native American identity, she was sacked and sent home to the Yankton Dakota Reservation (Zitkala-Sa: Trailblazing American Indian PBS video 2020 6:00). After she married a half Yankton man by the name of Raymond Talephause Bonnin, the couple moved to Utah, where she eventually worked with William F. Hanson, a music professor at Brigham Young University. Zitkala-Sa and Hanson's work was a Native American opera called "The Sundance Opera;" The Sundance Opera was the first of its kind, was able to translate portions that transpired within the Sundance, gave an actual account for the history behind the Sundance, and was published in 1913 (Singer interview 2020 23:51). The purpose of why Zitkala-Sa wrote the opera this way was so that Native Americans (specifically the Ute tribe she cast as members) could openly participate in the Sundance even when the government outlawed it at the time. Since the government did not actually know what the Sundance consisted of, Native American actors could openly and in public perform some aspects of the Sundance. The courageous act of writing the Sundance has Zitkala-Sa noted as one of the first Native American activists. Though later, her work and contribution to the Sundance opera would be discredited by those at BYU; Hanson was

the only one credited for creating the opera (Singer Interview 2020 25:00). Thankfully, we have seen Native Americans such as the Singers, a Navajo family from Salt Lake City, who have given credit where it is due and perform the Sundance Opera under Zitkala-Sa's name. The Singer family (Sarah Singer, Megan Singer, and James Singer) have all worked tirelessly to restore Zitkala-Sa's career as an opera singer and perform the opera under her name instead of just Hanson's. Zitkala-Sa's career never shied from politics, whether in her writings or in her opera. Her career after being a musician involved:

- Advocating for Native American citizenship;
- Women's suffrage;
- Eliminating boarding schools; and
- Protecting Native American rights granted by treaties.

She is a leading example of what activists and musicians should strive to be and how one is able to insert decolonization and indigenization into any academic platform or career. Zitkala-Sa's legacy has inspired many Native and Non-native people to continue her work in activism and music. She is proof that you can have multiple careers, use your music as a steppingstone into future ventures, and become an activist and indigenize/decolonize that space. During her time in Utah, she helped establish the Society of American Indians, which helped advocate Native American citizenship. Later Zitkala-Sa found herself working under the woman suffrage movement in a grassroots organization called the General Federation of Women's Club in 1921. Through this group, she was able to establish Native American advocacy and initiate a government investigation of oil drilling in Oklahoma on Native American land. She and her

husband worked tirelessly to help and preserve Native Americans and were buried next to each other in Arlington National Cemetery located in Washington D.C.

The political nature of opera tends to lead its current performers and even 20th-century performers such as Zitkala-Sa and Red Feather to be activists for their community. Although opera itself is not the primary catalyst for decolonization, the performers could use their opera platform to decolonize and indigenize themselves by being vigilant of their indigenous community and inserting their voices into western society. Inherently in the process of decolonizing themselves, these artists are able to decolonize the genre of opera and potential audiences that are witnesses to their work.

CHAPTER SEVEN

JAZZ AND BLUES:

Both jazz and blues are Afro-American and derive from the slave era in the United States (Daniels 2019 pg. 17). Although there are similarities, such as the genres being the product of Black American culture, differences separate the genres; these genres' geography and birthplace are one of those differences. Jazz is generally thought to have its roots established in New-Orleans, Louisiana, whereas its counterpart, blues, resides in the Delta of Mississippi and throughout the rural south; eventually, these genres will spread out and reach the entirety of the United States and the world. Other elements of playstyle and what instruments or vocals are used also attribute to these differences and each genre's definition. Although these genres can go hand in hand and are often lumped together, it is essential to understand their definitions and what makes these genres unique, and how the two have contributed to American popular music. The purpose of the "Jazz and Blues" chapter is to explore the foundations of jazz and blues, what defines jazz and blues, and explore how Native Americans contributed to jazz and blues while simultaneously indigenizing the two genres by asserting themselves into the genres.

Jazz

The definition of jazz is widely debated among musicians and academics, and due to its many subgenres defining jazz has become an increasingly difficult task. Jazz is a complex form of music that has been contributed to by many cultures around the world. In 1987 the Jazz Preservation Act was passed to celebrate jazz culture and Black American culture; the JPA defined

jazz as a Black American art form (Farley 2003 pg. 113). This definition of jazz is oddly broad and leaves a question of "What qualifies as Black American music?" Black American music is vast and is not just jazz; Black American music consists of many genres such as hip hop, rock, r&b, soul, and so much more; but how do jazz musicians justify the broad definition presented by the JPA and how it connects race and music? Duke Ellington, famed jazz pianist and American jazz composer, was defiant in defining jazz by connecting music to race and stated, "The Music is my race; this music was the result of our transportation to American soil and was our reaction in the plantation days to the tyranny we endured. What we could not say openly we expressed in music, and what we know as 'jazz' is something more than just dance music." (Daniels 2019 pg. 16). Although European Americans, Native Americans, and many other cultures, have contributed to jazz, space is controlled, and rightfully regulated, by Black Americans due to its birth and conception in Black American society caused by the oppression and suffering felt during slavery in America. Prominent bandleader Fletcher Henderson echoed Ellington's comments by simply exclaiming, "Jazz is a racial expression." The artists were gracious that Black Americans laid the foundation for almost every form of popular music and American music in the 20th century (Daniels 2019 pg. 15). Billy Taylor, another world renowned jazz pianist and professor of music at East Carolina University, has commented on the form of jazz music, saying that, "As an important musical language, it has developed steadily from a single expression of the consciousness of black people into a national music that expresses American ideals and attitudes to Americans and people from other cultures all around the world." The theory about jazz from Billy Taylor tailored well into Native Americans in jazz and not just Black Americans. For example, Mildred Bailey, the famed swing singer and an enrolled member of the Coeur d'Alene

tribe, expressed the vocal impressions used in traditional music that would separate her from other musicians when she sang swing.

Native Americans, along with Black Americans, have had historical traumas that are equally terrible and equally unjust, and contribute to the hearts of jazz and blues souls. Native American artists like Mildred Bailey are a staple for swing sub-genre in jazz; but what prompted Native Americans such as Bailey to connect to jazz? Having been adopted by European society, jazz as an artform was forced during the boarding school era to help erase Native Identity (Troutman 2012 pg. 108). The forced assimilation and attempt to expunge culture and music by promoting high society music genres such as jazz inserted a new wave of Native American jazz musicians who brought the new form of music home to their reservations. The assimilation tactic did not entirely work, as Native Americans still practice traditional ways of being, on top of adopting new forms of music into their cultures. Many artists could not express as much activism within their lifetime due to the racial discrimination, bigotry, and intolerance of women still being perpetuated and allowed. In particular, blues and swing singers like Charley Patton and Mildred Bailey took a different route in the crossroads when expressing whom they are as people by just allowing their music to speak for itself. Patton and Bailey were able to educate their non-native counterparts and pass down their understanding and affection of jazz to others. Their activism is minimal in the sense of indigenization of the genre, but the influence these singers have had over the genre of jazz has been noteworthy. How these artists indigenized their music can be seen in who they are as people and the music they were able to produce and be unique.

Mildred Bailey

Mildred Bailey was an iconic jazz singer during the swing era. In her lifetime Mildred Bailey was a teacher for up-and-coming jazz musicians, an expert performer, and an innovator for swing. Mildred Bailey was born in 1900 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and is a member of the Coeur d'Alene tribe (Berhlund, Johnson, and Lee 2016 pg. 33). Due to her Native American roots, in her youth, she traveled to many powwows or traditional ceremonies with her family. When Bailey was young, her mother provided her with vocal lessons, which is where her famed vocal swing derived from and how Mildred Bailey got the nickname "The Queen of Swing." Eventually, due to her growing popularity through Jazz and Blues music, she lost touch with her tribe and culture; however, the Coeur d'Alene tribe had an overwhelming effect on the genre as we know it today.

Bailey came from humble beginnings and started out learning more melodies throughout her years in boarding schools with the Jesuits. Her parents influenced her, with her grandfather being the song keeper for the tribe and her mother being a pianist and vocalist (Berghlund, Johnson and Lee 2016 pg. 34). The music her parents provided is her first glimpse into the musical world and sparked her interest in becoming a musician. When Bailey was in school, she was enrolled in a Jesuit school to try to westernize her musical talents further and teach her classical choral music. Taking what she learned from her powwow singing and the Jesuits' lessons set her up for a life of success without her even knowing it. After her youth experience in traditional music and western music, she combined the two artforms and indigenized jazz by creating her unique vocal tones.

In 1912 she moved to Spokane for better opportunities with school, and soon after this, her birth mother passed of Tuberculosis, and her father remarried a woman, which Mildred constantly battled with. After her father found a new relationship, Bailey moved in with her aunt out of

contempt for her father's new relationship and just the general tension between her and her father. After moving to Seattle with her aunt, Mildred and her aunt went on a road trip; this road trip would end up plaguing the new family and leave Mildred as a lone young adult after a fatal car crash (Berglund, Johnson, and Lee 2016 pg. 36). With her aunt's passing, Bailey was forced into independence at a young age and started getting gigs singing for bands in local speakeasies in Spokane and Seattle to make extra money. She got these gigs by working in a local piano store and talking with the managers and A&R reps that would drop into the stores looking for potential clients. She soon got connections and married Ted Bailey, a merchant, and she moved to Los Angeles to further her career and be with him. Later the two would end their relationship and divorce, but Bailey kept her new last name as she thought it sounded more American. Bailey became a dedicated singer to Charles Whiteman, and then her career took off after that. Sadly, Bailey died at an early age due to diabetes from the thyroid injury suffered during that fatal car accident with her aunt.

Despite her modest upbringing and early departure from life, Bailey was able to impact jazz profoundly. She influenced many artists throughout her life that would later pave the way for jazz musicians and hosted them in her houses in New York and Los Angeles, where she would educate them on the art of jazz. Mildred Bailey is responsible for introducing artists such as Bing Crosby to jazz and blues. Her Brother, Al, and Crosby moved from Spokane to Los Angeles to jumpstart their career. They stayed with Mildred, and during this time, Mildred took them both under her wing to educate them on everything she knew. They would sit together and have long talks while listening to jazz, and she would show Crosby new music when they would meet up or have downtime. Most importantly, Mildred showed Crosby the music of Louis Armstrong, and

without her showing Crosby the music of Louis Armstrong, his musical style would be vastly different. Armstrong's music has had a profound imprint on Crosby's style and has helped define his way of play and composing.

Mildred Bailey was not an activist, but she always identified as Native American and was a part of the Coeur d'Alene tribe even though people assumed that she was not; the general population speculated that Bailey was Caucasian due to her light skin complexion (Berglund, Johnson, and Lee 2016 pg. 33). Mildred Bailey never forgot about where she came from or who she was, and in that way, she was still connected to her homelands and family. She also decolonized her music by taking what the western Jesuits taught her about melodies and putting it into jazz, which is already a decolonized artform. The activism on her part is seen as minimal because she has only ever claimed her identity but now has had a significant impact on Native Americans, especially within the Idaho region and, more specifically, the Coeur D'Alene tribal members. Recently, the Coeur D'Alene tribe was able to reclaim Bailey's body and rebury it in Idaho so Bailey could again be a part of her tribe.

Although these case studies do not elevate a sense of activism, these musicians are able to insert themselves into daily conversations surrounding the origins and definitions of jazz that are widely debated amongst many. Mildred Bailey's contributions have not gone unnoticed, nor her life story. Many musicians, such as Bing Crosby, accredit these artists as founding figures in their music and hold these artists on a higher pedestal.

Blues & Delta Blues

Originating in the Mississippi Delta, blues finds itself deeply engrossed by Black American folklore, hardship, and contribution. As a core genre for American Popular Music, and due to the profound economic hardship that followed the jazz era, the Delta blues had a significant stronghold in the late 1920s and the great depression era of the 1930s (Morrison pg. 1). However, blues beginnings are poorly documented; the origins of blues are thought to have been prominent post-civil war and was influenced by field hollers, folk, minstrel show music, ragtime, and church music (Britannica pg. 1).

While jazz flourished in the recording industry in the early 1900s, blues remained a part of the rural black south; it was not until the 1910s that blues bloom and flourish across the United States (Gioia 2021 pg. 13). The first significant recording we hear from blues occurred in 1912 through a song recorded by W.C. Handy entitled "Memphis Blues," which sparked a national obsession with the genre (Wald 2010 pg. 1). Blues dates itself further than 1912 though, staple blues singer Ma Rainey said she was able to learn blues from a girl in Missouri in 1902, while Handy attested he heard the blues for the first time in a Mississippi delta train stop in 1903 (Wald 2010 pg. 16). There are distinctive parts of blues, such as rhythms, instrumental techniques, and singing techniques, that can be traced back to the slave era roots of West Africa (Wald 2010 pg. 12). Blues can be intertwined with jazz, but what can distinguish blues is the emotion poured into the performances. Delta Blues artist, and one of the originators of blues, Son House Gang, state that "Blues ain't nothin' but lowdown aching chill" (Wald 2021 pg. 1). Again, we find blues being curated and controlled by its founders as it should be, but it would be a disservice to the genre to say that blues did not have outside contributions from numerous ethnic backgrounds and Euro-

American, European societies. For instance, prominent figures who contributed to the blues genre, such as the godfather of the delta blues, Charley Patton, are generally thought to be Native American. Patton's influence over the Mississippi Delta is still felt even though his life is generally cryptic.

Charley Patton

Charley Patton is a mystery in the blues world of how he lived his life; he was an elusive person, and not much is known about him. Patton is so elusive to media that even when scouring the internet for pictures of him, there is only one in existence. Sadly, due to his elusiveness, his birth year (generally thought to be sometime in April 1891, 1895 or 1897) and race are always put into question; the delta blues godfather is thought to be White, Native American, and Black. Meanwhile, there is constant debate on what tribe Patton is a part of, and it is thought he is either part Cherokee or Choctaw due to the area he was from in Mississippi (Rumble 2017). He was thought to be a bastard child, being fathered by a slave named Henderson Chatmon, with his mother being Annie Patton. Patton got his start on the Dockery Plantation, a cotton farm in Ruleville, Mississippi, which his father owned, and he never strayed too far from home his whole life (Wikipedia 2020). His father was rather strict and was a plantation owner; not wanting Patton to fall into the risqué lifestyle of musicians; Patton's father disciplined him at a young age for wanting to play the blues. Eventually Patton would forge his path in blues and started playing anyways, leaving his home to play in shows across the delta; Patton never cared for hard labor jobs and would rather be a musician. Patton would marry twice in his lifetime and would eventually settle down with his second wife, Bertha Lee, not far from the Dockery Plantation (Fahey pg. 20). Patton and his wife got into a dispute and both were jailed; luckily W.R. Calaway, an A&R rep

with Getten Records from North Carolina, was able to bail the two out and in turn Patton and his wife went to New York with Calaway to record music (Fahey pg. 20). Throughout his career, Patton would record over forty songs with Paramount Records; thankfully, these recordings help musicians and scholars to recognize Patton's style, sound and influence in blues.

Patton's style is infectious throughout the blues community and has influenced many blues players in the delta. Although his lyrics can be somewhat inaudible, you can hear the passion he has; it is said that Patton could project his voice over 500 yards. Patton is known to have one of the most challenging accents to understand as a blues singer, whether it is due to the rasp of his voice or the thick southern Mississippi Delta accents that are known in that era of blues (Hähnel pg. 2 2012). As his voice sails-over recordings and leaves listeners humming along to the tune, the playing style he has follows his lyrics with what is known as a rhythmic chug. The rhythmic chug that is felt in the delta blues curated by Patton can still be felt in many of today's blues records (Rumble 2017). Rhythmic chug is a beat carried by a steady plucking of the E string or a tap on the guitar; depending on the song being played, the string being plucked can change. Patton is credited as a mentor to many influential blues players who would eventually leave the delta and take this style of playing with them, such as Robert Johnson, Howlin' Wolf, and John Lee Hooker. Sadly, Patton's blues would not last as he eventually passed on April 28th, 1934, from a mitral valve disorder. His contributions to the delta blues have left a mark on many artists, whether they are big or small names, and he was able to indigenize his music through his presence alone.

Blues and jazz can be intertwined at times, but are vastly different when looking at the history, geography, and people in them. These communities are distinct but interact with each other frequently, and we see a crossover with artists in both jazz and blues, thus making it confusing for

outsiders to interact with the two genres. I was even at the fault of doing this exact thing and combined the two distinct genres until informed by my committee that the two are separate and we have to make that distinction. It is vital to musicians, scholars, students, and audiences to understand the different definitions and history of the genres and how Native Americans contributed to them both throughout the years, even if the artists such as Patton were obscure in defining themselves. Although regulated and curated by African Americans, this does not mean that other cultures cannot contribute to that space. If done well and appropriately, the genres' curators, and gate keepers (Black American Artists) deem such artists worthy of their appraisal and help solidify their career and creativity.

CHAPTER EIGHT

INTERVIEWS:

The interview process during this thesis was unique in timing. Trying to conduct interviews during Covid-19 has been a setback but is entirely doable. My interview process was unique when I would have traveled to see the interviewees; I did not because I did not want to spread COVID to different communities if I were asymptomatic. I took precautions myself and followed the guidelines of the CDC and the Gallatin Valley Health Department at the time of these interviews. Thanks to modern technology, we were all able to conduct interviews with being 6 feet apart or having a Zoom call. Both went surprisingly smooth without any hiccups. During the interview, I got permission to record the interviews to hopefully be published in a podcast style. For our interviews' recording process, I am lucky enough to have an audio engineer (Matt Grayson) as a roommate. He was kind enough to help set everything up mic-wise and made sure that our audio quality would not be hindered by anything. During the interviews, I did my best to stick with the questions I had prewritten down, but out of curiosity in interviews, I asked other questions as well when it felt right. Every interviewee signed and took a copy of a consent form, as we were recording my interviews. I wanted the interviewees to know beforehand of the interviews' structure so we could both be best prepared, and there were not any questions that jumped out at the interviewees or any that they did not want to answer. I had a general theme of 8-10 questions that had to deal with how to indigenize and decolonize music and the industry that they are in. Depending on what genre that person was in, I was able to dive deeper into that side of music and explore what got them into that style of music and why they chose to stick with that. Each story is unique and has a different outcome. The interviews gave a vast number of perspectives of the

music industry, both good and bad, and how it affects people daily. The music industry's colonialist standpoint has been a battle all people of color have to endure, and these interviews dive heavily into what the music industry is and the awful standards it holds.

Indigenous information that is being gathered is qualitative, no matter how many interviews I conduct, and each interview holds a unique set of values. Out of respect for these interviewees I will let the interviews speak for themselves. Representation is vital for Native American and indigenous communities especially in the academy. It is a fundamental right for the interviewees interviewed to allow the work to speak for itself and this adds to the process of decolonization (Smith 1999 pg. 150). Representation without analysis allows for the artists to be included in the conversation, allowing the indigenous artists to help set their own definitions of decolonization and indigenization, and that is a vital concept of the thesis presented. These interviews should be treated with care and not taken for granted; treating these interviews with respect means transcribing every word, maintaining the interview's integrity and fully show representation. To get an accurate representation of what is happening within the interview, there will be the insertion of pauses, sighs, laughs, and coughs. Summaries of these interviews are provided to portray a sense of context so the reader can fully grasp what is happening, what is being said and be fully immersed into the situation.

The settings may not be natural in the spaces it is held due to it being recorded professionally, however, when interviewing Mario Minor Junior, I interviewed him like one would in a radio show. There will be questions to follow as a basis, but the stories he told and allowed to be recorded and used are up to him. He can say whatever he wants to fit his narrative. The goal is to eliminate the fact that there is recording equipment there and let conversation flow naturally. A

natural conversation allowed us to learn more about each other, and not having a goal of answering specific questions will be beneficial to the project. All these measures were taken when Sarah Singer was interviewed as well. Beautiful music happens naturally and is not forced, and my interviews resemble that. The interview had open ended questions to let the musicians tell their story. The questions presented in the interviews are as follows:

1. Tell us who you are and where you are from?
2. What is your back story?
3. As a musician, who did you look up to in order to become the artist, you are today?
4. Who are your favorite musicians, and who helped influence you musically?
5. How do you craft your sound, and what is your writing process?
6. What are you working on now?
7. How does being Native American affect who you are in the music world?
 1. What does being a Native American musician mean to you?
 2. Have you faced any stereotypes from fans, venue owners, or people in general, and how have you overcome them? What is your advice for facing something like this?
 3. Does your culture help influence what you create?
 4. What do you want to say for younger Native American youth who want to be musicians?
 5. What does success look like to you, and what do you hope for your future?

To make things easier for people to understand, I transcribed these interviews word for word, so nothing is misunderstood. I will mark when I asked questions or talking and mark when the interviewees talked with their names. I tried my best to implement tonality and emotions

throughout the interviews and tell it more like a story. I want to inform the reader of this thesis that these interviews do not shy away from profanity. As previously stated, I will not be editing them to show respect and integrity to the interviewee. The interviewees have proofread these interviews to their standards.

Interview with Mario Minor Junior

The first interview I was able to conduct was with Mario Minor Junior. Mario is probably the friendliest and most genuine person you will ever meet. Although he looks big and scary, wearing all black like most metalheads and punk rock guys do, he is just a big teddy bear. If you are a musician or do anything in the arts, you will always run into those people that are big goofballs, and a load of fun to be around and are super contagious with their energy. Mario is not only that, he is wicked smart and has learned how to make a name for himself in the music industry. Mario has an astounding knowledge of music history, Native American history, and vast circuit building knowledge. With his energy in the room, it is easy to talk to him for hours, and if it was not for a time constraint, we could have quickly done so. During the interview, I even forgot we were recording, and we got a little sidetracked of what was being said, but it was for the best, and we eventually got back on track. Mario was an open book, and we dove deep into his history as a musician and who he is in general, and how he got started in everything musically. It is not your average musical beginning, but then again to be a successful musician like Mario, you cannot be average. Mario is the lead guitarist and singer of the heavy blues rock band, Gallatin Ghost Train, which plays frequent shows throughout the Pacific Northwest. The interview with Mario, although fun, enabled us to talk about serious topics within the music industry. We were able to sit back and talk like two friends catching up even though there was an interview going on.

- Bryce: We'll get started here. Can you introduce yourself and tell us who you are and where you're from as a beginning point?
- Mario: My name is Mario Minor Junior, I grew up on the Fort Belknap Reservation around north central Montana I am half Assiniboine and half Lakota and now I live here in beautiful Bozeman, Montana
- Bryce: On that end what is your back story from then until now?
- Mario: From then until now, let's see, uh. I lived up north until the age of 18 (I blew the boys away more than they'd seen). Sorry that was a Tom Petty reference.
- Bryce: [laughs] Well you're just a heart breaker aren't ya?
- Mario: Yeah *laughing continues* uhm *Breaks for laughter* I lived up there till I was 18, then shortly after that I moved down to a little town in northern Nebraska called Chadron. I went to school there for music business, lived there for about 5 or 6 years, then moved here to Bozeman.
- Bryce: Cool, how have you been diggin' Bozeman? You were in school for a little bit, right?
- Mario: Yeah! Bozeman is great it was really cool. I came here off and on throughout the years cause my brother and sister used to live here and I used to stay here with my brother in the summertime and it kind of grew on me. There were a bunch of cool towns in this state, but none of them were as cool as good old Bozeman. So, moved here back in 2010, so it's been ten years now.
- Bryce: Okay, cool and what did you do while you were in school?
- Mario: My major was psychology with Native American Studies minor...yeah, I didn't make it all the way through, but I found a different calling and decided to pursue that instead, I guess.
- Bryce: Right, we'll get into that in a little bit. What was your interest in psychology and Native American Studies?
- Mario: Just figuring out how things work you know? Like, the thing about me growing up I always wanted to know how certain things work, and one of the things that interested me while growing up was the human mind and being able to study, you know how, this does this, neurons effect these things and stuff like that. That interested me ever since I was a kid and just wanted to pursue that at a higher level.

Bryce: And speaking of younger years, what got you into music and what got you started in that industry?

Mario: I was bored *chuckles* I mean north central Montana there isn't very much to do. Unless you're like a rancher or farmer and stuff like that you know? I did stuff like that when I was really young and after a while it just wasn't for me. Uhm, but yeah I kind of got into music at an earlier age. Like back when I was in sixth grade you know, one of my cousins joined like a youth band class and he was telling me how cool it was and he was learning how to play the Trumpet all this and that, and so I kind of dipped my toes in that and I joined that same class. I started to learn how to play saxophone and I play that for, oh goodness, a couple of years and then I finally thought to myself oh saxophone ain't cool *laughs* even though now I love saxophone and I wish I could play it a lot more than I do, and then I got older and got introduced to newer kinds of music like rock and roll and punk. I got into that because my brother was a radio DJ here and he would bring home singles and different CDs from local bands from Bozeman from back in the day and he would just leave those boxes around.

Bryce: Right like those old 75s?

Mario: Yeah, I'd get into the boxes and not knowing who some of these people were, I would just look at the album artwork and say, "oh this looks cool" and plug it in or put this in a CD player and be like, "oh wow I like this. This is aggressive. This is fast. This is something like I haven't heard before," cause prior to that I was listening to what my parents call moldy oldies from like the 50s and 60s even the disco era like that's all I really knew, you know? Like my uh musical taste was just that until I got into these boxes of punk rock and rock and roll albums and stuff. And after I got into that I was like, oh wow I want to do that! So, I made a deal with my mom, the deal was if I got good grades, she would buy me a bass guitar. And so, I remembered I hustled and worked as hard as I could and got good grades, and she held up her end of the deal and I got a little silver tone bass guitar starter pack, with one 8 inch bass amp, with a chord, and crappy guitar picks, and the bass. And after that I was gone. I got home from "Sam Goodie" (Music store) where we got it and within ten minutes of being home, I haven't even pulled out all the gear from the box yet, and I hear a knock on the door and it's my cousin and he asked me if I wanted to play bass in his band.

breaks for laughter

Bryce: You just got thrown into it!

Mario: I didn't even know he had a band.

Bryce: He was just waiting for you!

- Mario: So not even within ten minutes, I was just playing in a band. I was just thrown in it, while they have been playing for quite a while and I didn't know anything, and didn't know what each note was on what fret, or the note names for the strings, or anything like that and, uhm yeah, I just started playing Native punk rock in the middle of Rodeo Drive in Fort Belknap.
- Bryce: What was one of those first 75s or first singles you ended up picking up from your cousin?
- Mario: Oh, the box of CDs from my brother?
- Bryce: Yeah.
- Mario: Uhm goodness, one of the albums that really stuck out to me and caught me was, uh what is it, "Sun of the Morning Star" by this punk rock band out of Rapid City, South Dakota called the Reddmen, and that right there served my biggest inspirational point in my life because they had the Tootsie Pop chief with the bow and arrow shooting at the star, like that was like their artwork, so like a chief and I'm Native American, so something that was relatable and so I opened it up. It wasn't even the original CD, it was a burned version that had the album title written in sharpie on the CD, and I popped that in, and oh gosh their song "Ready, Set, Burn" was the first song on that album and that just shook my entire core and my world. Just the intro, and you know, and just hear it kick into this huge punk rock riff, and yeah, I think the album has like 20 tracks on it.
- Bryce: Right, because punk is pretty quick.
- Mario: You know some the songs are only a minute and a half long, but dang dude I listened to that album so much it couldn't play anymore.
- Bryce: Right, you burned a hole right through it?
- Mario: Yeah, you know there were so many scratches from my discman in my pocket from when I was skateboarding with it and it would spin and scratch the bottom of it.
- Bryce: Do kids even know what that is today?
- *breaks for laughter*
- Mario: Yeah dude, ugh kids these days. With their bluetooths and mp3 players. Do they even have mp3 players anymore or is it just all streaming stuff now?
- Bryce: I don't know, I think it's all based on streams now.

- Mario: It's all streams now? Oh my gosh I just dated myself again!
- *breaks for laughter*
- Mario: Like CDs and mp3 players dude!
- Bryce: Shit, I remember when I had CD players going to school with big ass headphones only playing one CD all day.
- Mario: Yeah, that was a huge moment for me, and last August before covid we actually got to play with the drummer and the singer for the band. They used to be "The Reddmen," but now they go under "Friends of Caesar Romero," but yeah, I got to hang out and play a show with them and that was really cool. So, I got to sing "Ready, Set, Burn" with them. I showed up and told them about it and I totally fan girl'd. I rolled up and was like, "Bro, I've been listening to you since I was a kid," you know, and he was super cool and super nice, and I watched their set and they happened to play "Ready, Set, Burn" for their last song and I was just like, do I just rock out like on the side, you know? And then my inner teenager was just like, NO! Do it. So, I just jumped up and screamed the vocals with him and it was a crazy time. I actually gave him one of my unique guitar amplifiers, that cow skull amplifier, just as a token of appreciation for helping me set my own path in punk and rock and roll.
- Bryce: Are there any groups that you have listened to nowadays that are the equivalent of that? Or that are on the same spectrum?
- Mario: Goodness, I listen to a lot of stuff ya know? He's not in a band, but he's a musician and he's a really good friend of mine, his name is Sage Cornelius. And uh, I forgot what Native he is, but he's originally from Lawrence, Kansas, somewhere around there, and he's a phenomenal fiddle player. He's bounced around a bunch of different bands throughout the years.
- Bryce: Like bluegrass music?
- Mario: Like dude, he does the whole thing. He does bluegrass, he's even offered to lay down tracks for Gallatin Ghost Train stuff, but he does the whole thing like traditional Irish fiddle, bluegrass, country. Lately he's been in to, uhm, he got a custom 7 string fretted fiddle or violin made and he's been blowing up these past couple of months combining like fiddle and violin with djent and death and heavy metal riffs and stuff.
- Bryce: If you have a 7 string you can only play djent, right?
- *breaks for laughter*

- Mario: Dude like, some of the stuff he does on his violin is stuff you've never heard before. There's really glitchy scratchy Tom Morello (Lead guitarist for Rage Against The Machine) type stuff to like something that's reminiscent of White Chapel (American deathcore band) to really chuggy violin if that makes sense. He yeah, I've been listening to a lot of his stuff. He does a lot of solo stuff and posts a lot. Posted a guitar battle with Jared Dines (metal comedy guitar Youtuber). He did a video with him.
- Bryce: Like back and forth?
- Mario: Yeah, back forth.
- Bryce: But he was playing his fiddle?
- Mario: Yeah, he was playing his 7 string it's like a flying V violin. While Jared was playing an 8 string guitar, like really chuggy stuff. Yeah so, he's been on my top of my radar list and we chit chat here and there. There's that guy and that's about it.
- Bryce: Yeah, that's really cool I always like to find out what other people are listening to.
- Mario: Oh yeah, I've been listening to a lot of this guy called C.W. Stoneking he's like a legit blast from the past. His style is from the 30s or roaring 20s, just old school. He dresses the part and sounds like it. He mixes comedy in with his songs and he's fun to listen to.
- Bryce: Right, just a real old school vibe. That's really hard to come by as some guitarists or players just stick new school stuff instead of looking into old school roots and stuff.
- Mario: Right.
- Bryce: Speaking of working on music and things like that, what are you working on currently for music? We touched on this before, but I know you do some amp stuff and music stuff on the side, if you want to talk about both of those.
- Mario: Yeah, uhm, musically I'm working on. Me and my little brother are working on some heavy blues stuff for our band that used to be As the Crow Flies, but there was quite a fiasco with that a couple years ago and we've tried to hang on to that as long as we could.
- Bryce: Those fuckin legal disputes.
- Mario: Yeah dude! Like having those bigger, more well-known musicians come through use the same band name as you is a nightmare and is a hard hole to get out of, you

know? And uhm, we finally, after 2 years, we decided to change our name to Gallatin Ghost Train, you know, cause of the Gallatin Valley. For one to steal, unless someone blatantly steals it, playing like heavy blues and rock and roll riffs and trying to incorporate what I grew up and listen to currently, you know, and try and blend it all together and create something that you know is blues influence, but has a kick in the ass; and then we are working on that and writing and making riffs for that and hopefully we'll get that recorded.

Both of us look towards Matt

Bryce: Wink wink, nudge nudge Matt.

Breaks for laughter

Mario: As for like building and stuff with Minor Glitch Electronics, I've been focusing on pedals and working and amps.

Bryce: Quickly when did that come about?

Mario: That popped up in the latter half of 2004. It started off with me being too broke, you know? Ain't a dang thing change.

Bryce: I mean that's all musicians, right?

Mario: Yeah, I wanted a cigar box guitar and looked up online, and the ones I thought were really cool that I could use were upwards to like 300-400 dollars.

Bryce: You see that price range and you're like shitting your pants and you're like well, not in this lifetime.

Mario: Yeah, that's way out of my price range there, and so I was just looking at the pictures and looking at it like okay that's a cigar box, and some of the necks were made out of broom handles, you know what I mean. What I started to do was what I did throughout my life and when I wanted something. I'd build it or try and make something similar to it, and how I would do that is mentally I'd take it apart, piece by piece, and say, "oh okay the bridge on this cigar box guitar is a key, like literally using an old school brass key, and the neck is going all the way through, and that's just a piece of pine, and the body is a cigar box," and started taking it apart piece by piece and then thinking like I have something that resembles that bridge. I have a piece of wood that's as long as that guitar neck. I have a bunch of plywood I could make this box. I can make this and that. And it started with that janky cigar box guitar build, which I still use now. I named him Howlin' Duke. He's a four string Frankenstein guitar made out of old pieces of wood, uh, old guitar parts, my mom's old jacket from the 70s, some dream catchers, plywood, other scrap wood, and

anything I could find and was able to pull it all together and create a four string rock and roll machine out of it. And growing up I was taught that everything has a spirit, even objects, and doing so you treat those things with as much respect as you possibly can. Knowing that I created this thing, I threw that in there too and this thing obviously has a spirit. It sounds mean and beastly, and growing up on those moldy oldie stuff I grew up listening to Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Lightning Hopkins, and I thought, you know if I'm gonna give this guy a name and playing some heavy blues I'm gonna give this guy a heavy blues name. So, I try to incorporate that and Howlin' Wolf, and I used to listen to Duke Ellington stuff like jazz and all that when I was younger. And I put those two names together and I was going to go busk downtown, I think I wasn't making any money because I was working at the college.

Bryce: *Laughs* yeah. There isn't any money in that!

Mario: Yeah, there isn't unless you are high up there! And I didn't have enough cash and I went downtown, and I was busking. And I thought Howlin' Duke has a cool name so I gotta come up with something, so you know listening to all those guys I'm gonna be Lightning Hopkins. My grandma's last name was Thunderhawk so trying to incorporate another old blues guy's name with my name, so Lightning Hopkins. I don't know, somehow it worked out in my head. So, I had a little suitcase bass that I had made, and I painted Howlin' Duke and Lightning Hopkins, and it would just be me sitting there thumpin on the bass drum and playing guitar. And people would come up to me and be like, "Okay so you're Howlin' Duke. Where's Lightning Hopkins?" you know, and I'd say, "Noooo this is Howlin' Duke (the guitar) and I'm Lightnin' Hopkins," and they'd laugh and throw some money in my cup and whatever, whatever. And then after that you know, I was trying to write a paper for one of my psychology papers and I had a brain fart, and I was just spinning around in my little chair in my little study and my wife was cleaning everything up and had an ammo can and my old amp laying there that I had, and I stopped, and I looked, and I thought you know wouldn't it be cool if I could put together that guitar amp into that ammo box? And I honestly tried to take apart that practice amp and putting it in there, but I didn't have the knowledge or tools or anything. So, seeing as I couldn't do that, I looked up online different diagrams and schematics.

Bryce: Down the rabbit hole you go!

Mario: Yeah! That's how it started man, that was a slippery slope. You know and so I just couldn't stop thinking about it and there was a certain point in time where I was like, you know I just got to do it. So, I got online, and I didn't know what any of these crazy alien looking symbols were for like capacitors, transistors and resistors. But when you immerse yourself into something for so long, eventually you start picking it up. And so, that's what I did and finally I was like I'm going get this resistor in this and blah blah blah and got all my pieces together. And wait actually

no, I didn't get it all together I was building it piece by piece, okay, so I got this, I don't even know where to get the boards for this. I don't know anything about PCBs so I just started digging and finding things. So then I got this piece here, this piece there, this piece there and I was trying to build my first guitar amp, and now days I could build a guitar amp in like a day if I wanted to. And that took me like 2 months because I was trying to gather everything, trying to learn at the same time and it finally came time to put in the last component and to turn it on and I turned it on, and the sucker just did not work. All that build up, and to that point my heart just broke and I wanted to give up, you know what I mean? Cause I invested so much in this one project, and so I left it alone for like a week or two and I finally, just like this stubborn person in me was like, "No. Oh my god I've got to figure this out," and come to find out, I think that one of my components was just in the wrong spot. This is how new I was to all this. It wasn't even connected to anything else it was just soldered in place and prior to this I didn't even know how to solder. I didn't know how it was. I thought if I had a green wire you have to put it with another green wire. I thought something bad would happen if you didn't connect the colors together and it's color coded for a reason. I mean it does, but it's different. But my mind wasn't in the right spot. I just didn't solder anything, so I got that together and finished that up and then I took a picture of it posted it on Facebook and within 10 minutes someone wanted it and commented on it. The second one I made was an Eddie Van Halen, like the striped guitar? Like his Frankenstein guitar. Someone wanted one painted like that and said they'd pay me for it. Being the little hustler that I am I said yeah and that's what I did I went and painted it like Eddie's Frankenstein guitar and made some dollars out of it.

Bryce: Then has it been word of mouth ever since?

Mario: Yeah, I've never paid for Facebook ads, or Instagram sponsorship type stuff, like it's all word of mouth. That to me has been the craziest thing. I've sent things over to Germany and I've talked to people in like Switzerland and Australia.

Bryce: It's like a super organic way going about it.

Mario: And there is a lot of points and times, like I just sit back and think, wow I just talked to someone on the opposite side of the world. It's nighttime over there and it's like oh my gosh. The way I see myself, I still see myself as that crazy dude from north central Montana, in the middle of nowhere and now I'm talking to people on the other side of the planet. And that to me is just crazy and it just goes to show that every point in time, throughout this whole building career, where I felt like I wanted to quit, you just can't. There's a reason. Especially now with all the Covid-19 lockdowns, that's been pretty tough on me mentally.

Bryce: Yeah, you've got to keep yourself busy.

- Mario: Yeah, so now I'm just trying to keep myself busy and there are just points where I don't want to do this no more and then there will be someone, like this morning, from Portland said, "Hey man how you are doing? Keep doing what you're doing! I love what you build and looking at your builds." And it's like all of a sudden, I'm like reset and ready to go.
- Bryce: That's good, that someone's always there looking out. But are you working on anything new? Would you like to talk about the Rez Dawg?
- Mario: Mostly right now I'm sticking to the Rez Dawg thing, and that thing, and pedal has been pretty popular, and I've made it to where the eyes light up and people love that, and it makes your pedal interact with the player. That's one of the coolest things in my opinions, cause in a lot of pedals you get it and turn it on, and it does what it does. For me it goes back to everything has a spirit, and so for me having those LED lights or diodes interact with the player is kind of like intertwining, like that kind of thinking into that type of build. It's that spirit looking back at you, you know.
- Bryce: Right, can you explain that build for a little bit and what that pedal actually does?
- Mario: The Rez Dawg Suppa Fuzz is a clone of an iconic fuzz pedal called the super fuzz. With what I've done with it now, I added a different kind of switch that allows you to switch the diodes and allows different fuzz when you switch it to the LEDs. The LEDs are switched to the eyes. The eyes are in the image of a Rez Dawg, like a snarling dog image, on the front of it and when the player has the LED lights engaged to play, the eyes light up with the intensity of the playing. It's really about the flow of electricity of those diodes and with the image and with the player.
- Bryce: That's really cool, are you hoping to expand your pedals in anyway?
- Mario: Yeah! I'm still very, very new to this. Effects pedals like with the super fuzz, that's a lot more intricate than the amps, you know, and the ammo can amps have seven components, where the super fuzz has like 50. There's a lot more bells and whistles that go into that so, I'm still trying to figure out this stuff still so it's trial and error like it's always been. I try to experiment and a lot of the time they don't work, but you've got to get back up and try and figure it out. But recently I've been talking to another native pedal builder, his name is Mike Trombley, and he's from Browning which is wild cause it's 2 or 3 hours west of where I grew up on a different rez. Which is wild, and now he owns his own pedal company called the Native Audio and he's been a huge help in building pedals and figuring out how they work. He sends me different articles to read to help me understand the inner depths of circuitry. He's also offered to help me create like a PCB for any of my pedals in the future, which will allow me to build faster and more efficiently, cause what I am doing right now is like Veroboard and stuff you can just find on the internet, and

look it up and figure it out. But this will allow me to have my own little piece and it will be unique to me. After I get caught up with my orders now, I'm going to figure that out and have a PCB for me and not have to build special orders by special orders. I can just have the orders ready for different companies and have them ready to get shipped out. My next goal is to make a clean gain pedal or a clean boost pedal.

Bryce: Something opposite of the fuzz pedal?

Mario: Yeah, I want to make something that can do a lot more than just be loud and gnarly. I want something that can do more for different players. Something eclectic cause us musicians, we're finicky and picky.

Bryce: Right, we want something that fits us and is unique to us and fits our needs.

Mario: Yeah, I want to be able to have a fuzz, a clean, maybe a different kind of fuzz, a distortion, a clean boost, and an overdrive. As a handful of a moment, that's my next goal. To create my own pedal line and expand. It's like native fashion and clothing, the expand with types of clothes and stuff like that. I kind of want to do that, but with effects pedals because the thing that I've noticed through this whole lockdown is a bunch of musicians are not playing shows no more. They're at home. As a weird result they are trying to find their own tone. So, they are looking through Instagram or Facebook and I end up getting a bunch of messages from people I've never talked to before because they are all trying to find a different tone or a builder that no one else has discovered yet. And they come across what I'm doing, and they want to place an order and do this and that. I kind of want to figure out a variety of pedals so I can have options for orders.

Bryce: Nice, that'll be cool once you get that going. The Rez Dawg is a phenomenal pedal.

Mario: Yeah! You guys got one and you sent one to your cousin over in California and you got one with the special fuchsia, the only one with that color, you know, and that's the cool thing about doing everything yourself. You're able to make one offs to a friend and pick the colors cause its different and I'm able to tweak things for that one person and make it unique for that one person.

Bryce: And make them want to play it even more.

Mario: Exactly.

Bryce: Cool, okay now to get into the nitty gritty stuff. How has being Native American affected you in the music industry?

Mario: Ya know, it's a lonely place at least with my builds. Building wise it's a lonely place cause with Mike he's the only other native pedal builder that I've come across. He

and I are tight you know? We both know we are the only two in the industry that are native, and we are constantly gassing each other up like, “Keep it up bro! I just saw what you posted on the germ [Instagram]!” We are always working together so it’s pretty lonely in the sense of that. It’s weird because he has his company, which is Native Audio, which represents him and me having Minor Glitch Electronics, I feel like people see that Romanized cause in my description it says I’m Lakota and Nakota. They see that and I feel like they a lot of folks are transported to what a Native American should be. Cause I’ve gotten a few messages and I’ve been on the fence about changing my name from Minor Glitch to something that would better represent me being Native American and my background and stuff like that. I was talking to some people about it, like different online magazines, and that would come up and be like, “yeah I thought about it” and they are like, “oh if you do, it would be great if you could come up with a name that represents Indians and stuff.”

Bryce: Right like the stereotypical stuff, but that’s not who you are.

Mario: Yeah! Like it’s my last name you know? So, I don’t even know, but every time I talk to somebody about it that’s the first thing that pops up. Like, dang dude if I wanted to have a really crazy name or something. I have all this pressure to have something native, but I’m cool with Minor Glitch Electronics for now. That’s one thing that I’ve been noticing.

Bryce: What about your band life being Native and going to shows?

Mario: I feel like I get, that’s a really weird one too, you know. Because like being like a big Native dude, you know, playing loud and heavy rock and roll and people think I’m just a violent dude. I feel like they take that stereotype of being a big scary Native dude and being violent and mean comes with it.

Bryce: But you’re like the complete opposite of that

Mario: Yeah!

Bryce: But you’re like one of the nicest dudes in the world.

Mario: Yeah, I have people come up to me and say, “Dude, when I saw you I thought you were going to kill me, but you’re like a big warm teddy bear.”

Bryce: *laughs* That’s exactly who you are!

Mario: Yeah! That’s how I’ve always been bro! Like, I’m sorry man! That is what I mostly receive, this judge this book by its cover. But there’s a lot more to it, you know? I grew up in a weird place and didn’t have the best family and family upbringing and all this and that. Like, I’m just a cool cat you know?

- Bryce: Right? You made it work.
- Mario: Yeah! Like, I'm not going to slice off your face or anything like that you know?
- Bryce: Just cause your music is aggressive doesn't mean you are.
- Mario: Yeah! Like, give me the benefit of the doubt or something, like gee whiz.
- Bryce: Right, so how does your culture help what you create? Both musically and with your builds?
- Mario: For me, a lot of it is about is trying to inspire the next generation. There's always the scenario in my head that pops up of how to incorporate my cultural background into my builds. It's the scenario of someone my age, when I just started figuring out how to play music, like guitar or bass or something like that. The scenario is of a kid picking up a guitar and learning what distortion or fuzz is or learning what effects pedals are, and when you go these music stores you see a whole array of different pedals with a bunch of different bells and whistles. You see Horizon pedals, Strymon stuff, you see a whole bunch of stuff. What I want to do, when say that person sees that shelf, they see something that resonates within them, much like how that Reddmen album resonated with me.
- Bryce: Right, because you only get that rez dog reference if you're from the rez.
- Mario: Yeah, you'd only really know it if you grew up on the rez or are familiar with it. So hopefully that would stand out to them and then they'd pick that up, and then do a little bit more digging and seeing that like, you know, this guy is native! He builds all this stuff?! Hopefully that will inspire folks with that. And with the names and how everything has a spirit I try to incorporate that. I also try and incorporate history and culture like for the ammo can amps. Like I said before, there are 7 components that make up the amps, that make the amps tick, and there just so happens to be 7 reservations in Montana. Which fits perfectly. This wasn't my idea it was my wife's idea. I wanted the PCB to be in the shape of Montana. That's what's I wanted.
- Bryce: And then she one upped ya.
- Mario: She one upped me and said, "Wouldn't it be cool if you could put those components in the places of the reservations in Montana?"
- Bryce: Light bulb!
- Mario: Yeah! I was literally driving and I went, "HUUUUUUH" and gasped. I was at a stop light and I just stared at her and I was like, "Babes...do you know what you

just did? This is brilliant! There are 7 components in my amp/pedals and there are 7 reservations in Montana!”

Bryce: And you placed them where the reservations are too so people can geographically see.

Mario: Yeah, I put the components on the state map on the PCB so when someone cracks open the amp and then sees it, or if there is another creative mind that wants to learn more and take it apart. Like if someone takes apart any of my things, I don’t care I love that.

Bryce: Right, that’s the point of them.

Mario: And so, if there is another Native builder out there that wants to figure out how this works or something or if he... he/she/they/them whatever, opens it up and sees the PCB and looks at the back side it’s on the backside and they’ll see that, and I love Easter eggs you know what I mean?

Bryce: Right, and then people will be like “oh what is that?!” And then will google it and a map of Montana will pop up or something.

Mario: Right, they’ll pop it open and if they don’t know the background of it and then ask what are these? And hopefully research it.

Bryce: Right and learn something new.

Mario: Exactly, hopefully they learn something new and that’s what the whole idea is trying to. There’s a soft slogan that I like to say. There’s a lot of artists, painters and clothing designers that they’re all trying to make sure our cultures, our heritage, are being seen. I’m trying my best to make sure our people are being heard and by incorporating things like that, you know, that’s how I’m doing that.

Bryce: Right, and for a long time you couldn’t do that. So, I remember talking about Link Ray and he was one of the first Native guitarists and he couldn’t express his culture and even got banned from the radio station.

Mario: *hahaha* Yeah dude! I think he’s still the only person to have an instrumental track banned from the radio because they thought it would insight violence. And I love that documentary. Any time I get a chance to jump on that soap box, I tell people watch Rumble! That’s such a good movie. You will understand how, like, blues is incorporated into Native songs.

Bryce: Yeah, cause Native Americans and African Americans went through a lot of the same traumas and stuff like that.

- Mario: Yeah dude!
- Bryce: So, it's good that you're able to express yourself and your culture now through even little Easter eggs.
- Mario: And then my music... I just splashed coffee all over my glasses. It's all good it happens all the time. But, like, through my music I try to incorporate where I grew up north central Montana, the highline. I talk about Fort Belknap in a lot of my songs and like growing up in Fort Belknap mixed with like blues lore and mythology like Robert Johnson.
- Bryce: Yeah, like the crossroads?
- Mario: Yeah! The crossroads and selling your soul to the devil and I try to incorporate all of that and incorporate my cultural upbringing and mix it all together and create some type of goulash.
- Bryce: That's really cool, because you get to blend two cultures that are similar in a lot of ways and honoring both in that kind of spectrum. It's cool to be open to that and be in that kind of realm. You've been pretty vocal on youth and other native youth and youth in general to get into guitar building, or guitars or music and what would you have to say to those youth, and native youth in general, who want to strive for that? Cause there is always that push to go into science, which isn't a bad thing, but people often overlook the music side.
- Mario: Yeah, you know it's simple, like I say this all the time, it's nothing too deep, but it's, if my country butt can do it, you can too. You know what I mean? Like considering what I do now, like making pedals and screen printing, like, I didn't even know how to do that at one point in time. It's just having the will to do so and being resilient.
- Bryce: Trial and error.
- Mario: Yeah, trial and error. You fail, don't completely give up. If you fail that's okay, take some time to just breathe, because sometimes we immerse ourselves into so much of what we are doing.
- Bryce: Right, we forget to look up.
- Mario: Yeah, it becomes normalized some of the stuff you know? That happens to me a lot and there's moments where I mess something up and then I have to stop, and I have to breathe, chill out, calm down sometimes and by the time I take that time to chill out, I look at it and 90 percent of the time I can fix that issue. There's that little slim few times where I can't, and you just throw it out and keep going.

- Bryce: Yeah, sometimes you just got to step back and look at it from a different angle.
- Mario: Yeah, for people who want to get into this game, you know, it's not all easy. You are going to have those moments where you're like, am I doing the right thing? I've been doing this for almost 6 years now, wait, no yeah, about 6 years because I started around this time of the year (Summer) and I still have those moments. Like, am I on the right path? Then I'll get a message from somebody, like this interview for instance, like, that right there and what's going on here inspires me to keep moving forward. To keep pushing and getting asked to do these different podcasts or chit chatting with random people that I never talk to. That inspires me and tells me that I'm doing something. So, if I can do it, anybody can. Really, like honestly, really. Like I don't even know how to run a MacBook Pro or anything like that, but I can make something outta nothin'.
- Bryce: It's like one of my music teachers always said, "practice, practice, practice," which I always hated, but now I understand it!
- Mario: That's the worst! You're like awwwww for reals!?
- Bryce: That's all it takes?!
- Mario: That's all I have to do?! Ahhhhhh!
- Bryce: Alright, better get to it.
- Mario: There's a lot of times throughout this entire journey that, you know, I sit down and I'm having an anxiety attack. Sometimes you get to that point and, fuck I'm not going to sugar coat it, it's freakin' scary. I get to that point where I'm like, ohhhh my god am I doing this correctly? And there's other points where I have like severe imposter syndrome.
- Bryce: Right, yeah, I have that a lot even within this program.
- Mario: Other than Mike, I don't know any other people, like native people, building pedals, amps, guitars, all this weird stuff that I do. Like deep down in my heart I know this is the place for me, but in my head it's like, what are you doing? There are so many points in time where I had internal battles. So hopefully if anybody hears this and listens to this, know that you aren't alone in all of this because no matter who you are, man, because you're going to have some sort of struggle internally. Well, that's how I feel and that's my experience.
- Bryce: Yeah, we're our own worst critics.

- Mario: Exactly, there's been so many points in time where it's just like, what are you doing? Like, the voice in my head, but I don't know if I'm just going crazy throughout the years, but it's just like, what are you doing? You're screwing this up. You're doing this wrong, blah blah blah, you know? Usually, it happens when something cool happens.
- Bryce: Yeah, like do you deserve this?
- Mario: Exactly, I was talking to someone that works at Zvex, you ever hear about them? They're an effects pedal company. One of their famous pedals is called the fuzz factory. It's a very, very cool fuzz pedal, but I was chit chatting with one of their guys, like a couple of months ago, and I've been talking to this guy for a couple of days and this dude is like, "oh yeah, I work for Zvex." In my head I'm freaking out and he's a super nice guy, but in my head I'm just like, you don't belong here you're not to that level. One thing that I've learned is don't compare yourself to somebody else.
- Bryce: Because they are always doing different things.
- Mario: Right, like I myself with Minor Glitch Electronics cannot compare myself with, like, Zvex and that's what happened. And I got into my head so bad, but that's what happens you just got to keep moving and got to be... REZilient.
- Bryce: HAHA nice pun!
- Mario: You gotta use that INJUNuity
- Bryce: *laughs* man you shoulda been a teacher!
- Mario: Double whammy! I'm a Dad, dude, that's where it comes from.
- Bryce: The dad puns never get old.
- Mario: Well to my family they do.
- Bryce: But to us they don't. On that note I think we'll close it out.
- Mario: Cool man.
- Bryce: Thanks for coming on and coming down and being a part of this interview.
- Mario: Anytime thanks for having me. I love moments like this, and hangout with my friends and bs into some microphones and hopefully inspire other cats.

Interview with Sarah Singer

The second interview was with Sarah Singer. Sarah Singer is Navajo (Diné), from Kearns, Salt Lake City, Utah, and I first met Sarah through her awesome sister Meg. Meg and I first met at the Standing Rock pipeline protest back in 2016, and she helped us with navigating the camp. At the time, she was a student at Montana State in the NAS program and we were able to connect after that through different clubs and events held by the Native American Studies department. When I first started my thesis, I was in the process of looking for people I could interview, and I remembered that I saw Meg and her family bring the “Sun Dance Opera” to Bozeman. So, I asked Meg if I could interview her and her whole family. She had the idea and invited me down to come to meet them all in person in Utah. Meg, Sarah, and her brothers James and Cameron all live in Salt Lake City, Utah. I drove down and was able to meet them all and hang out for a week. Little did I know, Meg and I would become family after this week. The whole Singer family is a talented bunch. Their parents were wonderful hosts and were able to tell me a lot about their history and who they are; whether it is Meg with her public speaking skills, James with his incredible voice, or even Cameron who can play guitar and sing. I was lucky and privileged enough to see Sarah perform an Opera piece for her graduation from Weber State University, and it was phenomenal. Anyone looking for a great vocalist should hire Sarah. Spending a week with the Singers is by far one of my favorite memories of my college experience.

The interview with Sarah followed the same questions in Mario’s interview, but it was freer-flowing, and she was open to me asking questions that were not on the prompt. Inherently I was enthralled with the world of opera as not many people get access to what is happening in that

genre of music or not much of its history. Sarah was kind enough to dive deep into the problems surrounding opera and even talk about the racism and shaming she faced as a singer. Like many others, Sarah started in the choir, and her teachers pointed out to her that she had a great voice and that she could be in opera, and it all took off for her there. Later in life, Sarah was able to major in music with an emphasis on opera, and that is where her exploration with Native opera began.

Bryce: We'll get started here. Can you introduce yourself and tell us who you are and where you're from as a beginning point?

Sarah: Oh sure. So, my name is Sarah Singer. I am from Salt Lake City, Utah, uh, I grew up here. I never moved away. I've always been in Utah and I, uhm, graduated in 2018, the summer of 2018, from Weber State University with a degree in music, specifically vocal performance opera and that was my life for 6 long years, and yeah. I don't know. My intro into music has been, music has always been in my life, and I knew it was something that I wanted to pursue and now that the world is falling apart it seems even more unlikely. But it's just like, I don't know, there's not a whole lot to me. I went to school and now I'm done.

Bryce: So, what got you into choir and into the whole classical realm of the music scene?

Sarah: So, the classical part was just that my voice, uhm, is much more classically inclined. It has a very natural vibrato and very open tone and much more... they call it legit in Broadway. They call it more legit, the fabricated right sound for musical theatre. It's just a lot more naturally pretty, uhm, and since my voice just naturally tended to go with that, a lot of my teachers that I had in high school, and post high school, my teachers said, "Well, your voice does this and you should look into this," and I was like, "Oh okay." I have always been more inclined towards that anyway cause when you're singing with any music you're like, oh yeah, I want to sing this cause I can do it. I sound like the person I'm singing. So, I always liked more legit music theatre and old timey stuff and that was on my pathway to opera, and when I went to school I wasn't even thinking about opera. I was thinking like, oh, I really like this art song German leader and such, but my teacher was like, "Uh, you need to audition for Opera, like, yesterday." And I was like oh, okay, I guess I better go do that and from there just like started my opera career at Weber State where I was in every opera scene after that, every opera production we had and it was just opera, opera, opera until now. Like it's still that as far as it can be.

Bryce: What classical composers are your favorite in that genre and opera? And why are they you're favorite?

- Sarah: Classical music is so vast, like, term it classical and it's so vast and there's so much in like renaissance and baroque and romantic. So, people have so many options and are, like, well if I had to choose baroque it would be this person, or if I had to choose romantic it would be this person. So, it's hard to or for me to say if I have one favorite. But I think my favorite to sing was Mozart. Like, my voice was the kind of voice that he kind of wrote for, like, very lyrical, but also very agile and that was something I was able to do. So, I like Mozart a lot and I also like a lot of the more 20th century composers like Brahms and Marks and stuff like that. Really anything, but anything that has really long lyrical lines that my voice tends to be better on.
- Bryce: Yeah, it's always, like, I like those ones too. Like, when I was back in choir, we'd sing those ones. Like the Mozart ones always had so much range, from singing, from piano, to triple forte in two measures and you're just like, okay. It's really fun and it trained you really well.
- Sarah: It really does!
- Bryce: And if you're just sitting back and listening to them, it's kind of boring if you don't really understand it, but once you sing it, you're like, man that sounds great and I feel like it's one of those things you have to throw yourself into.
- Sarah: And the complexity behind it too. Like it's deceptively simple, but when you do get into the nitty gritty of it, you're like, oh my gosh I can't believe all these simple things mesh together and make this huge crazy thing.
- Bryce: Right, like, one line could transfer into 7th and 9th chords that you just didn't even hear before, and hearing these overtones and undertones, and you're just like, wow I'm nerding out over here, over this classical music, and it's one of the best things to do. It sets a good foundation for everything.
- Sarah: It does.
- Bryce: I used to bog down on it so much as a kid, "I don't know how people can listen to this stuff," and now I like, I get it and I'll be studying to it, and I find myself saying, "Man that was a really great piece and not even be studying anymore."
- Sarah: Right, yeah! That's exactly I feel about it too.
- Bryce: So, what musicians are you listening to today? Even if it's not classical, what have you been into yourself and what kind of genres besides classical do you gravitate towards?
- Sarah: So, I have been gravitating a lot towards west coast hip hop and rap cause when I graduate, I was like I don't want to think about classical music for a minute.

- Bryce: Yeah, once you're in that field you're like get me out for a little bit.
- Sarah: Yeah, you're just like, I don't want to think about anything. And for a while I wasn't listening to like anything. Like, I was specially like, I'm going to do podcasts. I'm going to do books on tape kind of thing, and I was just avoiding music and when I was slowly getting into it, I was like, okay, I want complete opposite of what I am capable of doing and stuff I haven't dove into super deep. So, I don't know I've been super into Kendrick Lamar lately and Travis Scott, and just, like, going back into early gangster rap too and especially Tupac. I really like Tupac a lot.
- Bryce: Yeah, he's one of my favorites too.
- Sarah: I don't know, there is just something about it, where it's like, I think another reason too, why I really wanted to get more into it, was because I feel like the classical scene is so hoity toity and very much classist and racist.
- Bryce: Whereas hip hop is the exact opposite.
- Sarah: Yeah, and there is beauty in this too, and you have to be so eloquent and you have to be smart to do rap. Not anybody can just do it.
- Bryce: Yeah, it's a lot harder than it looks.
- Sarah: Yeah, it's way harder than it looks. It's way hard. Like, even in opera when you have to do pitter patter stuff and you're, like, singing Italian super-fast, it's like rap, and those are the hardest parts and people had the hardest time with it. And it's like, okay imagine a whole album like that and every song you're doing like that.
- Bryce: And at different speeds and different cadences and stuff like that.
- Sarah: Yeah!
- Bryce: It throws me for a loop, people always say every song sounds the same in rap, but it doesn't. It varies per region and you go into Texas style rap like Travis Scott and you compare it to west coast and the Bay Area, and even the Bay Area and LA have way different sounds from each other.
- Sarah: Yeah, they do!
- Bryce: It's really interesting to dive deep into and it's a rabbit hole you'll never get out of once you start.
- Sarah: Yeah, no for real. So, I've been super into that, and a lot of the music I've been into when I was a teen. Like, I've been trying to get back into thinking about music I

actually liked and not being so analytical about it. So it's like, why did I like this music, like, why did I like Radiohead? Why did I like My Chemical Romance? Like, all my emo music. Like, it's the familiarity of it. It's like, "Oh yeah this is why I liked this." I'll go between two different opposites, like I need to listen to hard core rap right now or I want to reminisce, I need to listen to whoever right now.

Bryce: Yeah, my favorites will change every day with what I'm listening to, but I generally have a top 5. But it'll totally change when I see that artist live and I'll be like, "huh" and it'll change my perspective and that's why I love concerts so much and seeing as much as I can. That changes the perception of that album or whatever they are singing it can make it that much better or that much worse.

Sarah: And that's actually something I don't get into as much, is concerts; I mean, how many concerts come to Salt Lake first of all? I also have a thing about crowds, like, I'm good. I don't need to go into a crowd so, like, YouTube is cool.

Bryce: Yeah, I always have to prepare myself for that too. But for like concerts I'll sacrifice it. It'll be fine, I'll get lost in the music. It won't even matter that people are there, until I have people push me and I'm just eh, whatever.

Laughs

Sarah: Yeah, it's worth it.

Bryce: Yeah, it's worth it in the end for me. Supporting the artists is always good too.

Sarah: Yeah, that's true.

Bryce: How are concerts different in opera and classical compared to normal concerts and the standard? And what stereotypes have you come across in that whole genre? And how's that changed you?

Sarah: Opera is definitely rich people, and if they are not rich, they want to be. So, it's very classist, uhm, and there is a huge racial divide. Like, if you go to any opera, the audience you are performing to is almost completely white. Uhm, and that's something I noticed, and I mean that's something I always noticed, and it was jarring the first time and my whole opera career, it was just literally no one my age first of all, and no one here that is remotely brown, and it's just like this... I don't even know if they enjoy it. That's the other thing too.

Bryce: Right, it's like going to church on Sundays like a chore.

- Sarah: Yeah, like, they're like, "Oh we have to go Bahahaha (*rich/proper people laugh*)" and it's like, you guys say you like it but do you really?
- Bryce: Right, like do you understand what's going on or is it a dress up event?
- Sarah: And, then the ones that do understand it, uh, are pretty *sighs* they can be dicks about it and it's just like disappointing because it's a very off putting environment to be in. And even as a performer meeting, like, concert goers or performers afterwards, it's just like very off putting is the vibe you get, because you have to be... I mean the whiter you are, the better you have to be pretty well off. You have to dress nice, you have to act a certain way, you have to know when to clap, when not to clap, when to laugh, when not to laugh. It's very rigid compared to a normal concert. Cause, like, if it was going to go to an amphitheater that was playing a rock band people are like, "Oh we are going to sing with the band, we're going to dance, we're going to clap."
- Bryce: No one really cares unless you run into someone
- Sarah: Right, and in classical music it's like, "Oh my gosh they clapped in between the first movement and the second movement of the symphony, like *gasps* I can't believe they did that, like, how faux pas."
- Bryce: Right, next thing you know someone's going to come over and shine a little flashlight on you and say, "Get out."
- Sarah: Yeah! For real. It's pretty uptight. That's especially for symphonic music, orchestral. That's even more ridged than opera, cause at least in opera, there is a story going on where there are opportunities to clap after, or area to laugh at the scene going on, or to cry, or whatever. There is at least moments of emotional release, but even those have to be within the prescribed moment. So, it's like this weird in between of it's really hoity toity and it has to be set in a certain way, but it still has the freedom to have emotional expressions sometimes. So, opera is this weird in between medium.
- Bryce: What other stereotypes have you experienced in opera? Is there anything you've experienced being Native in opera that people weren't expecting? And being a brown person have you experienced any adversity in opera from other peers or other concert goers?
- Sarah: Not so much from concert goers, but definitely from my peers and my teachers. Not specifically because I'm native, but because I am a person of color and I'm ambiguously a person of color, like, I don't exactly look native. The opera world and classical world in general is just really racist. Like, a lot of the practices and a

lot of the operas that are still being performed have a lot of disturbing characters in them and there is a lot of houses especially in Europe that still do them.

Bryce: Wasn't there that French one or was it German that had black face not too long ago?

Sarah: Probably, yeah, it was probably *Sighs* the last one I heard of, that I was really fucking mad about, was the Hungarian National Opera performed *Porgy and Bess* and that opera stipulates that it has to be performed by an African American cast or black cast, like, it's in the book. You cannot get rights to those stories or the score to perform it, and the whole cast was white, and they signed a waiver saying, "Oh yeah, we're black," and they performed it anyway.

Bryce: Did they get a huge fine or anything like that?

Sarah: No. I think America picked up the story and they were like "Uhm, you shouldn't have done that, but it's Europe they don't care. They're just like, "Oh well, whatever."

Bryce: Yeah, just brush it under and say it didn't happen kind of thing?

Sarah: Exactly, but that's an extreme example. But things like that happen on the micro scale of it. It's happened to me. It's happened in a general sense, where it's okay if we do yellow face, or it's okay we do this character like this, or, uhm, it's okay if we don't talk about the context of, like, of why this caricature is wrong or why this stereotype, this trope of a race is wrong. That conversation isn't a conversation. It's been a conversation lately because of the climate right now post George Floyd, uhm, a lot of opera houses are like, "We stand with our black opera singers." But then it's like okay...where are your black directors? Where are your black board members? Where are your black crew members? Where are your black stage managers? Where are they?

Bryce: Yeah, they are nowhere.

Sarah: Right, they're nowhere. It's because they've done such a good job of pushing out anybody who can't afford to be in this business. It costs so much money to be an opera singer.

Bryce: Right, people don't think it does and all you have to have is a good voice and a teacher.

Sarah: Right, but that's only one part. You better have a fucking trust fund, like, seriously.

Bryce: Especially for those vocal lessons.

- Sarah: Not only for those vocal lessons, but they want you to do like summer interns and, like, summer programs. They don't want you to them here in the States either. They want you to go to Europe and they want you to do a couple at least before you start doing your masters, or while you're doing you masters. So, that's like 4, 5, 6 years of summers programs and they cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$10,000 a summer, for like, 3 weeks.
- Bryce: And that's not accounting your flight over there and everything too.
- Sarah: No, it doesn't count your flight, doesn't count your food. Sometimes it doesn't count your lodging. Like, that's just, like, tuition and lesson prices. It's crazy. You have to be so rich.
- Bryce: Do they give scholarship opportunities or anything like that for those things?
- Sarah: Some of them do, like some of the bigger summer programs do, uhm, but there is not very many. But you have to be really good to get those ones. There are a lot of small, like a lot of small summer programs, that are great, but they don't offer any financial assistance. Like I've auditioned for a few and I got accepted into all of them, but they were like, "Unfortunately we don't have any financial assistance and we need 5,000 dollars up front and then you can pay the other 5 when you get here." And I'm like uhhhhh...
- Bryce: Like how do I get 5 grand when I don't even have it?
- Sarah: Yeah! How do I get 5 grand when I'm 36,000 dollars in debt for school. I can't work cause I'm traveling anywhere from 2-5 hours a day?
- Bryce: Yeah, how do they expect you to pay that?
- Sarah: Yeah, it's crazy. So that class divide is super there. The racial divide is something they don't want to acknowledge or really talk about. And the times I had talked about it with, like, my teachers and my fellow students, it was bad. It was like... *sighs* it was so hard. I wish I had the fire I have now to go back and talk about it, but I was in the midst of all of it and I was in the system. And I was like I'm trying to make it through this program.
- Bryce: Right, like you don't want to be perceived as doing something wrong and potentially get kicked out, or get an F based on your moral beliefs.
- Sarah: Yeah! Mmhmm, and I don't believe my grade was ever, well I hope it wasn't ever in jeopardy, but like my relationships with the teachers, my relationships with my fellow students, whether the teachers wanted to help me out, I think was put into jeopardy because of some of the stuff I brought up. I think it glossed over

eventually, but, like, that's crazy that that was even a thing. Like, that shouldn't have been a thing that happened at all.

Bryce: Yeah, that shouldn't have even happened in general. Moving on from that and segueing into another topic. Has there been any Native artists in opera that, I know you have been working on something with Meg and James with a Native opera as well? Has there been any other artists? And could you talk about your Native opera and who wrote it and what was your inspiration to bring that back? And tell that story for our audience?

Sarah: Sure! Uhm, so when I was first getting into the Opera program, like, I was like, oh, I think I'm going to do opera, so like, I better see if there are any other Native opera singers out there. So, I just googled Native opera singers and a couple came up but none of whom I recognized. But this Native opera play came up and I was like, oh, this looks interesting. It's called the *Sun Dance Opera* and it was written by, well it was co-written by, Zitkala-Sa who was Yankton, Lakota. I don't want to say the wrong one. And then, uh, William F. Hanson from Brigham Young University. I kind of was just like, oh that's cool there's an opera. It didn't have a whole lot of information, so I wasn't exactly sure what it was. But my sister, Meg, was in her master's program at Westminster College in Salt Lake, and I was telling her about it because the women composer, Zitkala-Sa, she was also a prolific writer and she was like, "Oh yeah, I've heard of her." And she [Meg] went to go to the teacher that assigned her Zitkala-Sa and that teacher, Katie Evans, was like, "Oh yeah, I did my whole thesis about that opera and Zitkala-Sa and that opera and such," and my sister was like, "Oh wow. I need to know more about this lady, and I need know more about this opera and what's the dealio." So, she decided to do her thesis on it and from there she invited me to do research with her. We went down to Brigham Young University and went to the library there, with the special records collection, and we just looked through the old microfilms of Hansen's handwritten score and clippings and such about it. Because that's her thesis, and my sister wanted a lecture recital as part of it, that motivated me to be like, let's get some of this music together, uhm, print it out nicely, so we can perform it. And so that's how my brother and I got involved with the performing side of it. And from that lecture recital we performed it in a couple of different places, a couple different symposiums. Uhm, the experience working on that was very telling, I think, of how Natives are viewed in the opera world. There isn't a lot of Native characters or tropes in the opera world. There is in grand opera, which is like early 20th century, late 19th century kind of like B class opera. They aren't great, but they aren't terrible, but they are kind of just there. The music isn't great, like, they are kind of hokey, the music isn't amazing, but it's just like that cheesy feel good music that was really prevalent in American music in the early 20th century. And a big, big thing was Native Americans and so I always thought it was interesting that this very prolific writer Zitkala-Sa, co-wrote this grand opera and it's actually so much more than a grand opera, like it's... the parts that Hansen wrote, which are pretty obvious, they're

pretty hooky and cheesy, but the parts that she worked on that were actually inspired by Native melodies and such they are really pretty. They sound pretty stereotypically Native, but you can tell the difference and the care that went into them, and where was I going with that? Oh, the experience. Natives in the opera experience have been sectioned off into this side, lesser than part, of the opera scene. It's not great enough to make the main stage, as far as I know the only opera that has, uhm, ever made it to a main stage has been a Puccini opera, what's it called, *La Fanciulla Del West*. It's about this cowboy girl, so it's out in the west. There's gun slingers and stuff and there's two Native characters on the side and they sing like 3 lines.

Bryce: Yeah, so not even main characters.

Sarah: No, it's not.

Bryce: What are those main... or for those that don't know, those Broadway stops, for opera? So, what are the mainstages for opera today?

Sarah: So, the main stages here in the U.S. are the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and the Chicago Lyric Opera in Illinois. L.A. has one, I forget what that one is called exactly, uhm, so those are the three biggest ones here in the U.S., but there's like the Royal Opera in England. There's, what's that one, Teatro Alla Scala in Italy. There's a couple in Austria and Germany. Uhm, Europe has a ton of opera houses of various sizes. I think the U.S. definitely has bigger ones in terms of compacity, but there's not as many. So, a smaller opera house would be like, I don't even know if Montana has one.

Bryce: No, we do not.

Sarah: If it did it would technically be a small opera house.

Bryce: That would be a first for Montana.

Laughs

Sarah: But, like, the opera here in Utah, that's definitely, like, a small scale one. Uhm, so like, if you can make it to the big ones, like the MET or LA or Royal Opera or La Scala, those are like they're doing good. Those are the ones that are gonna be performed over and over again year after year.

Bryce: The timeless ones?

Sarah: Yeah, the timeless ones.

- Bryce: Okay, yeah sorry. I had to distract because I was a little bit curious about that.
- Sarah: Yeah, no you're good. So, like the Sundance Opera, they wouldn't have ever been on any of these big stages. It was definitely on a small stage here in Utah when it first came out in 1912 or 13 and then it traveled to New York as well. It was also a side, very small B theatre, but it didn't make it anywhere big. I don't think it was meant to get anywhere bigger than that. It was just this, "let's just do it here," kind of thing.
- Bryce: It wasn't supposed to make its way over into Europe kind of thing or anything like that?
- Sarah: No. Surprisingly, some German companies have picked it up. But I have noticed that German companies and German people in general are just very intrigued by Native culture.
- Bryce: Which is weird, cause they are on complete opposite sides.
- Sarah: Yeah, its super weird. Like a couple years ago this German guy reached out to Meg and I to talk about the Sundance Opera and I was like, "Uhm, I don't know what to tell you. So just talk to my sister." So, I just let her handle it. But I think, like, that's the second or third guy that had done that to her. Like, a German guy that had reached out, it was weird, and it was this really, really obscure opera.
- Bryce: That's so interesting. I don't know how that gets across over there. It's just like mind boggling to me how it gets over there. It gets spread so easily.
- Sarah: Yeah, it's super weird.
- Bryce: What else has Zitkala-Sa done? I have read one of her books, that has the essays from when she was younger. It was really a great book. It's crazy to see how she was able to, she was able to move through boarding school era, and being taken from her parents, and being totally transformed. But how's her activism shaped how you guys work that whole opera?
- Sarah: Uhm, I think because she is known for more of her, like, her activism on behalf of Native peoples. Like she was really big for the Native vote, like, she was one of the main people to help get that movement going. The opera was like a side note or, like, a paragraph in this long life of hers, and she co-writes an opera, and it's like she didn't just help co-write it, it was basically a front for tribes to perform their own sacred dances.
- Bryce: Right, the OIA didn't really allow that back then.

- Sarah: No, they didn't, so she was like how can we do this? So, she incorporated the actual Sundance into the opera. So, let's circumvent this stupid rule and so that these people out in Duchesne can do their Sundance and that's, like, so smart and that does not get talked about. Yeah, so I think for when we were working on that, I know for me, I just want her to be given the credit she deserves for, like, the work she did on it. For not only the music, but also the work she did behind the scenes on getting, uhm, the story out, but also having Natives and giving the Natives a place to perform and a venue to do their own religious acts. Especially in a time where that wasn't allowed. That's a pretty ballsy move.
- Bryce: Right, cause wasn't all of her cast all Native too? Back when she was in that touring cast with... what's his name Hansen? Weren't they pretty okay with that?
- Sarah: Yeah, so most of the cast was Native. The whole chorus, which is a pretty big, chorus in the score. They kind of act like how they do in Greek tragedies, how the chorus talks to the character, but like as one voice. They kind of do that and they have their sections where they do their stuff, they're performing, uhm, but the main characters who actually did all the main acting were all white. So, I don't think any Native performer actually did that. But some of the side characters and the chorus, which was definitely a big chorus, was Native.
- Bryce: Right and then you guys kind of flipped that where you guys, where you and James were the main characters, and the chorus was mainly white right?
- Sarah: Yeah, mmhmm, as far as I know. Well, I know for sure there has been one other Native who has sung music from the Sundance Opera. Uhm, he was a Navajo tenor. Megan would know, but I can't remember. So, he did stuff from it. But as far as I know, I think I'm the only Native woman that has performed any of the music from that.
- Bryce: Which, is pretty great.
- Sarah: Yeah, it's pretty cool. I mean if there are other Native women that have performed something from it, like, you totally get the accolades. Like, I'm not getting anything from this, but it's just like kind of cool. Like, wow this was written by a Native woman and a 100 years later I might be the first Native woman actually performing it.
- Bryce: Right, I'm sure that's one of the goals she had in mind eventually. Knowing how great she was with her writings and everything, and reading and everything, it's probably one thing she thought of down the line. But, has there been any other Native artists that you have been into besides Zitkala-Sa?
- Sarah: Uhm

- Bryce: Or any activist musicians in general?
- Sarah: As far as music not so much, I don't know why either. I just haven't really felt, like, the desire to look into it too much. I just think that's a me thing, I don't think it's because it's bad. I just haven't done it yet. But I definitely try and fill my social media feed with tones of different activists and Native activists. Uhm, so I think I'm influenced by that a lot, but as far as the music part probably not so much.
- Bryce: Do you think you'll be performing the musical...or opera any time soon in the future? Or have hopes to?
- Sarah: I don't know. So, after I graduated. Here's another thing about opera is, well going back it's classist, it's racist, it's fat phobic, it's all these things and I have done a lot of auditioning after leaving Weber. I wasn't auditioning for schools. I'm not sure if I want to go back to school at all. But I auditioned for like the opera chorus here like 3 times and I didn't get in any time and it's a small opera chorus.
- Bryce: Right, so they don't have the choosing.
- Sarah: Yeah no, so if you don't have the money thing and you want to perform opera, you have to go where the opera is at. You can stay in your state, but you'd have to stay in the capital and the performing is going to be slim unless you live in New York, Chicago, or L.A. and these big cities, and it's like I'm not moving to New York City because I can't afford to move to New York City.
- Bryce: Yeah, not the average person can, and not even the average musician can at that point can either.
- Sarah: Exactly, and even if I went, I don't know if they would even consider me because there is the element of you have to look the part. You have to be beautiful; you have to be skinny; you have to be blonde and white, and or if you aren't blonde and white you have to be so good to make up for it, uhm, and I'm honest enough to say that I'm not good enough to make up for how I look which sucks, but...
- *laughs*
- Bryce: Yeah, which shouldn't exist.
- Sarah: Which shouldn't exist! Uhm, it sucks because going back to a lot of the big main opera stages, the MET, the one in L.A., the Royal Opera House, they are all very beautiful singers physically. They have great instruments, but there are definitely other singers who can out-perform any them.
- Bryce: That just don't get any attention based on their looks.

- Sarah: Exactly, whether because maybe they're black, or maybe they're latinx, or they're native, or they're fat, or they're not conventionally beautiful. It's in the eye of the beholder, but the eye is all the same eye right now. There's no room for nuance yet and I don't know if there ever will be.
- Bryce: When did that elitism start within opera? I know it's kind of always been there. Has there been any instances of people sneaking in? And not based on looks, like you said, and is there been any instances of that? Or has it been pretty elitist from what you've seen at least on the main stages?
- Sarah: It's been pretty elitist the whole time, uhm, I'm thinking back to, like, back to opera singers who have paved the way for black singers or women singers, and they all had to fight tooth and nail where they were and even then, it wasn't enough sometimes. Eventually they had to conform in one way. Whether that was to their detriment or not. But that, definitely has been something that has always been there.
- Bryce: Is it the people in charge of the Opera houses who set who's being in that opera? Or who chooses those roles?
- Sarah: I think it depends. I think it's a mixture of who's on the board of directors, so who's funding the opera; who's on the artistic board, whether that's the artistic board of the house of the particular opera. It comes down to the director, it comes down to costuming, it comes down hair and make-up, it comes down to everyone. It's so ingrained in every single part of opera world, you can't get away from it. Every single person that has any kind of power know that, "oh you don't fit this, you don't fit this mold that I need you to fit into. You can't be in it."
- Bryce: Okay, so it's basically whoever has the most money has the biggest stake and gets to decide who's actually in the role and how they want to be perceived by the audience?
- Sarah: Exactly. I think a good example of that isn't so much about a Native experience, but a women's experience. There's a lot of opera singers, and specifically male opera singers, who are getting ousted by other women singers, or employees, or stage crew, and they are coming out and saying, "Hey this dude molested me in the back," or, "He raped me and he did this or that," and these people that are high up, so like Placido Domingo, a tenor, one of the greatest opera singers of all time has a flurry of allegations of sexual misconduct and he is one of the greatest singers of all time. He was the head of the L.A. opera. He artistic directs everywhere, and everybody was so scared of him that they allowed his power of him being a man and a great singer, and this great artist to ruin everything for everyone else.
- Bryce: Right, they made him look like a superhero and basically you can't touch him kind of thing.

- Sarah: Exactly, it's like, oh you can't grab my fit in the back dressing room anymore, so you're gone. And that's happening all over the place, and it's happening more in America, and again in Europe they don't give a fuck, so it's like.
- Bryce: Right, a totally different standard for singers.
- Sarah: Yeah. Another opera singer, Antonio Grigolo, same allegations of sexual misconduct and literally on the stage of an opera house, but he was like groping a female singer that was not scripted and they let him go. But in Europe he's still the darling of their universe over there. There's this double standard of, like, it's okay to do it here, but not there. And nobody can get on the same page about anything. They can't get on the same page about sexual misconduct, they can't get on the same page about black face, yellow face, it's like there's nowhere to run.
- Bryce: It's like these singers with horrible morals are able to go out perform wherever they want.
- Sarah: Mhmh, and I think you said it right when you said they think these people are super humans, because the people that are devoted to them are like, "No! Domingo would never do that he has a voice of an angel! He would never do that."
- Bryce: Right, and people are just blinded by it, but the facts are there.
- Sarah: Because these people idolize these people, that do have a gift. It is kind of superhuman to be an opera singer. You are literally amplifying your voice to a huge auditorium. It's just you.
- Bryce: Yeah, there's no microphone or anything.
- Sarah: Yeah, and to do that, it feels like you are on top the world. You feel like a fucking boss. Like I'm so loud, I'm so proud, I'm so cool, I can do anything and the bigger the house you go to, the more, I think the bigger the ego comes with it. So, there's just so many things wrong with the opera world. It's hard to be, like, it's fine there's this one part that's great. It's like, no.
- Bryce: There's a lot that's wrong.
- Sarah: Yeah, there's a lot that's wrong. Yikes.
- Bryce: Yeah, I can totally understand not wanting to go back.
- Sarah: Mmhmm.

- Bryce: I know when you guys came here, it was a really good opportunity, and to see it, and that's when I was first starting music school, I think you did it 2014 if I'm correct?
- Sarah: I think it was 2015 because I had just finished a big opera and it was a couple weeks later, I went up to Montana.
- Bryce: Yeah, that was really cool to see, because that was one of my first instances of seeing an opera. When I was in the music program, we had a concert requirement go to 12 of them.
- Sarah: Yeah, like 12 a semester!
- Bryce: Yeah, like that's one every week.
- Sarah: Yeah and then bring us your tickets, and then at the end of the semester you're like, "I need to go to 10 concerts in one week because I didn't go!" Oh yeah, I've done that.
- Bryce: Yeah, I remember I failed one of those, and it's like how do you fail a class based on concerts? I didn't go to two of them.
- *Laughs*
- Sarah: It's stupid ugh.
- Bryce: Yeah the music program, I could rant about that.
- Sarah: Oh yeah, I think every music program should be ranted about.
- Bryce: Yeah, so what are your plans for the future? What are you thinking about and what are your plans? What are your long term goals?
- Sarah: So, my long term goals. That's something I haven't thought a whole lot about. For so long I was like, I need to get done with school, I need to get done with school, and then school is over, and I don't know what to do now. I had this goal of I was going to do this and go right onto my masters, just get it done and blah blah blah and then I got hit after hit of rejection. Which, eh, is like a normal thing for any performer. You're going to get rejections. But when it's like there are 2 opportunities in Utah and you don't get either, you're like, okay well what am I going to do now? Unless I leave anyway. So, I kind of have been, like, I don't know what I exactly want to do, besides working and having money for the first time in forever which is nice. Cause when I was in school, I wasn't working at all, I was commuting and going to school so much anyway. So, it's nice to have money.

- Bryce: It's nice to actually save and go do things every now and again.
- Sarah: Yeah, it's really nice. We'll see how long it lasts through with the way things go, but we'll keep hoping. But as far as the long term goals as far as music, I do want to keep singing. I don't know if it's going to be opera. I don't even know if it will be professionally, but I want to get back to a point where I want to sing because it makes me feel good rather than...
- Bryce: Not because you have to?
- Sarah: Yeah. It's not like it's an assignment where I have to be like, I have to learn these many lines today, and I have to learn this melody and blah blah blah. I have to work on this choral piece, and like, that's what music was like for so long that I don't know how to look at music and just go sing this song for fun. Let's just play this song, sing and don't care what it sounds like. Just like go for it.
- Bryce: Right. That's exactly why I left the music school because it was turning into that. Like, oh my god it's not even fun anymore. It took me like a year to get back into it and it's fun again.
- Sarah: Yeah! I'm waiting on two years now, but hopefully soonish it'll happen again. Slash long term goal is to get singing back to where it's like, oh yeah this is fun, this is why I went into this, not just because I'm good ha-ha. But because I like it, because I feel good doing it, and
- Bryce: Something you're passionate about
- Sarah: Yeah, and I definitely, that passion is not around right now, but I'm hoping it'll come back slowly, and I think it has a bit, but it's just really slow going.
- Bryce: Right, there's always a buildup and you'll get there eventually. But it'll happen sooner or later. At least music is around 24/7.
- Sarah: That's true.
- Bryce: It won't ever leave.
- Sarah: Yeah.
- *Laughs*
- Sarah: Yeah.
- Bryce: But it's been great talking to ya.

Sarah: I hope this was helpful and wasn't terrible.

Laughs

Bryce: Definitely not, thank you for being able to talk with me today!

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION:

My goal is to continue working on the decolonization and indigenization of music in my next venture, which is to pursue a Ph.D. in American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona. The intention is for me to add to my thesis work by adding chapters on rock and roll and hip hop. Some musicians have yet been discovered and I want to continue to broaden my horizon with as many indigenous artists I can find. The thesis presented aims to create a class that goes along with this research, so this knowledge can be passed down to future generations. The indigenous music class is not complete, as I have not been able to conduct proper research on genres such as rock and hip hop. This course is based on the Intro To Native American Studies class syllabus created by Walter Fleming, my goals in using his format is to make sure that it follows the structure of introductory classes. By creating this course, it can be freely taught at any level. I would like to see this course of Indigenizing and Decolonizing Music implemented at higher level institutions because of the lack of representation people of color get at these levels. The three departments I have in mind when looking at this research and teaching it are Native American Studies, History, and Music. With it being taught in multiple departments, the strategy is not to pigeonhole it into a stereotype and have it only be available for a diversity credit. It is in my interest to see future students take courses on race, but not have such a negative outlook. By inserting it in these other departments, it shows a step in the right direction of acknowledging race and moving forward.

My course also demonstrates that the people of color (mainly indigenous and native) are seen, heard, and validated within other areas of academia. Inclusivity is a necessary part of the higher education experience. To show this, professors and university programs must take the lead

when the university itself misses out on opportunities. Indigenizing Western spaces is a necessity for higher education because of inclusion and because their voices are valid. As non-natives, we have brushed this fact under the rug for too long. Even with starting this project too late, it is better later than never. Courses like Indigenizing and Decolonizing music should already be implemented in universities but sadly are not. I have started creating this course, but my goal is to finish my: “Introduction to Native American Music from 1870 to the present” course after I graduate. I would also like to acknowledge that I might not be the first person to do this. I am sure other educators are working or trying to work on a project that is similar to this one.

In further explorations of this topic of decolonizing and indigenizing music, I hope to go deeper into my favorite genre of rock and roll. I hope to explore its connections to blues and the influence Native Americans and African/Black Americans had on the genre by exploring it. Rock and roll is as American as it gets. The sub-genres within rock and roll and blues are fascinating. Exploring them more in future work will allow me to expand on my course that I have made and make a specific rock and roll history course geared towards Native Americans and Indigenous people in that industry. Hopefully, with expanding my knowledge in different genres and being more specific within modern genres, students will be more inclined to sign up for classes. In the next few pages, I will provide an example of my structure for my class project that people are free to use at their will:

Introduction to Indigenous Music from 1870 to Present

Course Description:

Introduction to Indigenous Music from 1870 to present presents a timeline of how Native American and Indigenous peoples have evolved over time musically and to talk about social justice issues and activism within Indian Country and how that has evolved as well. The course meetings are featured with lectures, open discussions, guest speakers, student presentations, film screenings, group work, reviews, exams, and essays. This class is meant to be a fun learning experience and get students involved within the local music scene and hopefully experience something new or learn something new along the way. Being involved in the community will promote students to go to music shows, indigenous cultural events if allowed to by members in that community, indigenous or native lectures in the university and around town/state.

Texts:

Bainbridge, Catherine. *Rumble: The Indians Who Changed the World*. (Free will watch in class)

Lee, Kimberly. Johnson, Jan. Berglund, Jeff *Indigenous Pop Native American Music from Jazz to Hip Hop* (\$30 on amazon)

Troutman. John M. *Indian Blues American Indians And The Politics of Music, 1879-1934* (\$14-\$24 depending on where you get it)

Course Objectives:

Intro to Indigenous Music has a couple objectives. One, is to learn how Native Americans/First Nations and indigenous peoples have adapted to being assimilated into society through music and how they were able to make that music their own. Another goal is to learn about activism within these communities and how artists were able to use their platform or be oppressed even while having a platform. Another objective is having the students involved not only in the classroom but in the community as well and actively show what knowledge students have gained. NASX and activism are always linked together, and it is vital that students learn this.

Learner Outcomes:

Upon conclusion of successful completion in this course the student will have:

- Developed a broad knowledge of major historic eras involving Native American History
- Presented knowledge of and opinions about Native American issues, music, and culture
- Studied and practiced multiple conceptual frameworks suitable for comprehending Indigenous Music and the history surrounding it
- Situated Native American and Indigenous issues past and present within historical, legal, cultural, political and economic contexts

Course Requirements and Grading:

Final grades will be determined based on one exam, two essays, one project, weekly discussion posts, and participation in class discussions. The head instructor is in charge of all final grades and can make adjustments to assignments throughout the semester.

Exam 100 points

Essays 100 points each X 2 for 200 points

Weekly discussion posts 10 points each X12 for 120 Points

Weekly participation in class 10 points X12 for 120 Points

Final grades are determined on the average of the exams and reading responses. Grade distribution is as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	GPA
A	90-100	4.0
B	80-89	3.0
C	70-79	2.0
D	60-69	1.0
F	0-59	0.0

GRADES ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE!

Assignments:

Discussion post:

Discussion post prompts are posted weekly on D2L and are meant to be a visual learning guide for students. This guide will have students answer questions that pertain to the weeks readings and hint towards what the discussion in class will be like for the week. Discussion posts are due the Sunday before the week at midnight. This discussion post is also meant to be where students can ask questions if students forget to ask them while in class or so they don't forget what is on their mind. Students should also feel free to interact with each other and share opinions, but they must be respectful towards each other and if a debate ensues, they must respect each other's opinion and any foul language will result in an F for that post. There is no toleration for hate speech, stereotypes and anything that resembles that.

Essay 1:

The initial essay is made to gauge where the student is in regard to Native American Studies, Native American music, culture and activism. This essay is a 3 paragraph essay format with a 700 word minimum and a 1000 word maximum. I also want the student to introduce themselves and tell me why they are interested in this course and what music interests they have in general. This essay will be due by the end of the first week. It should be times new roman font size 12, 3 paragraph essay formatting, and double spaced.

Essay 2:

The second essay is meant to be a 5 page research biography on a Native American, First Nations or Indigenous musical artist, group or band. This biography should cover their life from beginning to end or what they are doing present day. The biography essay can explore how this musician influenced the music industry they are in and/or how they use their platform for activism or how they were oppressed and not able to express themselves freely even being a musician. The formatting of this essay should be as follows: Times New Roman size 12 font, double spacing, 3 paragraph essay format minimum 5 page essay maximum 10 pages.

Project:

The project should be a power point presentation on the research biography essay. The goal is to make sure that the student knows the information presented on their essay inside and out. The majority of the power point should be memorized but can have flash cards for notes. Words on the power points should be minimal and should have more images instead. This presentation should last 5-8 minutes and have time for questions at the end so other students can get more in depth information about the artists presented. These will be presented the week before the final exam. If students have the same interest in the same artists, they can work together on the project, but the essays must remain separate and must maintain their own originality.

Test:

The test is a cumulative 50 question test. It is all multiple choice and has no short answer or essay questions. It will be the only test distributed during the semester and is not meant to be hard. This will be an overview of the artists, time periods, and activism talked about in class. The test will be graded out of 100. There will be a review for this test the week before the test, so students have time to study.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit opportunities will arise throughout the semesters. Students can attend a concert, lecture, powwow, presentation, club meeting etc. as long as it is indigenous lead or the artist themselves are indigenous. The student must have proof of a physical ticket of the event and should have a photo of them at the event if they cannot provide a ticket. The extra credit can have 10 points maximum and cover a missed discussion post or missed attendance week. If a student has turned in everything and shown up for all classes and has an A the extra credit cannot be used for this student.

Attendance & Participation:

Attendance in this class will not be recorded for a grade. You are an adult and expected to show up. If you do not attend, please email me a liable reason as to why you are not in attendance to class. Not showing up will only hurt yourself. If you are sick, please wear a mask or do not attend class and email me so I can keep you up to date on what was discussed in class. If you are on a sports team, club sport, or any extra circular activity and are missing due to an event I need to know all those dates beforehand, so I don't get confused on why you are missing so much class time and please have your coach or advisor sign these dates off as well. Participation is based on the discussion in class. I will base a conversation about the readings, musicians, theories, methods and history we learn about in our reading assignments. My goal is to have as much participation as possible and limit the lecture time so students can grasp what is fully in the readings. This not to say that there will not be any classes with lectures.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. You need to source all your outside research appropriately and your source formatting should be consistent. When in doubt source it. If caught plagiarizing or any form of cheating the student will automatically receive an F.

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignments & Due Dates
Week One	Syllabus How government banned culture Indian Removal	Chapters 1&2 in Indian Blues	Essay 1 due Sunday Sign up for presentation
Week Two	Boarding Schools and introduction to western music Musicians who are products of boarding schools	Chapter 3 Indian blues	Discussion post due Sunday
Week Three	American Indian Movement & Self Determination Native Musicians of the 70s	Indian blues chapter 5	Discussion post due Sunday
Week Four	The Indian Arts and Crafts Act 1990 Overview of Native Musicians	Rumble Documentary In Class	Discussion post due Sunday
Week Five	Montana Natives In Music Guest Speaker	Indigenous pop chapter 3	Discussion post due Sunday
Week Six	Indigenous People in Classical and Opera Zitkala-Sa's Influence	Indigenous pop chapter 1	Discussion post due Sunday
Week Seven	Indigenous people In Jazz Indigenous people in Blues	Indigenous Pop Chapters 2,3,	Discussion post due Sunday

Week Eight	Indigenous people in Rock & Metal	Indigenous Pop Chapters 4,5,6	Discussion post due on Sunday
	Indigenous People in Indie and Folk	Indigenous pop chapter 7	
Week Nine	Indigenous People in Hip Hop/R&B	Indigenous pop chapters 12, 13	Submit presentations
Week Ten	Presentations	No readings available	Discussion on presentations due Sunday
	Presentations		
Week Eleven	Presentations	No readings available	Final Papers Due
	Review for Final Exam		Continue discussion post on presentations and ask questions for final exam
Week Twelve	Final Exam	No readings available	Turn in any late work by the time of final exam

The finalization of this project has yet to see its day, but with a pursuit of a Ph.D. in mind, I hope to solidify this class. Implementing weekly outcomes and goals for students is the next step for this project. Along those lines, I will provide a more in-depth explanation of these assignments and how they help students' understanding. Furthermore, I hope to explore decolonization and indigenization throughout my career. These topics are evolving at a high rate and are never stagnant; I will always be changing, adding, or removing aspects in the class to keep with the world's progression. Native American Studies has taught me to never be complacent in my studies and to always keep working.

I realize that there are faults within my thesis that I hope to correct when working towards my Ph.D. The faults lie within explanations of decolonization and indigenization. I would like to expand further into these definitions as they are continually being challenged and changed. I want to expand more into my theory of how artists can decolonize and indigenize music. My worry with these terms (indigenization, decolonization) is how frequently they are evolving. By expanding more into an artist's history, I will be able to do this completely. The evolution of this work will be challenged as time moves on, and more musicians and artists become present. My ideas are also faulted with me being a non-native in Native American Studies. An outsider's perspective can have a dangerous influence on Native American Studies if it is not scrutinized by its curators. These ethics are always evolving as well, and if I want to stay connected with these communities, I have to abide by that and change with the ethics no matter what the circumstances are. There are faults within the works I have chosen as well, non-natives seem to have written more books on Native American musicians, and for the future, I hope to use mainly Native written books to help promote their views even further.

With the completion of my thesis, I have learned more than I ever intended, and I hope to continue learning not only from my professors and colleagues, but also from future and present students. The Native American Studies program at Montana State University will always hold a special place for me. I hope this paper has helped bridge the gap for students and the community around them who want to learn about native and indigenous music history. Native American Studies validity is unwavering and brutally honest as it should be. Music and Native American studies have been deprived of proper education and celebration in the school systems for decades, if not centuries. Native music deserves more credit than what is given to them. With classes and

research like this provided in our education systems, we can finally give that accreditation. Civilization must embrace the past to move forward, and the real history must be told to its fullest extent.

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