

MEDIATING INDIGENOUS GEOGRAPHIES: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF
CHICKASAW MEDIA

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INTRODUCTION

Cultural studies, whether anthropologic or geographic, underwent many changes in the last half century stemming from a desire to find new ways of thinking and new ways of understanding other cultures. From the civil rights movement and the counter-culture to globalization and the digital age, society as a whole experienced dramatic shifts during that time. These shifts led to a new attempt to understand how cultures operate because academics realized there was a problem with creating meaning in cultural studies because the traditional ways of thinking about other people were changing socially and politically. Previous ideas about non-Western cultures – commonly referred to as the ‘Other’ – changed because researchers began to re-evaluate how they conducted cultural studies. Technology from the digital age provides new tools for studying and representing culture. Mass media provides new global access to marginalized cultures and makes the so-called dominant society accessible. This serves as another form of contact and encounter between Western and Indigenous cultures. Cultures previously only written about in books read by Western elites can now be broadcast across the globe.

Indigenous peoples, those who are typically the original or first people living in a region, are possibly the most marginalized groups in the world. They have adopted technological skills to produce of their own media. Media produced *by* Indigenous people can represent those people and their interests by presenting their knowledge and traditions in a form that is familiar to Western observers. The messages of Indigenous media may speak for only a small part of that Indigenous group. Most Indigenous societies are heterogeneous communities with stratified social groups and a division between rural and urban or wealthy and poor. One Indigenous group working to

incorporate the modernization of Western society is the American Indian people. Dispossessed of their homelands, relocated to small reservations and living on the edge of poverty for generations, several American Indian groups utilize media for their own benefit.

One example of American Indian media can be seen in the promotional videos and commercials of the Chickasaw tribe in Oklahoma. Marginalized throughout their interaction with Europeans, the Chickasaws produced media to increase their presence in the regional, non-Indigenous community. The Chickasaw *United We Thrive* video series and the longer single video *An Enduring Nation: a History of the Chickasaw Nation* are examples of the media production. Analyzing these videos offers insight into the current tribal culture and how they represent themselves.

Using media as a form of representation of the culture is not a new concept because geographers and anthropologists study artwork from Indigenous cultures for hundreds of years (e.g.: Ginsberg, 1991; Turner, 1995). Many researchers analyze the archives of texts written about Indigenous societies as a method of determining both the Indigenous culture's change and the understanding academics had of that culture in the past (e.g.: Smith, 1999; Shaw et al., 2006). Since video is a newer technology and one that has not been used by all Indigenous groups, its importance to cultural representation studies is still being determined. For those Indigenous groups with access to video production technology, it is central to their efforts in communication and representation. Thus, American Indian video production is an ideal media to analyze for a picture of their current cultural issues.

Video analysis can be achieved in several different ways depending on the desired results. Content analysis, rhetorical analysis, or argumentative analysis are examples, but discourse analysis questions the view of language as a neutral method of communication and focuses on the construction of the social aspects of culture (Gill, 2000). This study uses discourse analysis to uncover the discursive messages the Chickasaw are communicating across space. These messages indicate a structure of marginalization built by the federal government or new structures of sovereignty built by the current Chickasaw culture. In other words, the messages in the videos represent some of the ideals of the Chickasaws or the ideals shaped by their past. To differentiate between these possible discourses of ‘the mythical Indian,’ ‘the noble savage,’ or ‘one with nature,’ the tribe’s history and nation building should be examined. It is important to consider the geography of their historical domain and the region they currently occupy. Also, because the Chickasaws distribute these videos to television stations and made them available on the Internet, it is also important to consider the geography of the functional regions created by the video diffusion.

Because other tribes in Oklahoma reside in nearby regions, the messages in the videos and how the videos are disseminated may show a relationship or conflict among the tribes. By conducting a case study on the Chickasaws, the tribe’s history and culture serves as a reference to the possible discourse present in the videos.

By analyzing the video production of the tribe, their postcolonial culture and their position in our technological society can be understood. These videos provide insight into inter-tribal relations, community relations, relations with the federal government, and internal discussions. An improved understanding of American Indian discourse will lead

to greater steps toward an understanding of American Indian cultures in the areas of globalization, nation-building and self-representation. This research intends to discover how the Chickasaw tribe constructs their message through commercials and a promotional video and how the messages are diffused to outside groups.

This study focuses on the Chickasaw tribe and two parts of their promotional video production. There are other videos in their library, but these serve as a sufficient example of self-produced media because of the unique method of diffusion. In Chapter One I will outline the basis for this kind of research within existing literature and examine the Chickasaw history and culture. Chapter Two contains a discussion of critical discourse analysis and the methods used in this study. In Chapter Three I present the results of the analysis and discuss the applications of the research. Finally, I provide my conclusions and suggestions for future research in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER ONE

The development of ideas behind this study draws from postcolonial theories and developments in cultural geography. With cultural shifts in the late 20th Century came changes in the Western line of thinking about Western society. Cultural studies and anthropology scholars, primarily in the United Kingdom, began to discover new ways of analyzing and understanding the world around them through media use and representation as tools of the new cultural interpretation. For example, as Shurmer-Smith (2002a) believed, it was more important to look at culture as being practiced, not owned, and as “the communicating, sense-making, sharing... qualifier of what people *do*.” Media is a strong example of a cultural practice that helps people *do* the things Shurmer-Smith mentioned.

Concurrently, other anthropologists, ethnographers and geographers took the postmodern, postcolonial, and poststructural ideas of culture and refocused them away from the West towards the groups of the ‘Other’, the Indigenous peoples of the world. By reinvestigating these Indigenous peoples with a new lens, researchers like Edward Said challenged the preconceived notions of 19th Century geographic work, such as environmental determinism, and fostered reinterpretation and improved representation of Indigenous cultures.

Indigenous Geographies

The most significant development of postmodern geographies has been the geographies of difference; research with a more humanistic focus on cultures and the structures that shape them. A major focus of these new geographical studies was on the

cultures of the 'Other' and their relationship to dominant Western societies. Viewpoints such as Shurmer-Smith's (2002b) that cultural geography should not aim to be an exercise in tolerance, but an understanding of why people think differently and that it should require self-reflexivity, echo this focus. These 'Other' cultures have been predominantly Indigenous cultures, groups whose previous representations in academia were dominated by Western ethnographers writing from a colonial perspective. Improved scholarly representation and a new approach to studies of 'Other' cultures are important to the development of postmodern geographies.

There are a few guidelines that this research will follow. First, following the editorial decision of Johnson et al. (2007) for the special edition of *Geographical Research*, the term 'Indigenous' will be capitalized the same way we would capitalize 'American' or 'European.' Second, use of the term 'native,' instead of Indigenous, will be avoided because of the confusion that can arise when different groups are considered. The Indigenous people of Australia prefer the term 'Aborigine' and 'native' is considered offensive, while 'native' has become the accepted term of use in America yet some groups prefer 'Indian' (Shaw et al., 2006).

Indigenous geographies stem from concepts developed in the last few decades. Geographies of difference question the structures built by societies and facilitated by social sciences, including geography itself. Researchers who developed these ideas believed cultural geography had been based on 'Western' (or imperial/colonial) ideas and the power that comes from those interpreting the culture. Western academics studied other cultures in comparison to those of Europe and the United States because researchers were unfairly using white, Western culture as a control. Western society asserts this

power over how other societies are viewed within all cultures. When confronting this kind of social construction of knowledge an interesting complexity develops. If Western universities are hoping to expand their teaching of Indigenous cultures, it would be ideal to use poststructural methods to show the variability and contradictions that are part of any developing society. Poststructuralism is focused on the process of how ideas and theories are built, not what they are (Shurmer-Smith, 2002c; Johnston and Sidaway, 2004).

Questioning the conceptual structures of culture is very geographical in nature. Because poststructuralism deals with space, flows and how things are situated, the language of deconstruction, separating out the parts of a whole for individual analysis, is rooted in geography (Shurmer-Smith, 2002c). The poststructural impact on geography can be linked directly to the work of Michel Foucault, who believed the ‘gaze’ of the researcher, as an expression of power, made the separation of cultural and political constructions nearly impossible. Geographers gained interest in the ideas of discursive practices and surveillance of people in relation to cultural studies (Shurmer-Smith, 2002c). It should be noted that poststructuralism is not about refuting the construction of culture, but it does examine the stability of the structures within it by taking it apart and examining the meaning of the pieces and how they are interrelated (Shurmer-Smith, 2002c).

Every geographer studying a culture different from his or hers uses the position of researcher to describe his or her observations as the correct interpretations of that culture. Thus, cultural geography, especially before World War II, was built on an Anglo-centered power structure of interpretation. Penrose and Jackson (1993) said that “at any

given place and time positions of hegemony are being employed to exercise and preserve power” including how a given society is described to the masses. The interpretation included the freedom to define what was different and to assert the interpretation through communication and education through the years (Penrose and Jackson, 1993). Because this freedom to write a culture’s story in the history books was being exercised in a society where ‘sameness’ and conformity were expected, creating difference led to circumstances of disadvantage and disempowerment (Penrose and Jackson, 1993).

Many geographers used this argument of power creation as a basis for racial discrimination. Bonnett and Nayak (2003) believed that defining exotic against normative terms of ‘white’ and ‘western’ created a racial privilege that was prominent in science. It was easy for geographers from the Western world to exploit this privilege because the Western world, during most of the development of geography, was busy expanding its empire. As Johnston and Sidaway (2004) noted:

...those who speak from a ‘racial’ or national position are doing so within categories defined by imperial and colonial histories and geographies – in many cases (notably with regard to racism) from a position of assumed superiority.

It was clear that postcolonial critiques led to the development of a distinct Indigenous geography. Removing the structures of power and assumptions of superiority was necessary to improve cultural interpretation.

Cultural geography was not the only area that needed a postcolonial perspective. All geographical research needs to be conducted with appropriate cultural representation in mind and should not shy away from the difficulties that are inherent in that kind of research (Blunt and Wills, 2000). Efforts in postcolonial work needed to challenge what had been taken for granted in the West. Blunt and Wills (2000) wanted postcolonial

studies to “challenge the production of knowledges that are exclusively western and ethnocentric by not only focusing on the world beyond ‘the West’ but also by destabilizing what is understood and taken for granted about ‘the West.’” By understanding that creating categories such as ‘whiteness’ is a product of what Bonnett and Nayak (2003) called ‘racialization,’ we can study the history and geography of those categories. Geographers can change the assessment of race and ethnicity from a ‘subfield’ to an “essential theme running throughout a rigorous geographical education” (Bonnet and Nayak, 2003).

Indigenous geographies are molded out of this developing concern for politics of difference within geography, but efforts are focused on, as Shaw et al. (2006) put it, an explicit political aim to ‘recenter’ and ‘reclaim’ space within geography. To begin this struggle, geographers must first deal with a nagging issue of the all-encompassing term ‘Indigenous.’ One definition refers to all people born in a place, which does not work because it only excludes those that have migrated (Shaw et al., 2006). Questions of ancestry and primacy of land ‘ownership’ are even more difficult for researchers to consider. For the purposes of Indigenous geographies and this paper, the definition posed by Shaw et al. (2006) is ideal:

...[Indigenous peoples are generally] groups with ancestral and often spiritual ties to particular land, and whose ancestors held that land prior to colonization by outside powers, and whose nations remain submerged with the states created by those powers.

Arguments between Indigenous groups about land and spiritual connections are a major issue for researchers, but the primary concern with Indigenous geographies is to study the power structures forced upon them by colonization.

The colonization of the world, mostly of Indigenous lands by Europeans, is the catalyst of the problematic power structures that marginalized Indigenous people. This was exemplified in geography as the Cartesian dualism of man and nature, which is not a component of most Indigenous beliefs (Shaw et al., 2006). ‘Western’ science separated man from nature; and ‘Western’ geographers lumped Indigenous people together in with nature by referring to them as savages (Johnson and Murton, 2007). The first explorers, many guided by Indigenous people, observed new lands and new species of plants and animals. With newly developed Linnaean taxonomy, these explorers asserted control over describing the world with their own descriptions of nature, choosing what would be visible on maps and how to name features, making the Indigenous concepts invisible to the rest of the world (Johnson and Murton, 2007). Before the peoples being colonized even had a chance to educate others, their views and knowledge were marginalized by ‘Western’ science because ‘Western’ science classification was considered the only ‘truth.’

Since Columbus landed in the West Indies, the colonial science power structure kept Indigenous issues in the dark and out of mind. Most of the regional work being done in geography prior to the 1960s was nothing more than ‘Western’ scientific description. They carried “a sense of their own ‘racial’ superiority and a belief that Indigenous groups were already extinct or soon would be” (Shaw et al., 2006). The 1960s heralded an era of social protest and change. ‘Western’ thought and ideals were being challenged from a social consciousness within, developing as a set of radical geographies. Geographers of this time embraced the call for change and political awareness and cultural geography developed many subdisciplines to reflect this change,

including Indigenous geographies (Shaw et al. 2006). The call for Indigenous geographies was strengthened by the development of postcolonialism, even though some scholars warn that postcolonial rhetoric may become a pretense for ignoring the persistence of colonial practices today. While the ideals may be different, postcolonial studies owe the basis of their work to colonialism and its branches. As Shurmer-Smith (2002d) argued, “it is necessary that the position of any commentator be made explicit in terms of the categories that imperialism rendered important,” even if we hope that some day colonial characteristics will die out.

All the concerns for Indigenous rights were wrapped up in postcolonial criticism. The aims of these researchers were on the pillars of colonial thought, ‘reason’ and ‘progress,’ as well as moving away from ‘Western’ knowledge superiority (Shaw et al., 2006). Indigenous issues have been slow to move to the forefront, while the rights of blacks, especially in the United States, have been a major focus. Postcolonial ideas needed to reflect on the present experiences of Indigenous peoples in colonialism instead of the ‘traditional’ fixation on non-urban areas and it wasn’t until the late 1990s that critical geographers engaged these Indigenous issues (Shaw et al., 2006). Shaw et al. (2006) said that postcolonial and Indigenous geographies have voices from both ‘the colonized’ and the former imperial powers, in the form of advocates, scholars, and sometimes politicians.

Indigenous geographies also grew from other aspects of the radical and postmodern movements in geography. Panelli (2008) believed that postcolonial critiques in Indigenous geographies coincide with critiques of modern geography from the feminist and queer movements. Not only were the influences of Indigenous geographies diverse,

but the topic of Indigenous issues has spread into many branches of the discipline as a whole. Shaw et al. (2006) found that Indigenous experiences were present in many subdisciplines, including environmental geographies, planning geographies, urban geographies and even legal geographies. Although concerns with Indigenous people are gaining more attention from researchers, but Indigenous geographies are still in their infancy, to date there is no substantial niche for them in the mainstream. Shaw et al. (2006) conducted a quick content analysis of publications and found that less than 2 percent of publications between 1997 and July of 2004 contained any variation of the term Indigenous. They continued to say Indigenous geographies “remain *out there*, on the post/neocolonial edges of the disciplinary orbit” (Shaw et al., 2006). A focused effort in more Indigenous research might change this structure within the geographic literature.

The combination of postcolonial and poststructural ideas seems obvious, but it was not until Edward Said’s discussions on ‘orientalism’ that geographers began using deconstruction in postcolonial terms. Said showed how power and knowledge is constructed through language and the Eurocentric ideas of ‘different’ cultures began to marginalize non-European groups (Shurmer-Smith, 2002d). Higher education is a perfect example of European construction of knowledge. In most non-European countries, higher education was initially only available in European languages, thus creating an elite class of non-Europeans whose education was based on the very structures that oppressed their people. This class of people contributed to the colonization of others because they were part of the subversive and dominant European world-view, which has developed into globalization (Shurmer-Smith, 2002d). No matter where a cultural study originates, the decision of ‘acceptability’ still comes from the Western educational power of

universities and journals that have been a part of this dominant European view. This has led some postcolonial geographers towards efforts in ‘anti-development’ studies that criticize the affluent Western powers striving to ‘improve’ the rest of the world (Shurmer-Smith, 2002d).

Even though Indigenous issues are struggling to command attention in the geographic discipline, there is much these geographies can offer the discipline, academics and the world in general. Many geographers feel strongly about the benefits of Indigenous work. Panelli (2008) averred that “Indigenous geographies demonstrate actions and proposals to build better, and more diverse, geographic knowledges and academic spaces.” She also felt they were important for looking into ‘complex intersections’ between the previously separate environmental, social, economic, political, cultural and legal geographies of an issue or place (Panelli, 2008).

One primary issue that Shaw et al. (2006) referred to as the “core value for Indigenous peoples globally” is the meanings of land, landscape, place and environment. Geographers are offered an opportunity to work through the differences in Western and Indigenous concepts and help to heal the divergence that occurred during colonial times (Shaw et al., 2006). Indigenous geographers can serve as activists, as many other geographers did with postmodern issues, and help to create policies that benefit Indigenous peoples by applying their concepts of landownership and land management (Shaw et al., 2006). This strategy can create problems with researchers at universities seeking tenure because these proposed efforts could require great amounts of time with little results.

Land management may be a primary concern because of the current environmental issues and previous egregious treatment of Indigenous people, but it is not the only one. Shaw et al. (2006) also identified resource development and management within the global market as a way to frame Indigenous issues within geography. Many Indigenous lands are home to vast natural resources. The way private companies are exploiting Indigenous land and resources is an issue Indigenous peoples are trying to oppose in world forums (Shaw et al., 2006).

The issues Indigenous geographies bring to the discipline are important to the Indigenous cause, but how they can change methods and academics is even more important. Postcolonial methods and studies are highlighted in Smith's (1999) book *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Smith outlined protocols for dealing with Indigenous research that vary from one culture to the next but stressed the responsibility to avoid exploitation of the people involved. She felt that the academy and other agencies that support research maintain the rule that research is supposed to be conducted at a distance from the community (Smith, 1999). This reinforces the "seeing, naming and knowing" of Indigenous communities by researchers that have no connection to the community.

As noted above, the researcher carries a power of interpretation that Smith (1999) and others feel needs to be regulated in order to conduct proper cultural research.

Johnson et al. (2007) felt that Indigenous geography needs to:

...encourage respectful, reciprocal research relationships between geographers and Indigenous communities; relationships that recognize the struggles of Indigenous peoples to preserve and further their knowledges and the affirmation of their rights to sovereignty over political, economic and cultural resources.

Many geographers recommend a combined effort between outside and Indigenous geographers to ensure that all concerns are properly addressed. Johnson and Murton (2007) believed that by working together, Indigenous and Western geographies, and academics in general, can add understandings to the common cultural goal. These collaborations are important because Indigenous authors can “relate the foundational stories of their communities’ knowledge systems to audiences, providing new voices to the healing of the disjunction between nature and culture in place” (Johnson and Murton, 2007).

Constructing active and understood Indigenous geographies will require diligence from geographers. The long-term goal is for geography to be “more than an occasional agent in Indigenous communities’ struggles” (Johnson et al., 2007). Ideally all geography will consider Indigenous issues whether or not they are obviously present. Shaw et al. (2006) instructed researchers on the appropriate approach they must take:

We must be mindful of how research can be used, and by whom. We must always ask, “Who does this serve?” and be leery of engaging in research that not only does serve Indigenous communities, but is also antithetical to projects of, for example, self-determination.

They continued to say that what is not being discussed in contemporary debates is the greatest cause for concern because the question of Indigenous representation is a difficult one to answer (Shaw et al., 2006); because discussion of these concerns will be necessary to even start working in the right direction. The fear of misrepresentation of other cultures is hard for geographers to deal with, especially as Indigenous issues become more prevalent. Shaw et al. (2006) hoped that contemporary geography could “offer more nuanced, de-essentialized, and located studies of processes that impact upon

Indigenous peoples” and the discipline could remove itself from colonial power structures that left Indigenous issues “out of sight, out of mind.” But, as discussed before, a complete removal from the colonial base can handcuff researchers as well.

Smith (1999) had several ideas for how to counter colonial geographies and imperialism. The two primary directions for the Indigenous research agenda she suggests are through community action projects like tribal land claims or through space gained by Indigenous research centers within institutions (Smith, 1999). This kind of work needs to focus on countering the dominant image of Indigenous groups and propose solutions to problems these groups confront on a regular basis around the world (Smith, 1999). In order to assure these goals are being met, Smith (1999) recommends that researchers ask several key reciprocal questions, such as:

Who defined the research problem? For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so? What knowledge will the community gain from this study? What knowledge will the researcher gain from this study? What are some likely positive outcomes from this study? What are some possible negative outcomes? How can the negative outcomes be eliminated? To whom is the researcher accountable? What processes are in place to support the research, the researched and the researcher?

While these questions may seem quite obvious, and even similar to those asked by the Institutional Review Board when approving research on human subjects, they must be asked in a context of the Indigenous community being researched. The answers should consider the Indigenous viewpoint and community as often as possible.

A specific area of Indigenous issues that was not being discussed in the mainstream academia until recently is that of American Indian geographic studies. These studies began to emerge out of the work of Carl Sauer and the Berkeley school of cultural geography in the post-World War II era (Rundstrom, et al., 2000). These basic cultural

emersion studies evolved into work addressing many of the issues facing contemporary American Indian culture. Some of these issues being studied include material landscape, resources, land rights, economic development, and representation in postcolonial identities, mapping and GIS technology (Rundstrom, et al., 2000). As with many Indigenous studies, there is room for improvement within American Indian geographies. Rundstrom, et al. (2000) recommended that geographers continue in some of their current efforts with activism and representation but feel there could be a struggle between interactive and advocate studies and those geographers who chose a more hands off, empirical direction. The hope for the future of Indigenous geographies is that the two can co-exist and focus on the importance of reciprocity.

Media Geographies

It is important to establish the value of media to geographic and ethnographic research. Media is an artistic method of how people depict perception and representation of place, space and environment (Shurmer-Smith, 2002a). Not only is media being used to gain a new understanding of Western culture, it could also be used in unison with changes in Indigenous studies for a better understanding of the 'Other.' Studying media has led to questions of objectivity, subjectivity, interpretation, and authorship of previous cultural studies. The availability of media and the new ways of looking at cultures has brought about a necessary cycle of re-evaluation and reflection by geographers and anthropologists within their academic circles.

Originally, written texts were the primary media used for evaluating cultural studies because, in some cases, they served as the only remaining clues to the past. This

cultural significance carried benefits and detractions to accurate cultural portrayal. Appropriate understanding of cultural texts hinges on the interpreter and how the interpreter approaches the text. Jacques Derrida was the primary poststructuralist who brought the importance of texts, as well as non-textual expressions, to cultural geographers. He showed that discovering the interpretive capabilities of the reader was just as important as the intentions of the author (Shurmer-Smith, 2002c). As Giddens (1976) pointed out, understanding texts from a different culture is “essentially a creative process in which the observer, through penetrating an alien mode of existence, enriches his own self-knowledge, through acquiring knowledge of others.”

An appreciation of texts can lead to appropriate cultural appreciation. But what kinds of text should be studied to gain an accurate representation? Porteous (1985) believed the novel was ideal for cultural understanding because it had significant length; was written in understandable prose; covered relevant human situations; and could contain descriptions of landscapes and places that were inherently geographical.

One text cannot reveal all there is to know of a society. The gradual development of a volume of texts can produce meanings, what Barnes and Duncan (1992) termed *intertextuality*. The ‘meaning’ of a text depends entirely on this vast hegemony of other texts which provides a socially plausible but theoretically impossible ‘true’ meaning. Conveying a message or image is built upon authors drawing meaning from other texts, which were developed from older texts themselves (Barnes, 1996). The meanings are also influenced by the author’s position in the world he or she is trying to represent. To understand the author’s position it is important to grasp what contexts shape the meanings of the text (Barnes and Duncan, 1992).

Where geographers run into problems with texts as signs is specifically in the interpretation of the text and its direct dependence on the geographer doing the interpreting. Barnes and Duncan (1992) stress the instability of meaning and how different readers may interpret the same words in completely different ways. “Thus both how we produce a text and how we interpret one depends upon our textual community – on the language (even the particular form of a language) that we use, reflecting our individual compositional and contextual positions.” Even the choice of which texts to use is significant. Different geographers may come to different conclusions of the same text, just like biographers may have different views of someone’s life and artists may choose to portray the same landscape in different ways (Johnston and Sidaway, 2004). There is also a concern within cultural geographers, which stems from the ideas of Derrida, of asking the question of why certain elements are ‘missing’ from textual representation (Shurmer-Smith, 2002c). This realm of studies is just beginning to gain importance.

Geographers who interpret texts and publish their own resulting texts are contributing to the cycle of *intertextuality*. One major way geographers add to the volume of interpretation tools is with the production of maps. Harley (1989) believed map production follows cultural guidelines as well as scientific ones. These cultural rules lead to cartographers using a ‘heirarchalization of space,’ in which the producing culture depicts the world in an ethnocentric way, promoting their own world views (Harley, 1989). As with other texts, a map’s accuracy in cultural representation depends on the producer and the interpreter. Geographers tend to believe that cartographers are ‘scientific’ or ‘objective’ in their creation; but in reality, maps can carry an element of

social inequality or enforce power structures (Harley, 1989). Maps are a medium of vast importance to the portrayal of cultures and Harley (1992) describes them as a way of “articulating the world in mass-produced and stereotyped images,” and expressing “an embedded social vision.” Maps are socially constructed by ‘professionals’ and those representing the interests of those in power who control the production of geographic knowledge through map-making. Obviously maps are a geographic medium capable of giving insight to culture, but what can other media show us?

Mass media, defined as communications efforts intended to reach the mass audience, is a strong tool for cultural interpretation. Forms of mass media may not carry as much intellectual prowess as novels or academic publications; but because they are mass produced texts, or texts then read out loud and broadcast, they are just as important to understanding culture, possibly more important to a society with oral traditions. Zimmerman (2007) said that mass media, including the Internet, “mediate our experiences of place and geography.” Media creates a connection between the location of the production and the reception, similar to a network. The receiver of the media may feel a connection to a place they’ve never been. Mass media also present geographers with an interesting spatial problem, in part because the representations are part of conceptions of the world and media has the “power to conceptualize and spread political ideas and reinforce hegemonic orders.” Reflexively, “media can create, reinforce, and promote specific ways of seeing for particular cultures” (Zimmerman, 2007). Not only can media provide others an opportunity to understand a culture, it can influence the world views of members of that culture.

For geographers, studying media involves a long history related to journalism, which leans on geographical knowledge to help communicate issues from around the world to the reader/viewer (Zimmerman, 2007). Studying media as a cultural tool requires knowledge of both disciplines to be successful. Friedrich Ratzel, an influential mind in early geography, had a career in journalism before he began teaching geography (Zimmerman, 2007). Ratzel made use of connections that can more easily be seen today. The early stages of geography involved the researcher entertaining others with the stories of their travels. As geography struggled to gain scientific credibility, popular media, in the forms of adventure and travel literature, could be seen as having more influence on the spread of geographic knowledge than the attempts at scientific geography (Banse, 1932, cited in Zimmerman, 2007). Geography can be used to see how media is interwoven with culture because as Moreno (2007) stated, both “fold into and affect the perception, substance, and power of the other.”

Written forms of media can have a wide variety of interpretations based on the previous discussion of *intertextuality* and the dissemination of meaning through time. Adding more viewpoints and angles of interpretation, while still providing a window into culture, are the different forms of visual media: television, cinema, advertising, and the Internet. These media forms have the capacity to frame our understanding of culture by showing the viewer only what the producer feels is important. By cropping or distorting images, media producers frame, or control, the message being portrayed. The term ‘text’ has now been stretched to include any part of culture that communicates meaning. This has brought about the idea of ‘reading’ the landscape for cultural clues in a similar way to

reading a book (Shurmer-Smith, 2002e). Media studies within a society were thus stretched to include all forms of artistic expression of that culture.

Visual media has become the primary method of gaining geographic knowledge for many people around the world (Rogoff, 2000). The last few generations of children, specifically in Western society, have been raised on visual media, specifically television. Moreno (2007) described his search for ‘locatedness’ in all the visual images presented to him by being raised in front of a television. Visual media, like maps, are shaped by society, but also have the ability to shape society themselves. The power of visual images in shaping minds comes from what Moreno (2007) termed ‘an affective media field.’ He described it as “a nomadic space” that allowed viewer and image to interact and affect change in each other (Moreno, 2007). Studying how the viewer and image interact in this space is geographic. The viewer is connected by emotions solicited by the image and a cycle is created where the screen represents the space for interaction that draws the viewer in and thus molds perception (Moreno, 2007).

Another strong visual media is cinema. The film industry, specifically in Western cultures, has the power to influence cultural representations that no other media quite compares to. Pierpergerdes (2007) compared cinema to propaganda, maps, and monuments as a visual medium that is an “iconic representation of place.” Films have authenticity, and have the capacity to document specific historical times and places (Pierpergerdes, 2007). This puts the viewer in an opportune position to gather geographic knowledge; even if the subject of the film is fiction, it is a representation of culture. A non-fiction or historical fiction film presents an ideal depiction of culture. As Pierpergerdes (2007) put it:

... any film shot on-location captures a spatio-temporal picture of the physical landscape (the setting), allowing one to 'locate' view comparison the degree of natural and/or human-induced stability or change of a place... films contain evidence of time- and place-specific social relations because regardless of plot or narrative, they offer socio-cultural identifiers in both objects (the clothes, cars, appliances, for instance) and the behavior of people (the dialect they speak, their occupations, their actions and the objects they use which the viewer is able to associate with a particular class, ethnic group, etc.).

The elements of scenes that directors and producers put together in a film can be a geographic, visual representation of culture.

A few geographers over the last couple of decades have picked up the study of film, either individually or as a medium. This very specific field has produced a guideline for studying cinema with application to geography with wide emphases from spatial issues to iconic representation to the aesthetic practice; but a limitation in this area of research is its highly specific focus on one film or one director. Films are cultural products of mass consumption that can reaffirm or change relationships between people and between humans and the earth (Pierpergerdes, 2007). The power of cinema is a double-edged sword. Along with television, film can affect perception of the subject matter by soliciting emotion from the viewer about place and identity (Zimmerman, 2007). Visual media can be globally aware and contribute to issues of importance, but it can also spread Western ideals of globalization depending on the choices made by the media producer.

Problems do arise with taking visual media as a gospel for cultural interpretation. Mass produced 'geographical' cinema and television which Pierpergerdes (2007) described as "little more than eco-porn, a natural-world voyeurism heavy on slow-motion panning shots and seductive (yet vapid) voice-over narration," does not always carry

facts and critical representations. Another major issue with all media is its subjectivity and motivation in the representation of 'facts.' Cinema itself goes through many channels before it is presented to the public. Scripting, directing, acting, cinematography, and editing each add more possibilities for subjectivity. Just as with maps and geography, the producer has the power of controlling the representation of information and his or her subjectivity can be dangerous. As postmodern thought has demonstrated, representation of reality is always subjective. It would be exceedingly difficult for a film to completely avoid subjectivity. As Pierpergerdes (2007) illustrated "it would take an infinite number of cameras and angles to objectively represent a single time- and place-specific action." The main subjectivity issue with cinema is the editing process. Many different parties, each with their own agendas or goals, make choices to include or exclude or structure images to represent something.

The Internet is probably the most subjective media even though it is growing in importance and popularity every day. Because the Internet provides access to textual and visual media in its own time and space interaction it has geographic significance. By bringing news and entertainment outlets to the viewer, the Internet creates 'situatedness' or the opportunity for the many perspectives needed for understanding all voices in equal light. Moreno (2007) believed that Internet applications such as chat rooms, search engines, and online gaming give us security by creating a virtual space. The Internet lacks academic merit because while it provides an interesting social situation, the information provided is not always credible because sources can come from anywhere and they aren't always trustworthy. While the credibility of the Internet is, as Pierpergerdes (2007) said, "dubious at best," it does add to the development of perception

of peoples and places. The Internet is being studied more heavily recently because many geographers and anthropologists view it as a network of cultural interaction. Addressing these issues through postmodernism requires deconstruction, or breaking down the structuring power to understand inner meanings and workings of the society, or discourses. Later, I will discuss deconstructing media using critical discourse analysis.

There have been warnings from some scholars of the dangers of relying on media for cultural interpretations. Jean Baudrillard warned academics of the difficulty in evaluating the truthfulness of the media's presentation of reality. His concept of hyperreality has been used by cultural geographers to understand the consumption of postmodern images in places like theme parks or shopping malls. Hyperreality describes a place where a simulation or fake representation of something is the phenomenon of interest instead of the real thing; a place where fakery is intentionally part of the environment (Shurmer-Smith, 2002c). The difficulty for cultural geographers is being able to determine the difference between the reality and hyperreality of a culture, even when the hyperreality is the focus of the study.

All of these arguments and examples are part of a media geography that has been gaining support and recognition for its importance to cultural interpretation. Building the subdiscipline will require an understanding of its capabilities and dangers. Twenty-five years ago, Schultz (1983) argued that cognitive information processing and how mediated information is disseminated and consumed could be a viable direction in cultural geography (cited in Zimmerman, 2007). Recent arguments for the importance of media geography center on the abilities of media to be a "social force that affects the formation and becomings of society and space" (Moreno, 2007). Media geography should attempt

to answer many questions within cultural geography. How do media affect everyday life? Do media produce emotions? And do those emotions solicit certain behavior? How is our relationship with media changed by changes in spaces? How are media different from other social/cultural forces (Moreno, 2007)? Zimmerman (2007) felt that visual media investigation is the appropriate direction within media geography. Visual media with all its images is much more influential on contemporary society than the written word (Zimmerman, 2007). Similar to Moreno, Zimmerman (2007) had his own concern for the direction of the subdiscipline:

... how geographies are communicated through visual media; how this communicated knowledge affects audiences' life-worlds; and, the awareness of the close connection between geographers and journalists who share an interest in important societal questions, whilst using altered approaches.

The key to accurate cultural assessment of media, as with the use of texts, is analyzing the perceptions of reality of the producers and consumers of media. The production of media carries heavy subjectivity that cannot be completely removed but can be studied in conjunction with the media.

Indigenous Media Geography (Mediating Indigenous Geographies)

Some researchers have used both of the previously discussed concepts in combination to add to the discussion of postmodern culture. On one side, journalism and media studies have begun to recognize the importance of Indigenous cultures within media. This is primarily due to the ever shrinking globe caused by globalization and increased access to technology by previously isolated groups, or the closure of the 'digital divide.' From the geography and anthropology side, researchers began to study how

Indigenous groups were dealing with or accepting new technologies and how those people were being represented. This two-sided development presents an interesting dichotomy of where the keys to mediating Indigenous geographies lay, a dichotomy that poststructuralists would take apart and examine the pieces to discover the relationship.

Journalism in today's world is often under fire for its dramatization and sensationalism in everyday news. What is often missed is the struggle journalists have in telling the whole story in a short amount of time. This is especially problematic in addressing Indigenous issues, or representing the 'Other.' Poststructural efforts insist that it should not be an 'us versus them' approach. Fursich (2002) discussed the problems the field of journalism faces in dealing with Indigenous and minority issues in an era of postmodern critique. Journalists tend to be an ethnically homogenous group from the dominant and established culture but are often in direct contact with subjects of a different class, ethnicity or nationality (Fursich, 2002). Their training hardly ever addresses the theoretical and cultural aspects of media production, but their duty as journalists can sometimes be as 'mediators' between different social institutions with different productions of knowledge (Fursich, 2002). In most cases, journalists are forced, often by time constraints, to gloss over this important relationship, whereas geographic research ideally has more time to explore the relationship. In most cases, it is only after the fact that academics are analyzing their work and critiquing the representations. Fursich (2002) asked "how can the concept of representations of the Other be transformed from a passive strategy of text critique to an active strategy for change of media production?" She believed in adopting new routines in traditional reporting and production that are self-reflexive and critical, hoping journalists would be more active

and avoid hiding behind the veil of ‘objective’ journalism (Fursich, 2002), a problem geographers also deal with. Although a step in a positive direction, activism can be dangerous when dealing with Indigenous media; there is always the question of authorship and meaning, which is a major challenge in postcolonial research.

Journalism, and to a greater extent media, have seen a boom in the ethnic or minority attention to both representation and production. Hartley (2004), in describing the increasing attention to Aboriginal Australians in media, saw a change in the national aspect of television towards a fragmented, international, virtual, and voluntary community. The ‘national’ message of Australian media was torn by intense dialogue on Indigenous representation. As the number of Indigenous people in creative positions in the media increased, the media was no longer an outside entity acting on the Indigenous people; the media was being acted upon by a new national sentiment (Hartley, 2004). Australian television was being molded by the very Indigenous community it was struggling to represent.

More and more Indigenous groups are gaining access to media production technologies. No longer are they struggling with outside media for equal and fair representation. Indigenous groups around the world are *showing* ‘Western’ culture how they want to be represented and working towards a co-construction of representation. Ginsberg (2008) referred to Indigenous media producers as ‘cultural activists’ because they self-consciously “use the production of media and other expressive forms not only to sustain and build their communities but also to transform them” in a method Ginsberg called ‘strategic traditionalism.’ This concept of strategic traditionalism refers to how Indigenous groups have adapted how they stay ‘traditional’ by strategically using the new

methods, or technologies, in front of them. Problems can arise, though, when an outsider offers help in production with claims of objectivity, but their main goal is to add their own agenda of social or political transformation into the Indigenous method (Ginsberg, 2008). And what makes a researcher an activist? As evidenced in postcolonial geographies, is there any truly passive cultural research?

Many Indigenous media projects struggle with authenticity and dependency on Western allies and technology. Relying on the help of these allies – usually governments, Western foundations or NGOs, or academics from Western institutions – can be troublesome because they control the discursive frameworks of the colonial institutional structures that include policy and funding, which can impact practice and implementation (Ginsberg, 2008).

One such group is the Saami people of Scandinavia and Russia. A diverse Indigenous group in their own right, the Saami have their own radio and television outlets and struggle with funding, authenticity and representation. Pietikainen (2008) used Saami media outlets as examples in her work on ethnic minority media. The strength of these media has come into question from traditional media because of what is viewed as poor performance and a failure to accurately portray the diversity of minority communities. They are also perceived “as disrupting and disturbing the integration process of ethnic minority members into the majority society” (Pietikainen, 2008). This negative viewpoint obviously comes from the dominant ‘Western’ media culture and is one of the major stigmas holding back the development of quality Indigenous media. Pietikainen (2008) believed a part of this struggle is the Indigenous journalist’s position within their community, on a fine line between professional norms and status, cultural

obligations and audience expectations. By concentrating on community concerns, Saami media could produce a Saami identity. It could “convey information but also contribute to the formation of the Indigenous society” (Pietikainen, 2008), just like most mainstream media attempts to do with a national identity. This could allow ethnic minority members to:

...live through the hybrid, complex, multilayered conditions and experiences of various identity positions. The use of the ethnic minority media entails a rich and evolving terrain with the ebb and flow of different local and global influences producing varied results in unpredictable ways. And it is this multiplicity that opens up new possibilities and viable ways for the development of the ethnic media (Pietikainen, 2008).

So, instead of being a detriment to the majority society, ethnic minority media could act as a go-between with ethnic minority and the majority (Pietikainen, 2008). The field of Indigenous media may best be served to work with the majority instead of against it.

As discussed above, the Internet is an expanding media in both relevance and usefulness. While Indigenous groups may want to focus efforts on the big media, such as film and television, the cheaper but equally strong alternative of the Internet has promise. Srinivasan (2006) focused on how the Internet can serve similar purposes as other media to the development of Indigenous media. The capacity to interact, communicate, share resources and mobilize globally is appealing to Indigenous communities (Srinivasan, 2006). Many other studies and initiatives have discussed the empowerment that can come from Internet-based communities. The term ‘digital divide’ is becoming less applicable to Indigenous groups no longer at the bottom of the stratified technological world. Possibly the biggest benefit of Internet communities to Indigenous people is the capability to preserve histories and exchange historical information (Srinivasan, 2006).

Preserving history is a major struggle for Indigenous people. Instead of rewriting or retelling the stories throughout generations, when the meaning could get misconstrued, preserving them via the Internet allows for more control and keeps the knowledge at the highest level of technology. The process also allows Indigenous groups to insert meaning more relevant to the times. This control allows the Indigenous population to generate their own media that is independent of a researcher's subjectivity (Srinivasan, 2006). American Indians have been one of the fastest Indigenous groups to adopt Internet community building because of their access within the United States to a strong and more-complete Internet network. Their efforts have organized a wide range of sites that represent political, economic and tribal issues as well as provide an archiving capability (Srinivasan, 2006). Geographic distances are bridged and communities from around the world brought together by Indigenous websites. The Internet is probably the best way to store and display information, but Indigenous communities must be more active in developing systems that are built around culturally specific representations and paradigms (Srinivasan, 2006).

There are many problems confronting the development of strong Indigenous media, most of which stem from the dominant 'Western' media and the growth of a globalized community. New media is a 'Western' technology and separating any use of that media from 'Western' construction presents problems. Decolonization and globalization are the main reasons why there is even discussion about Indigenous media. As more areas of the world open up, 'Western' technology goes deeper. In discussing the authenticity of native-made films, Pack (2000) pointed out that "native expression is not necessarily found at the point of first contact, but after native groups have already

adapted to the new technology and made it their own tool.” Someone from the outside has to come into their world and show them how to use the technology. The isolated Indigenous group begins to be immersed in mainstream culture and thus may acquire traits of the culture. Pack (2000) raised the question about Indigenous films: “Does deeper immersion in mainstream culture render them any less ‘native’?” There is even an argument over the benefit of Indigenous groups using ‘Western’ media technology. Pack (2000) argued that the benefit of possible cultural self-assertion could be outweighed by the knowledge that the spread of this technology, as a form of colonialism or forced assimilation, could lead to the demise of the Indigenous culture. But over the last 500 years there have been similar developments in technology and forced assimilation, and yet Indigenous groups remain.

Pack’s (2000) main issue with ‘Western’ interpretation of Indigenous films is with the idea of Indigenous authenticity, or how truly ‘Indigenous’ they are. Since Indigenous films are predominantly produced for a non-Indigenous market and are funded by outside agencies, they are basically exports (Pack, 2000). This non-Indigenous market has its own idea of Indigenous authenticity and it lumps Indigenous people into a homogenous mass (Pack, 2000). The traditional discourse fails to see Indigenous film expression as diverse. Pack (2000) insisted on the distinction of Indigenous-made films not only from the mainstream but from one another, because even an ‘insider’ cannot be omniscient; he or she cannot speak for the entire society, only from their specific location within it.

Authenticity in Indigenous media production could be referred to as *Indigeneity*, the degree of Indigenous knowledge or contribution within the product. Wilson and

Stewart (2008) discuss the main concerns with Indigeneity being a specific and important part of global cultural politics because it requires careful attention. The main question is how to critically evaluate media that is produced by a dominant Western industry that addresses Indigenous issues or uses Indigenous knowledge or tells Indigenous stories. Even more concerning is how to handle that kind of media if the consent of those Indigenous people who told the stories or used the knowledge was not obtained (Wilson and Stewart, 2008). Is this still Indigenous media?

These specific locations may have commonalities, though. Indigenous groups may have similar world views or may share common ground in different places. There is a need for media producers to have an understanding that they should not have to compete with one another. They are on a common ground and should work with each other to produce a better product. Dowell (2006), speaking of the benefits of an Indigenous film showcase, First Nations/First Features, believed that not only is it important for Indigenous media to have a showcase but media producers also need a way to alter social relations off-screen to form a new Indigenous solidarity. The showcase also demonstrated the power of having production in the hands of Indigenous filmmakers. They were allowed to tell their stories their way, honoring traditions and cultures that are rooted in the stories (Dowell, 2006). When Indigenous groups pool their resources, they can get much more public support, support that can lead to activism.

One area of Indigenous or minority media that has sprouted out of these movements is 'alter' media. Sometimes viewed as radical, examples of 'alter' media can be found around the world. Community television stations like Not Channel Zero have served a minority outlet that has led to activism in ethnic communities (Halleck and

Magnan, 1993). Television is produced all over the United States by people without content restrictions who represent a diverse groups and an alternative to commercial television (Halleck and Magnan, 1993); many examples of this form can be found on YouTube. While the absence of an anthropologist or other expert in ‘alter’ media can be seen as ‘radical’ production, it seems to be the only way to convey the alternative message because the expert is usually someone aligned with the structures of power serving as a filter for the mainstream consumers (Halleck and Magnan, 1993). Most of the negative viewpoints towards ‘alter’ media are constructed by the dominant, or ‘Western,’ culture. Despite the popular opinion, it is important for Indigenous groups to be able to engage in ‘alter’ media production. Halleck and Magnan (1993) see the positives of being tied into the mainstream media technologies:

The communities constructed by these videos are not bound by territorial borders, but are communities of interest that are connected, and in a sense produced, by telecommunications channels and satellite transmissions.

Productions of an alternative world view need to be spread throughout the world so that other ethnic or Indigenous groups can use the methods to bring attention to their issues.

Turner (1995) echoed the importance of spreading the message of Indigenous media. While the main intention of their media is to get other groups to speak *about* them, or to use their own understandings to be objective, it is also important for this media to develop diverse, enriched understandings that can speak *for* them (Turner, 1995). When Indigenous groups engage in objectifying their own identities through media, they transform their identities and shift the world’s focus away from what they represent to how they represent it (Turner, 1995). This is an important step for Indigenous groups because they need to affect change in the ‘Western’ world view so that

they are no longer treated as marginal or unimportant. As Wilson and Stewart (2008) pointed out, because all cultures can no longer enjoy complete isolation, Indigenous media production offers cultural recognition of distinctiveness and allows for transnational affiliation.

Several concerns about Indigenous media production do arise from this discussion. First, from the journalism prospective, Fursich (2002) asked:

How can journalists under the changing conditions of production within the globalizing media structure develop representational strategies that do not obscure cultural complexities?

The ever changing global community can present a problem for the Indigenous media producers as well. As the definition of ‘We’ changes, how is the construction of the ‘Other’ affected? The locations of production and reception have an unstable relationship, a relationship that could be studied using new experiments (Fursich, 2002). Second, Turner (1995) posed a serious concern about being critical of Indigenous representations:

How can we construct critical representations of reality that will be as free as possible from ideological distortion and the historically repressive associations of representational technologies?

Finally, Wilson and Stewart (2008) expressed the concerns of Indigenous groups that are aware of the importance of their marketing capabilities, but recognize the need for control of their Indigenous product:

... marketing and selling ‘the Indigenous’ through media, tourism, art, crafts, music, and the appropriation of traditional knowledges and Indigenous images has become a profitable enterprise that Indigenous peoples worldwide feel the need to monitor and protect.

History of the Chickasaw Nation

Along with its background in academic theory and research, this case study examination of Chickasaw media requires an overview of the tribe's history and culture and their relationship with Western influences surrounding them. Their long history of colonialism is important to understanding the discourses that may be present in Chickasaw media production. There are very few histories written specifically about the Chickasaw people, only Arrell Gibson's (1971) *The Chickasaws* stands out. A comprehensive history of the tribe is otherwise difficult to come by.

The Chickasaws are part of the 'Five Civilized Tribes,' southeastern American Indians classified as 'civilized' due to European assessment of their culture. At the time of their first European contact in 1540, the Chickasaws controlled a vast area of western Kentucky and Tennessee and northern Mississippi and Alabama (*Figure 2*). The Europeans considered the Chickasaws civilized because of they lived in communities of families, they were skilled hunters and participated in small-scale agriculture, and they eagerly participated in trade (Gibson, 1971).

This interaction encouraged intermarriages with Europeans, creating a mixed-blood community within the tribe. These mixed-blood Chickasaws became a wealthy, elite class and controlled much of the tribal affairs because the Europeans, and later the Americans, preferred to deal with them. Their influence and decisions led to a division in the tribe with traditionalist, full-blooded Chickasaws (Gibson, 1971).

Whenever Chickasaw raiding parties would take prisoners from other tribes, they used them as slaves. Chickasaws were ruthless slave-masters because they cut the tendons on the tops of a slave's feet so they could still walk but not run away. Europeans introduced the Chickasaws to the African slave market. Chickasaw slaves would be

traded for African slaves, who the Chickasaws viewed as an inferior race, either from their own beliefs or the teachings of Europeans. This led to a long and rough history of Chickasaw and black relations (Gibson, 1971).

After the American Revolution, as it did with many other tribes, the United States government allied with the Chickasaws to develop trade and keep European interests away from its frontier lands. The Treaty of Hopewell bounded the Chickasaw nation for the first time and allowed the federal government to manage the affairs of the tribe. Subsequent treaties took away more and more Chickasaw land and reduced their sovereignty. The highly influential mixed-blood families were instrumental in negotiating these treaties. They held a significant portion of land and were the easiest for federal officials to corrupt. The most important treaty they negotiated was the 1837 Treaty of Doaksville, which laid out the plans for their removal to Oklahoma. The Chickasaws agreed to buy two-thirds of the Choctaw land in southern Oklahoma (*Figure 3*) and merge into the Choctaw Nation (Gibson, 1971).

The first 50 years in Oklahoma were full of moderate successes and significant challenges. In 1855, the Chickasaws negotiated separation from the Choctaws and developed a representative, three-branch, constitutional government, which legalized slave holding. The peace treaty signed at the end of the Civil War forced the Chickasaw to abolish slavery and give up the western third of their land (*see land area in Figure 3*). The freed slaves were not given citizenship or land rights. After an 1871 ruling, the federal government stopped recognizing American Indian governments as autonomous. The Chickasaw's two-party government perpetuated tribal division. The National party was primarily the traditional, full-blood Chickasaws who wanted to keep out American

businesses and rid the nation of 'white' or mixed-blood Chickasaws. The mixed-blood supported Progressives supported railroad expansion and increased agriculture. Between 1893 and 1899, Chickasaw leaders worked with the Dawes Commission to bring an allotment agreement to a vote of the tribe. When an agreement was reached, members of the Chickasaw Nation each received approximately 320 acres of land. Each piece of land was separated from others giving the Chickasaw lands a 'checkerboard' appearance (*see land area in Figure 4*) (Gibson, 1971).

Chickasaw tribal sovereignty took a fatal blow in 1907 when the U.S. admitted Oklahoma to the union. Chickasaw government and land came under complete jurisdiction of the federal government. The policy of the federal government was to assimilate the American Indians into the United States, which meant Chickasaws were to shed their culture and social structure and adopt American culture (Gibson, 1971). While the intent of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was to support the rights of American Indians, their efforts were minimal and they were often even cruel to American Indians (O'Brien, 1989).

In 1924, the United States gave American Indians citizenship. The Meriam Report of 1928 signaled a change in policy that favored American Indian rights (O'Brien, 1989). The federal government passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) in 1934. Its intention was to restore American Indian self-management, stop the depletion of American Indian resources, and help develop a strong American Indian economy (Mekeel, 1944). The IRA stopped the allotment process, which ended the loss of American Indian lands, and reestablished tribal governments (O'Brien, 1989). In the late '60s and early '70s the social revolution in the United States included American Indians

who marched and protested alongside others demanding better civil rights. Most American Indian tribes received some recognition and aid in health, economy, social services, and education (O'Brien, 1989). The Chickasaws accepted the federal aid and elected their own governor in 1970.

The Current Chickasaw Nation

As of a 1996 U.S. Department of Commerce publication, the Chickasaw Nation was down to just over 76 thousand acres of tribal land, 73 thousand of which is allotted and about 2500 acres are tribally owned. Tribal allotments form a checkerboard pattern covering south central Oklahoma between the Canadian and Red Rivers, with the tribal headquarters in Ada.

The tribal government is a democratic republic that resembles the United States. It consists of a 13-member legislature, a governor and lieutenant governor, and three tribal judges. In 1983, the Chickasaws ratified a new tribal constitution. Due to the process of enrollment, the size of the Chickasaw Nation has ballooned to 35 thousand. The tribal budget is now in excess of \$15 million, which comes from income from gaming centers, smoke shops, motels, trading posts and an electronics company. Much of Chickasaw land is used for agriculture, fisheries or forestry. The tribe has a construction company, CNI Construction; 4 gaming centers, including the Riverwind Casino; natural gas and oil production, and several tourism ventures. The largest employer in the nation is the tribal government, which employs 1300 people in the housing authority, the health system and Chickasaw Multimedia.

The Chickasaw Nation is well-connected with the outside community. Its proximity to Oklahoma City gives tribal members a cultural and metropolitan outlet. Also, Interstate 35 runs north-south through the western part of the nation connecting Oklahoma City to Dallas, which brings business and tourism through the region. The tribe also maintains several community centers, tribal health facilities and higher and vocational education facilities.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Chickasaw Multimedia

As part of the diverse resources of the Chickasaw Nation, Chickasaw Multimedia produces materials for the tribe. From the headquarters in Ada, Oklahoma, the Multimedia department uses tribal funds and resources to produce public relations and education media for the tribe. From pamphlets to the *Chickasaw Nation Times*, media production is key to the presence of the Nation in the regional community.

The part of Chickasaw Multimedia that I will focus on is the video production. The public relations videos used by the Chickasaw Nation are either produced fully within the Multimedia department or the production is outsourced to a public relations firm called Ackerman-McQueen. For the purposes of this study, I used the tribally produced video *An Enduring Nation: a Short History of the Chickasaw Nation* and a series of commercials produced by Ackerman-McQueen with Chickasaw oversight entitled *United We Thrive*. The Chickasaws originally produced *An Enduring Nation* as an educational video for libraries but edited it to the current, shorter version to accompany the Chickasaw governor on his speaking tours (personal communication with production coordinator, 2009). The *United We Thrive* videos are separated into two sets released in 2007 and 2008 to all the television stations in the Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Ada markets as well as the Sherman and Denison, Texas markets (personal communication with media relations director, 2010). These videos represent the Chickasaw efforts to communicate with the non-Chickasaw community of Oklahoma about the tribe.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Part of the task of mediating Indigenous geography is to understand the previously discussed concept of intertextuality. Deconstructing the power structures that are built by society through text and media allows geographers and anthropologists to discover the underlying meaning within cultural representation, such as maps and GIS, and to challenge those meanings. One method used by researchers in recent studies is discourse analysis. Social discourses are a major part of socially constructed media.

Authors produce texts as fixed moments of knowledge, usually localized for the specific culture being written from. When we interpret these texts, we need to be aware of all the possible lights of local and external truths that may alter interpretation (Shurmer-Smith, 2002e). People who agree on how to communicate the meanings of words and images construct discourse. The powerful members of societies use discourse to structure agendas and exclude others, which makes their values and opinions the dominant aspects of culture (Shurmer-Smith, 2002e). This applies to textual production because what is usually referred to as realist reporting needs to be considered a “value loaded representation of the ideological positions of the writer” because the choices the author makes reveal the discourse that shapes the representation (Shurmer-Smith, 2002e). Discourse analysis is important because researchers often take previously produced texts as truth.

Discourse is built through language use, a major aspect of media production. Alvesson and Karreman (2000) believed that language was developing into the most important phenomenon in social research because language is how we constitute our

sense of self as a distinct subjective being. Poststructuralists use the term ‘discursive practice’ to group together the things that constitute our subjectivity: talk, text, cognition, and representation (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000). It can be very difficult to study all the details of one group’s language use. Having too narrow of a focus or reducing the core concepts leads to a glossing over of the true discursive operations. On the other hand, skipping over language use in social context studies can lead to broad statements of discourse that have little care for the specific language, which is what a discourse study should try to avoid (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000). In their work on the varieties of discourse study capabilities, Alvesson and Karreman (2000) put discourse on a two-dimensional spectrum. On one axis is the connection between discourse and meaning, lying between completely unrelated and completely incorporated. On the other axis is the range of contextual situation or structure, either local or macro-system interests. Alvesson and Karreman (2000) believed that studies in discourse can encounter significant questions of the transition of small level language work to major summaries and interpretations of aggregated elements of discourse. The most difficult discursive work would fall in the macro-scale, heavily incorporated quadrant of their spectrum. They felt it was important for work in that area to be “grounded and shown” rather than postulated (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000).

Discourse analysis must be about more than just words. When someone is speaking, they often make gestures or faces that can also be interpreted as part of language structure. Taub, et al. (2009) studied the differences in gesture use in three different languages: English, Spanish, and American Sign Language (ASL). The concept of gestures as communication is called ‘spatial mapping.’ Taub, et al. (2009) felt

spatial mapping was integral to discourses of both signed and spoken languages because when there is a language barrier, people use gestures to help describe events. The study found that a significant amount of information is expressed within the discourse of all three languages through language and spatial mapping because gestures can adapt to the structure of each specific language when trying to convey a message (Taub, et al., 2009). The researchers felt it would be difficult to truly evaluate the way information is structured within languages without using spatial mapping functions. They believed that a combination of gestures and spoken language “can deepen our knowledge of what is common in human discourse in spite of any differences in the conventionalized structure or the modality of individual languages” (Taub, et al., 2009). This study showed that discourse can be approached from both the angle of individual language and greater structured language use.

Fairclough (1993) separates these two kinds of discourse by referring to the second, larger-scale kind as ‘Discourse.’ The capital letter adds to it the conceptual base of grand scale and deep meaning, or hegemonic discourse. To Fairclough (1993) the connection between social practices and text is mediated by discourse practice. Relationships between discursive practices within a society create the order of discourse. Interactions between orders of discourse, or different cultures, can be points of conflict as part of wider social struggles (Fairclough, 1993). Within his study, Fairclough (1993) introduced the concept of *interdiscursivity*, which he described as being modeled and related to intertextuality because it focuses on a view of texts transforming the past into the present. *Interdiscursivity* is then the progression of discourse study throughout history. Fairclough (1993) felt it important to relate discourse and power in terms of

hegemony because control of discourse is a hegemonic struggle and struggles over hegemony in a broad sense can involve discourses. Bringing *interdiscursivity* into the present involves methods of critical discourse analysis, but the focus should be on historical changes. Putting discourse in modern studies allows analysis to view the constitution and reproduction of power relations in society and understand cultural identities (Fairclough, 1993).

Studies in discourse analysis have begun to appear more often in the last 15 years. Looking at language representation and meaning in a critical manner, or deconstruction, has become more popular. Fairclough (1993) attributed this to three developments in contemporary discursive practice. First, contemporary society was increasingly being viewed as 'post-traditional', public relations based on authority are in decline and traditions have to be justified against alternatives. Second, the reflexivity of knowledge production was rising in importance. Finally, people were seeing contemporary culture more and more as 'promotional' or 'consumer' driven. This last point contributes to the previous discussion of authenticity. Fairclough (1993) saw the constant subjection to promotional discourse as leading to a problem of trusting the information source or producer.

This can be troubling to Indigenous media productions. If groups are to make any impact of mainstream culture, the authorship of their work needs to be strong and free from the influence of outside discourses that can alter the meaning of the Indigenous group. One way to help improve Indigenous media production is to apply methodologies of critical discourse analysis to their media as way to evaluate the message and meaning. Fairclough (1993) believed:

Discourse analysis has the capacity to put other sorts of social analysis into connection with the fine detail of particular instances of institutional practice in a way which is simultaneously oriented to textual detail, the production, distribution and interpretation/consumption of texts, and wider social cultural contexts.

Clearly, critical discourse analysis can offer solutions to the issues of Indigenous media representation and help the production of Indigenous identity with that media. It can reveal the power behind representations; contest those representations; and promote diverse representations within Indigenous cultural studies. The message is always important, but determining the structuring and identity of the message will lead to a better understanding of the message. Because making sense of a culture is an active process, we cannot just absorb material and see the meaning of an author. Discourse analysis helps us gather ideas and process meaning, even if it is not the author's intent (Shurmer-Smith, 2002e). It is relevant to geographical studies because all forms of text represent places and space is used as a method of communicating the ideas. Texts help the reader imagine places they have no reference of, but they can also be used as an evaluation of first-hand experiences (Shurmer-Smith, 2002e).

Within Indigenous geographies, the results of this study will hopefully provide a better understanding of how marginalized American Indians continue to attempt to work with the non-Indigenous community. Using video available on the Internet for the study is a somewhat new area of media studies and associating it with community relations on a regional scale gives credence to its relation to geography. How these public relations videos are produced and the representation present in them is an effort in mediating Indigenous geography. Ideally, discourse analysis will be able to provide an answer the

question: what messages can be found in representations within Chickasaw public relations videos?

Methods

The research was conducted using a grounded approach to prevent bias from the European American viewpoint. Glaser and Strauss (1967) described grounded theory research as a method for discovering theory from the data systematically instead of using the data to test a preconceived hypothesis. In most sociological research, Glaser and Strauss (1967) felt that the generation of theory takes a back seat to verification. Grounded theory is suited to its supposed uses instead of using theory generated by logical deduction from *a priori* assumptions. Testing a predetermined hypothesis closes the door to the possibility of discovering new concepts and hypotheses that are relevant to the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). While the hypotheses and concepts come from the data, the process of research allows for them to be developed in relation to the data, but the sources of new ideas can come from outside the research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Also, grounded theory research is a general method of comparative analysis, which is important for comparing the two types of videos present. To follow the grounded approach, I did not determine coding categories in advance and I did not ask for opinions or discuss rhetoric with preliminary interview questions, so no assumptions could be made.

I based the selection of the videos on an initial search of the Chickasaw website (Chickasaw.net). Four videos were available on the website, the *An Enduring Nation* video and three examples from the *United We Thrive* series. Upon further investigation

and information from the Chickasaw Multimedia department, I found the remaining 21 videos of the *United We Thrive* series. In order to begin the analysis, I needed access to these videos. The most recent set of the *United We Thrive* series (2008) is available on the Internet at the Ackerman-McQueen website (am.com). I obtained the other set (2007) directly from the Chickasaw tribe as a DVD by request. I viewed the videos using the media player on a laptop during note-taking and a DVD player during transcribing.

Before watching the videos, I conducted interviews with two members of the Chickasaw Multimedia staff; one a production coordinator involved in the production of *An Enduring Nation*, the other a media relations director involved with the *United We Thrive* series. These interviews were semi-structured to ask questions about the production, the desired intent, the intended audience and how the videos were disseminated to that audience. I did not consider the responses to the interview questions in the coding, but primarily used them to aid in the analysis of the videos.

During each viewing, I took notes about specific word use, images, sound, slogan use, and how each of the elements related to the others. Most importantly, I made notes about things that were *NOT* said as part of recognition of exclusion of known details. In the first viewing I focused on the relation of elements, the second viewing on word use, the third on images and sound, and any other viewings to look for questions and issues that might be raised or elements I missed in previous viewings. I watched each video enough times to reach saturation in the notes. I identified saturation as the point when I recognized no new material and was able to recall exactly what was said next or what images were coming up next. For *An Enduring Nation* saturation was reached at six viewings, and for the *United We Thrive* series the number of viewings was five for each.

After reaching a point of saturation in the note-taking process, I transcribed each video in order to ensure the correct word use was identified. I broke the transcription down by sentence (or group of sentences comprising a statement) to be coded along with the notes. I stored the notes and transcriptions in a spreadsheet where each type was given a color so they could be identified at a later time. I treated the notes, questions, and transcription pieces equally in the coding; giving no special weight to any statement or note.

The first step in the coding process was to identify words that described the theme of the statement, note or question. In many cases there were several possible themes for each piece. Once a word was used, I stored it as a possible theme for other pieces; allowing for repetition. Once each piece had at least one theme word, I consolidated the themes for synonyms and over-generalization and placed them into a word map. The word map allowed me to group the words into three major themes that I identified as: *culture, nation, and unity*.

Then I continued the coding process by returning to the notes and transcriptions to place each piece in a major theme based on the themes that had been identified earlier. Then a secondary or axial code was applied based on one of the initial themes from the first step. The axial coding was intended to highlight specific themes that were not consistent throughout the videos, but were identified in a few of them.

Once I coded each video, I watched each video one final time to check for mistakes or missed images. I reviewed the coding for accuracy and consistency and to make sure the theme groupings made sense. I counted the coded groups for all videos to obtain a quantitative analysis of the themes in order to aid in the analysis. I highlighted

individual pieces of text that stood out from the norm for review and to serve as examples in the analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

Video Dissemination /Creation of a Functional Region

The intended audience and the audience reception are important aspects of the discourse in the videos. *An Enduring Nation* is a special case because it is available for viewing on the Chickasaw website for anyone with Internet access. The Internet availability is not promoted in any way by the tribe, so the primary dissemination of this video is through the Chickasaw Governor's speaking tours. According to a production coordinator with the tribe, the video was originally much longer, but it was shortened so the Governor of the tribe could use it to speak of Chickasaw culture. The exact locations of the Governor's speaking appearances were not divulged in the interview with the production coordinator, so their individual locations cannot be considered in a geographic dissemination. The audiences viewing *An Enduring Nation* are selected by the Governor but distributed over a wide, indefinite area (interview with production coordinator, 2009). Essentially, the dissemination of the Chickasaw videos should be considered regional.

The video series *United We Thrive* should be treated as a commercial because it was produced to air on television instead of for public speaking. Even though the second set of videos is available on the Internet (www.am.com), and two others from the first set can be viewed on the tribal website (www.chickasaw.net), the primary method of dissemination is through commercial spots on television stations in the region. The distribution of the television stations shows a near complete coverage of the state of Oklahoma and parts of Texas (*Figure 5*). The videos were broadcast on network and cable stations in the television markets of Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Sherman/Ada

(personal communication with media relations representative, 2010). By comparing the station broadcast areas and the Chickasaw domain we see that the broadcast zones cover the area of Chickasaw influence as well as outside areas. The Sherman/Ada market extends into Texas which allows the Chickasaws to reach more viewers in the Interstate-35 corridor between Oklahoma City and Dallas, Texas (fcc.gov and personal communication with media relations representative, 2010).

The extension into the Tulsa market allows the Chickasaws to broadcast their message and public relations outside of their domain. As with businesses that provide services, the Chickasaws are extending their presence into an area where there may be competition for public relations ‘space’ and for support from the public. But Tulsa is the only outside market the Chickasaws have expanded their message to. The Lawton/Wichita Falls market in southwestern Oklahoma did not receive the *United We Thrive* videos. No specific rationale is given for not investing in broadcasting in one outside market and not another (personal communication with media relations representative, 2010).

The Chickasaw video dissemination creates a functional discourse region in which the Chickasaw message is conveyed. Berry (1968) referred to aggregations of cultural phenomena as functional regions. When a group of people, often spanning separate geographic regions, like multiple television markets, are joined by a phenomenon, they can form a functional region. By communicating their message to the community, the discourse of the videos creates a functional region; linking people from different parts of the region with shared understandings and common ideas.

Visual Elements of the Message

By examining the visual elements of the video more pieces of the message can be extracted and interpreted. According to Barsam (2007), the primary way a video or film is set-up and designed is called the *mise-en-scene*. The *mise-en-scene* is literally “staging or putting on an action or scene,” it is basically how all the aspects of the scene are set up and related. This includes set design, costumes, make-up, lighting, and hair-styles, everything that is important to portray the essence of the video (Barsam, 2007). For the consideration of the Chickasaw videos some of the changes in the elements are easier to spot than others but each one plays at least a small role.

For the *United We Thrive* series, the *mise-en-scene* is essentially the same for each piece. In the first set of videos, each subject is sitting in front of the camera in casual dress, the only exception being Matthew Neumeyer in army fatigues. The background is lit with a single yellow-orange light and has a flag, either the United States or the Oklahoma flag, on a pole. The interview clips are interspersed with clips of the subject in action or still photographs. In Shay Buchanan’s interview, we see her competing in the Special Olympics and receiving awards. For Wyas Parker’s video he is playing piano and composing music. These clips place the viewer in the context of the subject’s experience so the viewer can better understand the subject.

The second set of *United We Thrive* videos is vastly different from the first set. The most notable aspect is the black background in each video and the absence of non-interview pieces. Each video is made up entirely of interview clips with only a few text graphics as other visual elements. Each subject is dressed more formally, coat and tie or at least a dress shirt, the only exception being John Herrington who is in a NASA flight

suit. No specific reason was given for the changes between the series by Chickasaw representatives.

Another important part of the visual analysis is the cinematography of the video. The interviews in all *United We Thrive* videos are shot from a close-up eye-level angle. By using a close-up shot, the viewer is given an exclusive view of the subject's emotion or state-of-mind (Barsam, 2007). The viewer can see the smiles, the hand gestures, and the emotion in each subjects' eyes. This eye-level angle puts the subject and viewer on equal footing and fosters a relationship between them. Consequently, the viewer does not feel subordinate to the subject and may even identify with the subject (Barsam, 2007). By editing pieces of the interview together and separating them often with fades, the producers suggest a break in time or talking point. This allows the viewer to understand the flow of the interview and for the subject's most meaningful quotes to be condensed to a one minute commercial (Barsam, 2007).

An Enduring Nation is filmed more like a movie in that there are scenery changes, multiple visual elements and 'characters.' There is a mix of pictures, graphics and live-action 'reenactments' that provide a historical context and set the mise-en-scene. The narrator is often placed in front of graphics or images but is also seen in outdoor settings. This gives the video an appearance of progression and movement. Also, all of the shots are at eye-level, they are short pieces edited together, and there are several fades. These elements keep the viewer interested by following all the changes and feels like the narrator is making conversation instead of lecturing.

Put all these visual elements together with the words and the videos have a strong and cohesive message of *culture, nation, and unity*. Each piece is just as important as any other and the discourse is structured by each part of the message.

Identified Discursive Themes

In the coding process I identified three major themes: *culture, nation, and unity*. Each theme has both political and temporal aspects that separate it from the others for a cohesive message. These themes can be seen in each of the sets of videos, although not evenly throughout.

Culture as Knowledge. Possibly the most obvious theme in the videos is the description of Chickasaw culture. When an unknown culture is described to someone, it is typically done so they may learn about the unknown culture or clarify a misunderstanding. In the case of the Chickasaw videos, the description of the Chickasaw culture also shows the viewer similarities between the viewer's and the Chickasaw culture. By describing specific aspects of what it means to be a Chickasaw and comparing it with the American society at-large, the Chickasaws are looking for common ground between the two groups. Also, they hope to educate the viewer about the Chickasaw culture, which makes the viewer more likely to understand how to interact with Chickasaws.

Tradition was the most common sub-theme under *culture* found in *An Enduring Nation*. It was also most prevalent in the second set of *United We Thrive* videos and moderately present in the first set. *Tradition* speaks to the aspects of Chickasaw culture that are carried through time and that most affect the way they live currently. In the

United We Thrive series there are mentions of how spiritual Chickasaw people are, both in traditional beliefs and Western religion, and how that guides individuals and helps them be leaders in their community. For example, Courtney Parchcorn talks about the spiritual meanings of the feather and the eagle on the beaded cane she has made and how completing the cane helped her connect with her deceased grandfather who was a spiritual role model for her. Primarily, discussions of *tradition* are found in all three video sets when discussing specific pieces of the culture. For example, Mason Cole describes how his Aunt Te Ata traveled the country telling stories in the Chickasaw tradition to other American Indian groups and schools. In *An Enduring Nation*, the narrator talks about how the family clan system before European contact was structured around the oldest female but the men were elected chief. The viewer is also presented with 26 different of images of how the Chickasaws appeared and what their civilization looked like throughout the video. For example, there are drawings and computer graphics of pre-contact towns and live-action scenes of hunters with loincloths and feathers in the beginning of *An Enduring Nation*. These images place the viewer in a historical and geographic context for understanding the Chickasaw. The viewer can understand geographically the movement of the Chickasaw culture through time and space from the southeast to Oklahoma.

Other sub-themes that build the message of Chickasaw culture can be seen in the word map (*Figure 1*). The second set of *United We Thrive* videos seemed to focus on *family* and how important it is to Chickasaw culture. Two of the videos featured a mother/daughter pair and focused on how the mother supported her daughter who struggled with an ailment. In both cases the daughter spoke of how much their family's

love meant and how important it was to their Chickasaw heritage. *Family* references speak to a cohesiveness of Chickasaw people that is linked to nuclear and extended family relations.

Throughout *An Enduring Nation* there was a discussion of the *history* of the Chickasaw people as it related to their situation. While other sub-themes could have been linked to *history*, the references coded as *history* mentioned specific facts or events such as the first contact with Hernando DeSoto and the drafting of the Chickasaw Nation constitution, and the other sub-themes were more subjective about history. The large number of *history* references in *An Enduring Nation*, and the lack of references in the *United We Thrive* series, can be explained by the purpose of the videos. *An Enduring Nation* was intended to serve as a historical reference for the tribal Governor's speeches and the *United We Thrive* commercials were meant to send a more time-relevant message to the viewers. Despite this discrepancy, the importance of a culture rooted in its *history* is pervasive in the Chickasaw message.

Other sub-themes in the videos include *respect, adaptation, survival, common values, pride, mistreatment, determination, bravery, warrior, and Indian*. I used the literal meaning of each sub-theme. Across the videos some of these sub-themes were more present than others. For example, *respect* was more present in the first *United We Thrive* series compared to the *An Enduring Nation* video, but *adaptation* was more present in *An Enduring Nation* compared to the *United We Thrive* series. *Respect* was typically associated with either the younger generation respecting their elders or the Chickasaws gaining respect in the community. In *An Enduring Nation* references to *adaptation* infer how the tribe's culture has adapted to the changes in their environments

and political situations. On a similar note, *survival*, *mistreatment* and *determination* refer to specific ways in which the Chickasaw people experienced hardship and their efforts to persist. The stereotypical conception of an American Indian, a proud, brave warrior, or the ‘noble savage’ idea, is conveyed through the videos’ references to *Indian*, *pride*, *bravery*, and *warrior*. It seemed as if the Chickasaws preferred to portray themselves as proud warriors. If the proud warrior theme is not how the Chickasaws truly see themselves than the producers of the videos may have decided to represent themselves in a stereotypical way to appeal to viewers need for familiarity. Finally, there are a few examples of *common values*, references to Chickasaw values similar to other groups such as when the narrator discussed the Chickasaw commitment to education within their schools.

Building a Nation. The second, and most hidden, theme in the Chickasaw videos is the idea of the Chickasaw Nation. For a significant portion of their history of interactions with Europeans and Americans, the Chickasaws were politically referred to as a nation. Some of the videos make reference to the tribe’s efforts to maintain a nation or aspects of it. In most cases these references are used to emphasize the importance of the tribe and how strong they were and are as a cohesive group. By describing their successes and abilities as a political and economic entity, the Chickasaws are displaying their capacity to function separately from the United States; almost as if they were autonomous. The message suggests that if given the opportunity, the Chickasaw Nation could be a nation independent of the United States.

Only two sub-themes under *nation* were found in all three video sets.

Representation and *identity* examples were present in both sets of *United We Thrive*

videos and in *An Enduring Nation*, a title that suggests the concept of a nation. In most cases, *representation* is found through the use of one or more images in connection with the narrator's or subject's words. For example, towards the end of *An Enduring Nation*, several images cross the screen while the narrator talks about the progress and advancements the tribe had made. These images are of construction workers, doctors treating patients, and children in a library. Also, while the narrator discusses how Chickasaw business is a model for others, images cross the screen of a bank, a welder, and an electrician. These images are intended to represent what the Chickasaws think of themselves. The primary use of *identity* came from the first set of *United We Thrive* videos. At the beginning of each interview, the subject would state his or her name and what they were known for, then they would add "and I am a Chickasaw." This statement provided both a visual connection to the diverse appearance of the Chickasaw and gave a human element to the Chickasaw message.

Several parts of *An Enduring Nation* refer to Chickasaw *prosperity* and how it has aided the advancements of the tribe. The history of the tribe is marked with rich and powerful mixed-blood Chickasaws making decisions for the whole tribe and lessening the hardship of relocation and life in Oklahoma (Gibson, 1971). Both *An Enduring Nation* and a few of the *United We Thrive* videos make reference to the success of Chickasaw enterprises and how it helps keep the tribe financially stable.

Another sub-theme that was prevalent in *An Enduring Nation* was *sovereignty*. Along with *authority*, *sovereignty* references alluded to how the Chickasaws negotiated their own treaties, chose their own reservation lands in Oklahoma, maintained and developed leadership in tribal government, and worked for independence from other

tribes and the United States. As part of building a nation, the Chickasaw videos describe how the tribe has strived to be separate from the United States in as many ways as possible without seeming revolutionary. For example, William Paul discusses in his *United We Thrive* interview the foundation of an independent Chickasaw court system for dealing with tribal matters.

Finally, the videos suggested two important sub-themes within *nation*, *nation building* and *nation deconstruction*. Both of these are found in the two geographic areas of the Chickasaws, their former domain in the southeast and their current domain in Oklahoma. There are several references in *An Enduring Nation* for *nation deconstruction*, which are essentially mistreatments to the structure of the historic Chickasaw Nation. For example, the narrator talks about United States presidents appointing the Chickasaw governors to oversee the ‘dismantling’ of the nation. The most striking example appears when the narrator is describing the statehood of Oklahoma and says “and with the stroke of a pen the Chickasaw Nation’s new government was torn apart.” The difficult part for the Chickasaws was that the integrity of their nation was being demolished from hundreds of miles away without their input. An example of *nation building* from *An Enduring Nation* is when the viewer sees a live-action portrayal of Chickasaw leaders signing the Nation’s new constitution. Another example can be seen when the narrator is describing the new programs the Chickasaw Nation started during its recovery in the 1970s and ‘80s. These sub-themes portray the struggles and efforts of the tribe to be united as one people.

Unity in the Community. The theme of *unity* takes the ideas from both *culture* and *nation* to meld a message of togetherness for the viewer. Parts of the videos that discuss

how the tribe was working with the community and things that Chickasaws had in common with non-Chickasaws are considered *unity* references. For example, the videos discussed coordinated legislation efforts, health education, and working with outside organizations. Primarily, the videos seem to convey the worth of the Chickasaw tribe within the greater community.

The sub-theme that appears in all three videos is *outside relations*, relations with non-Chickasaw entities both inside and outside the Chickasaw domain. While this may seem more related to the theme of *nation*, in this case it references how the tribe cooperated with other groups like the federal or state government, the Special Olympics, or the American Medical Association. For instance, in *An Enduring Nation*, the references to *outside relations* focus on how they traded peacefully with Europeans, remained uninvolved in the American Revolution, and sought out the United States government for making treaties. In the *United We Thrive* series, there are mentions of working with congress on health issues and cooperating with Oklahoma state government on regional issues. Similarly, there are a few examples of *working together*, but in the context of how individuals work with each other not how larger entities work together, like when the narrator in *An Enduring Nation* mentions that every tribal employee plays their part in the success of the Chickasaw Nation. This indicates that every member of the tribe working together is important to the goals of the nation. The videos may be marketing to the Nation as a whole in an effort to bring them together and accomplish more.

A large group of sub-themes appear infrequently in a few of the *United We Thrive* videos, but are still important to mention. *Opportunity, leadership, youth involvement,*

improvement, intelligence, health, and future are examples of ways in which the Chickasaw tribe represents itself as integral to the greater good of the community at-large. They can be intelligent members of the scientific community; they have leaders throughout the local, regional and national government; they are concerned about health issues, youth programs, and the future; and they try to provide a diverse group of opportunities to all. The message within these sub-themes is that the Chickasaw tribe is united with the rest of the community in concerns and goals.

The strongest sub-theme within the message of *unity* is *contribution*. The majority of *unity* references within the *United We Thrive* videos are concerned with how the Chickasaws are contributing to their community. Jonathan Trent's video discussed his contributions to cancer research. Mason Cole talked about the contributions of his Aunt Te Ata to American Indian culture. Major Matthew Neumeier spoke of his efforts in the Iraq War and how United States soldiers are like Chickasaw warriors. These contributions can be seen on several levels from tribal to national.

All of these themes and sub-themes taken together represent the Chickasaw public relations message and the discourse present in it. By examining them in a quantitative way, the strength of each individual message becomes more obvious.

Quantitative Observations

In order to put the discourse analysis in context, I examined the coding data quantitatively, as a simple content analysis. While not the primary focus of the project, a quantitative observation provides a reference to the analysis of the videos that would not be directly concerned with discourse but adds emphasis to aspects of the discourse.

VIDEO	Culture	Nation	Unity	Total
An Enduring Nation	64 (43.9%)	71 (48.6%)	11 (7.5%)	146
United We Thrive 2007	45 (48.9%)	22 (23.9%)	25 (27.2%)	92
United We Thrive 2008	32 (38.6%)	10 (12.0%)	41 (49.4%)	83

Table 1: Theme percentages in each video.

Table 1 shows the relationship between each theme in each video set. Each video has a different theme that is most prevalent, a second theme that is important but appears slightly less frequently, and the third theme that moves to the background.

Each is defined by the number and percentage of times they appear in each video.

Culture is either the primary theme, as in the first set of *United We Thrive*, or the secondary theme. *Nation* is the dominant theme in *An Enduring Nation*, the video about the history and struggles of the Chickasaw Nation. *Unity* only appears 7.5 percent of the time in *An Enduring Nation*, which is a more inwardly focused video, but is significant to both *United We Thrive* video series that deal with contributions and outside relations.

Table 2 shows the breakdown of sub-themes in *An Enduring Nation*. It shows that the culture message is predominantly about tradition and history as well as how they adapted to the changes in Chickasaw way of life. Also, it shows the focus on sovereignty and representation in how they want to be treated and how they see themselves. The discussion of *prosperity*, how they struggled to keep the nation together, and how they have worked to maintain it are also found within the *nation* theme. Finally, the table shows that the only *unity* sub-themes discussed are how the tribe dealt with other groups and how they worked together.

Culture		Nation		Unity	
Tradition	17	Sovereignty	20	Outside Relations	8
History	15	Representation	14	Working Together	3
Adaptation	12	Nation Deconstruction	12		
Common Values	5	Prosperity	12		
Pride	4	Nation Building	8		
Mistreatment	4	Authority	4		
Survival	3	Identity	1		
Warrior	2				
Family	2				

Table 2: An Enduring Nation sub-theme distribution.

Table 3 breaks down the sub-theme distribution for the first series of *United We Thrive* videos. It shows the primary focus on *culture*, with an emphasis on the importance of the family and respect for others. The secondary theme of *unity* focuses on the contributions the tribe has made to society. While *nation* has the lowest percentage of references, every subject in the series identified themselves as a Chickasaw, making it a strong sub-theme, which is part of showing the diverse make-up of the nation because of the diverse appearance of the subjects of the videos.

Culture		Nation		Unity	
Family	13	Identity	16	Contribution	13
Respect	10	Representation	6	Intelligence	4
Survival	6			Opportunity	4
Bravery	5			Health	3
Tradition	5			Outside Relations	1
Determination	4				
Common Values	2				

Table 3: United We Thrive 2007 sub-theme distribution.

Table 4 shows the sub-theme distribution for the second set of *United We Thrive* videos. In this set, the focus shifts to *unity* but within that theme it remains focused on the efforts of the tribe to contribute to the greater good of the society at-large. Because this series of videos is more about the contemporary Chickasaw culture, there are fewer references to the same *culture* sub-themes, outside of *tradition*, it is very evenly distributed. Again, *nation* is the least prominent theme, but there are several aspects of the videos that reflect the way the tribe represents themselves.

Culture		Nation		Unity	
Tradition	9	Representation	4	Contribution	12
Respect	4	Authority	3	Outside Relations	10
Survival	4	Identity	2	Leadership	5
Indian	3	Prosperity	1	Youth Involvement	4
Determination	2			Improvement	3
Common Values	2			Opportunity	3
Adaptation	2			Health	2
Pride	2			Future	2
Warrior	2				

Table 4: United We Thrive 2008 sub-theme distribution.

Discussion

As the results of the coding themes show, the discourse of these Chickasaw public relations videos shows the tribe's focus on *culture*, *nation* and *unity*. While the general meanings of each of these themes have been discussed, what they actually mean in regards to the Chickasaw message leaves room for interpretation. One aspect of the message that is unknown is the actual meaning intended by the Chickasaw producers, but through discourse analysis, this study discovered a set of themes for one interpretation.

By looking at the audience reached through network television broadcasts, the main intended audience is made clear. The distribution of the *United We Thrive* videos into the Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Sherman/Ada markets allows the Chickasaws to reach the population they are in contact with the most. It also shows their desire to reach into a market (Tulsa) that is outside of their domain, but part of the regional community. The Tulsa market may contain businesses in which the Chickasaw Nation wants to compete with. Also, the extension into Texas by using the Sherman/Ada market allows the Chickasaw to communicate with the population occupying the area between the Chickasaw domain and the important market of Dallas. It is an extension of their entrepreneurial endeavors along the Interstate-35 corridor.

The dissemination of *An Enduring Nation* is selective but difficult to define. The Chickasaw Governor can use the video in any of his speeches at any location, but the specific locations are unknown. As for the accessibility of the Internet, the chance that any given person in the world will watch either *An Enduring Nation* or one of the *United We Thrive* videos is completely random. This randomness of Internet access is a strategy of the Chickasaw public relations message dissemination.

Before the Chickasaws came into contact with Europeans, their association of clans probably did not identify themselves as nation or even a united government. Only when certain members of the tribe began to deal with the Europeans and claim to speak for the whole tribe was the idea of a Chickasaw Nation discussed (Gibson, 1971). When the tribe agreed to treaties and relocation they found themselves more organized into a nation, but after the dissolution of Indian reservations in Oklahoma, the Chickasaw Nation lost cohesiveness (Gibson, 1971). Recently, the tribe has worked to gain more

autonomy and power in south-central Oklahoma and their efforts in nation-building are renewed. The discourse in their public relations videos points to the building of a homeland and a more globalized Chickasaw Nation which is also fostered by the posting of the videos on the Internet.

The concept of building a homeland is typically a non-political action taken by a group of people who are self-conscious of an emotional bonding to a particular place (Schnell, 2000). The Chickasaws represent a culture group that is not the majority in their 'home' region whose strong emotional tie to south-central Oklahoma is key to understanding their idea of a homeland and their motivation in developing these videos. Schnell (2000) outlined a method for finding a group's homeland by studying "the material imprint that a group has made on a particular landscape." Another less-obvious method suggested by Schnell (2000) is to examine broad questions of "group identity and belonging to a community." By analyzing the discourse in the Chickasaw videos, this study combines both of these methods to find that Chickasaw public relations efforts point towards a desire to maintain the established homeland in south-central Oklahoma. The videos represent a cultural imprint that speaks to the Chickasaw desire to be an integral part of the greater Oklahoma community and to rebuild their nation in their new 'homeland.' Their messages about *culture*, *nation* and *unity* provide strong examples of this desire.

Part of an ethnic group building a homeland involves connecting with place. The concept of 'place-making' among American Indians was examined by Rundstrom (1994) in the occupation of Alcatraz Island in 1969. Just because an ethnic group occupies and adapts to their surroundings it does not necessarily mean the group has connected to the

place. “Place and human identity must be invested in each other for ethnogenesis to occur,” (Rundstrom, 1994). Rundstrom (1994) felt that place consists of four related elements: physical site, created environment, social milieu, and personal and shared meanings. For the Chickasaws, the physical site is their domain in south-central Oklahoma. Within this site, the Chickasaws have constructed many administrative buildings, businesses and landmarks that serve as a created environment. The creation of educational programs, courts, and enterprises are examples of the social milieu of the Chickasaw. Their political organization also represents a form of social construction. By creating political goals and ideals tied to place that are visible to outsiders, the ethnic group gains a powerful form of social cohesion (Rundstrom, 1994). The Chickasaw public relations videos serve as a way of presenting these political goals, but they also develop shared meanings through discourse. By associating the tribe with the messages present in the videos, the Chickasaws hope to unite their people under a common message.

Finally, the three themes found in the Chickasaw videos hint at the tribe’s efforts to adapt to the globalized world. While the tribe is not necessarily expanding into international business, despite a comment in the *United We Thrive* interview with Chickasaw legislator Linda Briggs about the tribe being present in four foreign countries, there is evidence of the tribe seeking a regional, national and global position. In his discussion of the theories of globalization, Robinson (2007) mentioned five areas of study in globalization. The Chickasaw public relations efforts could fall into two of those areas. First, Robinson (2007) discussed the work in the patterns, practices and flows of ‘global cultures.’ Second, the Chickasaws could be considered part of what Robinson

(2007) called a transnational identity or community. The evidence for globalization comes from the changed relationship between the local and the global within the Chickasaw society. Historically, the Chickasaws were isolated to their territory, no matter how large or undefined, but through the development of media, especially the Internet, they are pressing their message beyond their territorial boundaries. The extension of ideas about home, locality and community around the world has globalized the idea of local and communal which has aided to the globalization process, or what Robinson (2007) and others call 'glocalization.' By displaying their viewpoint throughout their videos and placing them on the Internet, the Chickasaws are extending their message beyond the local and national context. This can also be observed in their tourism sites such as their casino.

Another way to look at the Chickasaw globalization efforts is with the idea of the network society. By broadcasting their messages via the Internet, the Chickasaws are using the power of information technology as part of what Castells (1996) called 'information capitalism.' The public relations videos are part of a knowledge-based, networked, global-scale message. The production of these videos is linked to the Chickasaw culture and thus linked to other information networks. The Internet has built a symbolic environment that is global in reach even when produced locally (Castells, 1996).

Despite the intention of the grounded approach, I noticed a few aspects of Chickasaw history and culture that surprisingly did not appear in the videos. First, there is no mention of the historic division in the tribe between the mixed-blood elites and the full-blood traditionalists. According to Gibson (1971), the mixed-blood elites were

responsible for most of the Chickasaw wealth and prosperity before and after relocation. It was the mixed-bloods whom the Europeans and Americans negotiated with. The mixed-bloods signed the treaties, agreed to relocation, and selected their land in Oklahoma. Once in Oklahoma, the mixed-bloods were the progressives who contributed to attempts at assimilation. Typically, there was little agreement between the two sides but it never was violent. None the less, the division was the driving force behind the course of Chickasaw history.

Second, there was absolutely no mention of the Chickasaw involvement in slavery. As Gibson (1971) noted, the Chickasaws kept slaves even before the Europeans brought them over to North America. The Chickasaws would take prisoners when they raided villages of other tribes and force them to do most of the manual labor. The accumulation of American Indian slaves provided the Chickasaws with their main source of trading 'goods' with Europeans. A main source of their historical wealth was the slave trade. They brought their slaves to Oklahoma, aligned with the Confederacy during the Civil War, and did not allow freed slaves or those descended from slaves to register with the tribe during the land allotment process. Because of their involvement in slavery and the subsequent unfair treatment of freed slaves, there is an underlying racist feeling to this part of the Chickasaw history, and not addressing slavery only causes an informed viewer to ask more questions.

Finally, in discussions of the current prosperity in both *An Enduring Nation* and the *United We Thrive* videos, there is no mention of the wealth accumulated from the Chickasaw casino, Riverwind. It is possible the subject is avoided because gaming is a divisive subject across America, especially in predominantly Protestant areas like

Oklahoma. If the Chickasaws intend to show the rest of the country that they share common values, funding from gaming profits is not going to be a positive input for those who do not approve of gambling. Many Protestants in the region may not consider gaming a legitimate profession or an appropriate way to make money. The messages of the videos seem to focus the viewer towards other sources of income and the ways in which they use their income (e.g., improving the community). Basically, their message is “don’t worry about where the money comes from, look at the good things we are doing with it.”

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS

Through critical discourse analysis, I interpreted a message within these examples of Chickasaw media production. The discourse spoke of three major themes: *culture*, *nation*, and *unity*. I interpreted these themes to be a focus of Chickasaw public relations towards the importance of their culture and history; their efforts to remain a viable political and economic entity, separate from the United States; and the values and goals they share with the non-Chickasaw community around them. There were several examples of this discourse throughout each video. The first *United We Thrive* video series focuses on *culture*, the traditions the Chickasaws value, what it means to be a Chickasaw, and the importance of family. The second *United We Thrive* series is primarily concerned with *unity*, the contributions Chickasaws make to the greater society, the cooperation with other economic and governmental entities, and the Chickasaw community leaders. *An Enduring Nation* discusses the importance of *nation* by highlighting the struggles of the Chickasaws, how they have worked to rebuild their nation, and that they are a viable political and economic entity.

Also important to the discourse, are things that were not discussed in any of the videos. These topics include their internal conflicts, their historical support for and involvement in slavery, their relations with former slaves and other neighboring tribes, and the revenues they receive from their gaming centers. Not mentioning slavery can be explained as a simple avoidance of an issue that generates a negative image. The Chickasaws may choose not to discuss intertribal relations because they want the focus to

be about their tribe. Most importantly, nondisclosure of the revenue from gaming can be linked to the primarily Protestant population of the audience reached in the broadcast zones (*Figure 5*) and the ‘Protestant work ethic’ that goes with it.

The Chickasaw public relations message, as interpreted from this study, is that the Chickasaw Nation is culturally rich and contributes to the local, regional and national community. The discourses present in the Chickasaw videos show how the Chickasaw Nation engages in nation-building and globalization; produces a functional region of shared meaning in Oklahoma; and is a leader among American Indian tribes in technological advances.

I also found these videos to be an example of an Indigenous group building a functional region. By using the reach of the broadcast zones of the network television stations that carry the *United We Thrive* videos in *Figure 5*, I have outlined the region in which the Chickasaws are communicating their message. The sharing of ideas within this region is an aggregation of cultural phenomena, which Berry (1968) felt was an indicator of a functional region.

The production of these videos by the Chickasaws provides examples of Indigenous place-making and homeland building. Video production is a significant way for a group to identify with a place. It fits all of Rundstrom’s (1994) criteria for place-making. The Chickasaws produced them in a physical site (Ada, Oklahoma), constructed an environment (tribal buildings), used social milieu (media), and constructed shared meaning (discourse). Also, by making an imprint on the cultural landscape of Oklahoma and creating an identity and feeling of belonging, Schnell (2000) might agree that the Chickasaws are building a new homeland in Oklahoma.

The discourse within the videos and their dissemination through television and the Internet is an example of Chickasaw efforts in globalization. By broadcasting their message outside their borders and diffusing their representations of a heterogeneous culture, the Chickasaws are what Robinson (2007) called a transnational group. They are not exporting their culture specifically; instead they are diffusing their representation of themselves as heterogeneous people going against the stereotypical ideas of American Indians in many ways.

This process of globalization produces an interesting dichotomy between the emphasis on tradition in the Chickasaw message and the progressive use of new technologies. I feel that while the ideas of Chickasaw traditions are important, their message speaks to remembering important aspects of tradition, not living in the past. For the Chickasaws, accepting progressive technology is not shunning their traditions; instead they are using technology to communicate values. It could also be an example of what Ginsberg (2008) called 'strategic traditionalism,' the use of technology to display the traditions of the tribe.

Earlier in this study, I presented two concerns about the issues this kind of research faces. I believe this study provides critical steps towards answering them. First, Turner (1995) expressed concern about Indigenous representations:

How can we construct critical representations of reality that will be as free as possible from ideological distortion and the historically repressive associations of representational technologies?

I feel this study has provided a method for addressing this issue in the future. The use of grounded theory is key to the process so that an outsider can be critical of Indigenous discourse and free from 'ideological distortion.' Also, Wilson and Stewart (2008) wanted

to make sure Indigenous groups are aware of the importance of their marketing capabilities, but recognize the need for control of their product:

... marketing and selling 'the Indigenous' through media, tourism, art, crafts, music, and the appropriation of traditional knowledges and Indigenous images has become a profitable enterprise that Indigenous peoples worldwide feel the need to monitor and protect.

This study encourages the assessment of Indigenous public relations efforts from the perspective of both the outsider and the Indigenous producers. It should not be the goal to critique the 'authenticity' of Indigenous media; the goal should be to understand the Indigenous perspective and maintain control of production in the hands of those whom the media represents.

Since I used a grounded approach, it is difficult to assess the successes of this study because I made no assumptions of my findings in the beginning. I feel the *United We Thrive* videos were ideal for this study because of their structure as interviews and their use as commercials on network television. I should have gathered more information about the dissemination of *An Enduring Nation* and more specific air-time information about the *United We Thrive* videos. Also, I believe more interviews with other members of the tribe would have aided in the analysis, especially interviews after the analysis had been conducted to discuss findings.

Discourse analysis was an ideal method for this kind of study because it challenged me to look deep into the videos, to analyze each phrase, and look for meanings in the images. Without a grounded approach, this study would not be following the course of suggested new research, but without it I could have looked for specific themes and been more critical of the discourse. Because of the approach used,

these conclusions cannot be applied to any other Indigenous group, but it would be beneficial to compare these findings with those of another Indigenous group.

Any variation of this study could improve on the findings whether it is through content analysis or through the use of a different medium. These methods could also be applied to any study of another Indigenous group, but in order to maintain the postcolonial viewpoint the grounded approach should be retained. This kind of research could help to answer questions in areas where the Indigenous group is in conflict with the colonial community or to aid a government in understanding how an Indigenous group wishes to communicate their ideas. It could also be used in a historical context to examine Indigenous groups that have died out or are no longer recognized. Discourse analysis of historical documents and artwork could help reintroduce an ancient culture to its descendants and educate others.

Other research could also expand on this study by interviewing the subjects of the *United We Thrive* videos to add their opinions to the interpretation. Also, Chickasaw leaders could be interviewed about the intended message with the Nation's public relations. Finally, another discourse analysis could be done of the media of another tribe in the region to compare with the Chickasaw discourse.

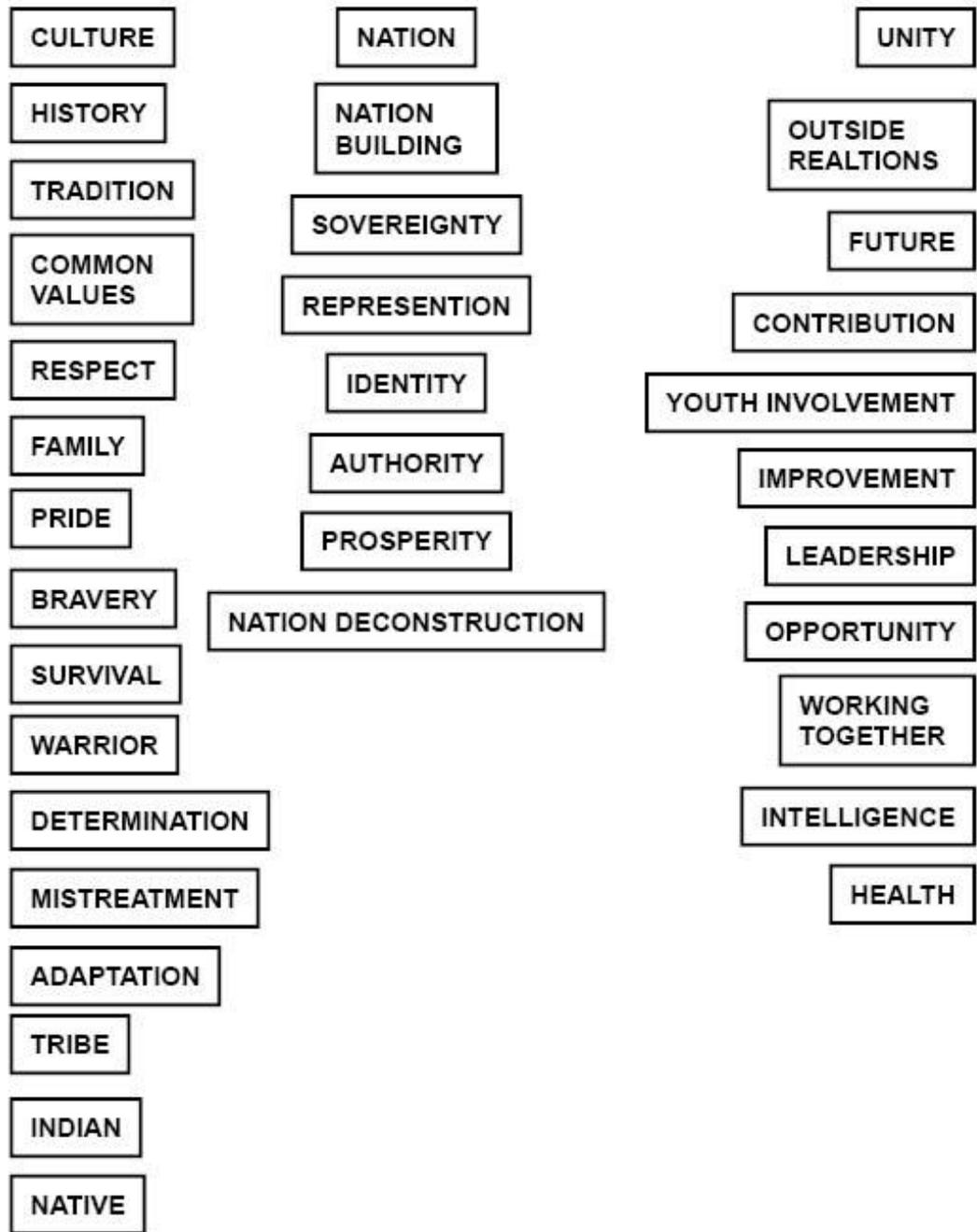


Figure 1: Coding Word Map

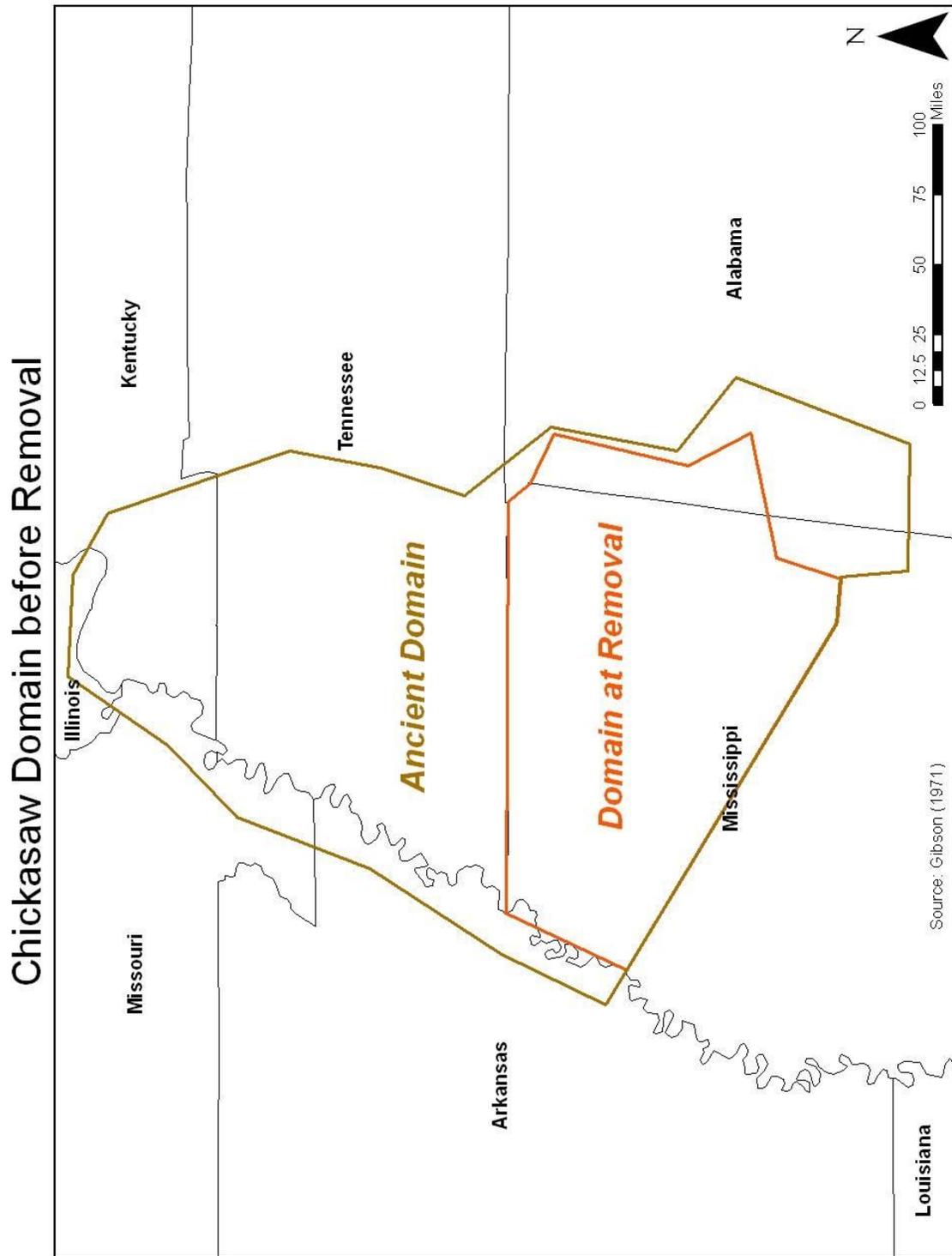


Figure 2: Chickasaw domain in the southeastern United States

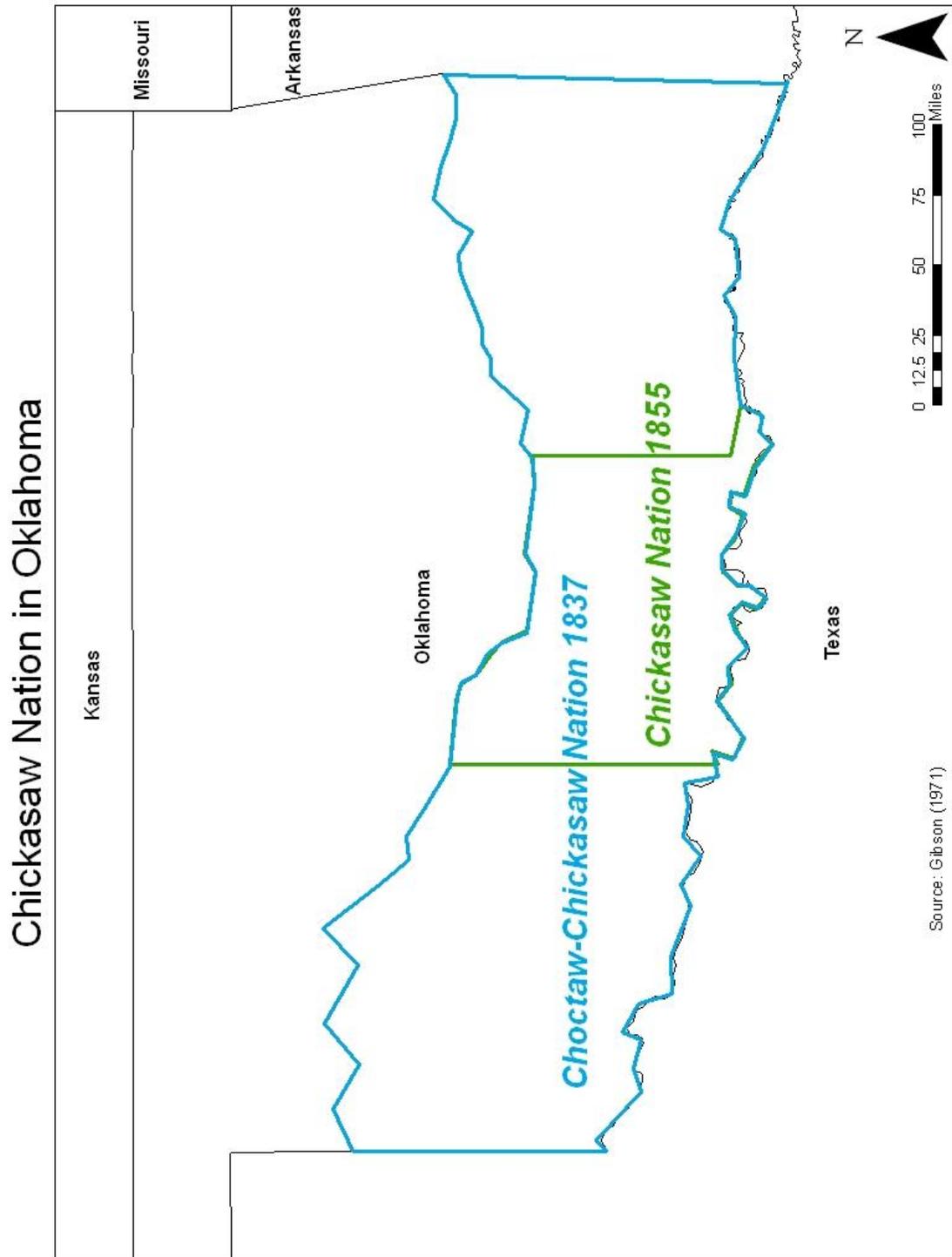


Figure 3: Chickasaw Nation boundaries in Oklahoma

Native American Domains in Oklahoma

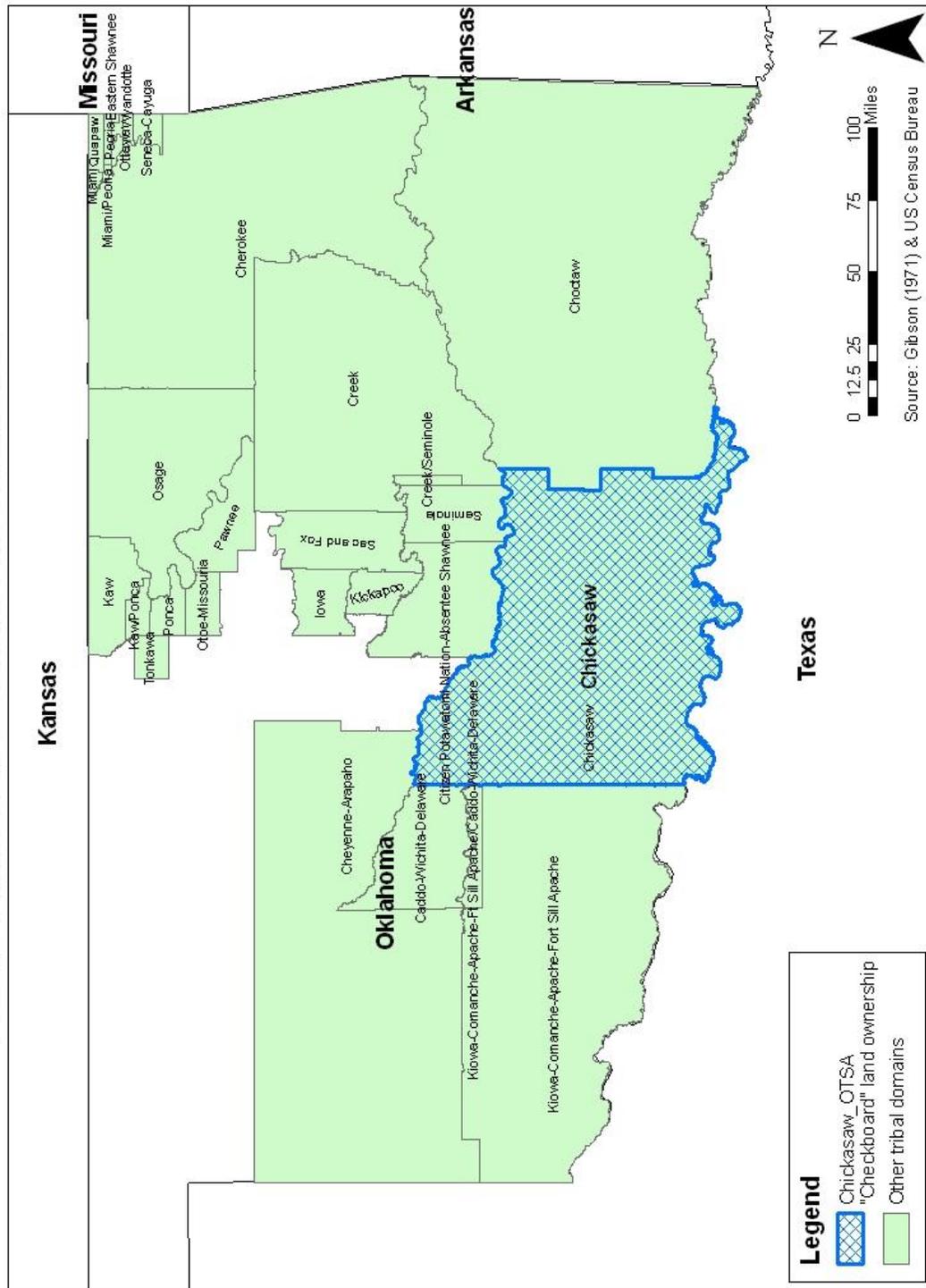


Figure 4: Chickasaw OTSA in relation to other American Indian tribal domains

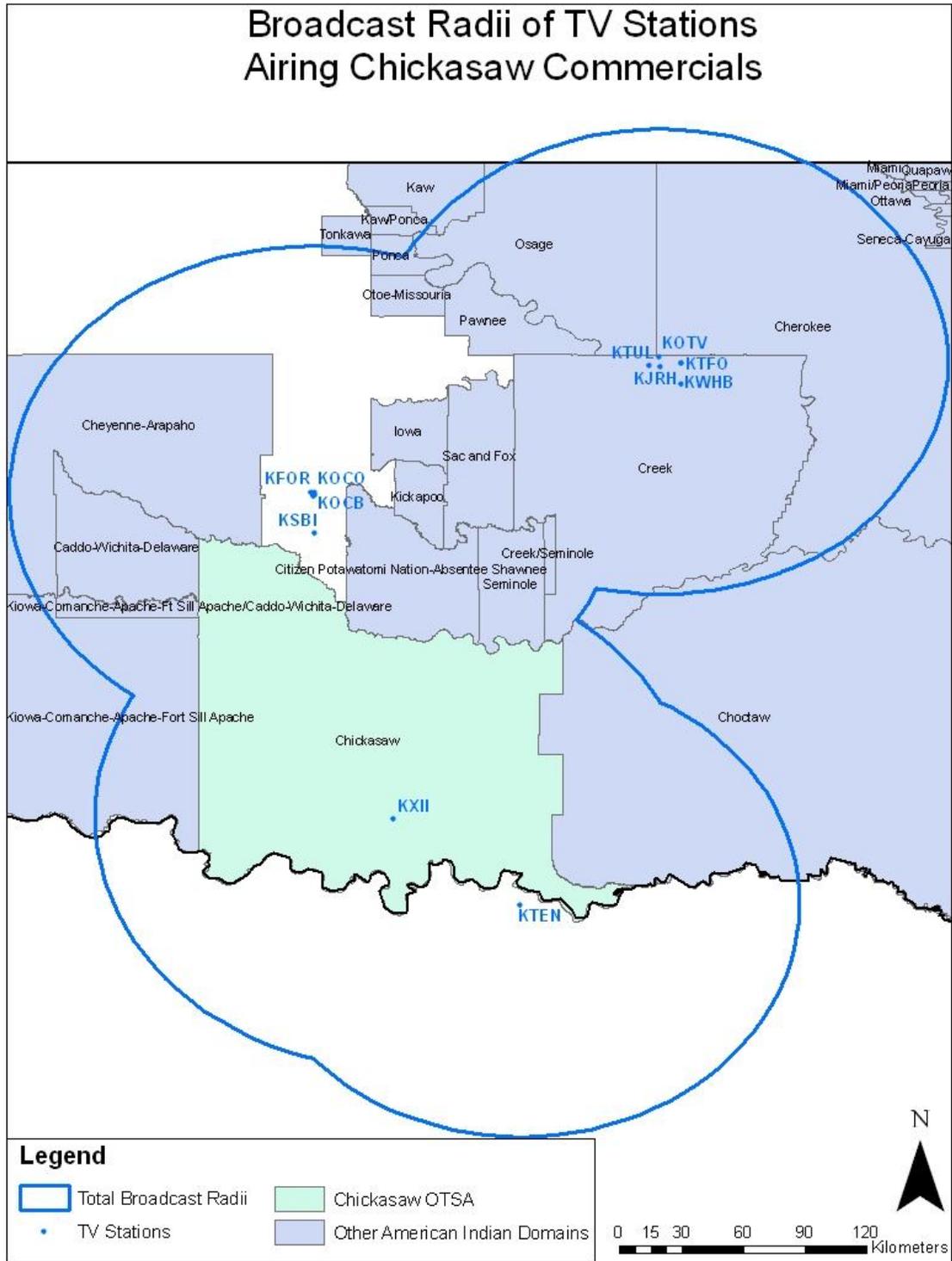


Figure 5: Broadcast Radii of Television Stations Airing Chickasaw Commercials

Appendix A: United We Thrive 2007 interview list.

United We Thrive 2007 Series

Interviewee	Position	Theme
Joe Howard	Oklahoma Highway Patrol Pilot	Bravery
Wyas Parker	Composer	Listening
Margaret R. Wheeler	Artist	Art
Jeannie Barbour	Artist	Family
Matthew Neumeyer	Major, U.S. Army	Service
Vicky Gold & Melissa Morgan	Chickasaw Mother & Daughter	Family
Shay Buchanan & Glenda Johnson	Special Olympics Athlete of the Year & Mother	Determination
Dr. Suzanne Van Cooten	NOAA Hydrometeorologist	Education
Beulah Shavney	WWII Veteran	Chickasaw Women
Mike Larsen	Artist	Painting Life
Teresa Shavney	General Surgeon	Service
Courtney Parchcorn	Artist	Spirituality

Appendix B: United We Thrive 2008 interview list.

United We Thrive 2008 Series

Interviewee	Position	Theme
Mason Cole	Great Nephew of Te Ata	Aunt Te Ata
Mason Cole	Great Nephew of Te Ata	Identity
Jay Keel	Youth & Family Services Administrator	Youth
William Paul	Attorney	Courts
Dr. Judy Goforth Parker	Legislator, Diabetes Educator	Health
Linda Briggs	Legislator	Oklahoma
Tom Love	CEO Love's Travel Stops	Determination
Mike Larsen	Artist	People Painter
Brian Campbell	CEO, Division of Commerce, Chickasaw Enterprises	Enterprises
Dr. Jonathan Trent	Cancer Researcher	Cancer Research
John Herrington	Commander, U.S. Navy, NASA Astronaut	First Indian
Neal McCaleb	Former U.S. Assistant Interior Secretary, Indian Affairs	Interdependence

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