

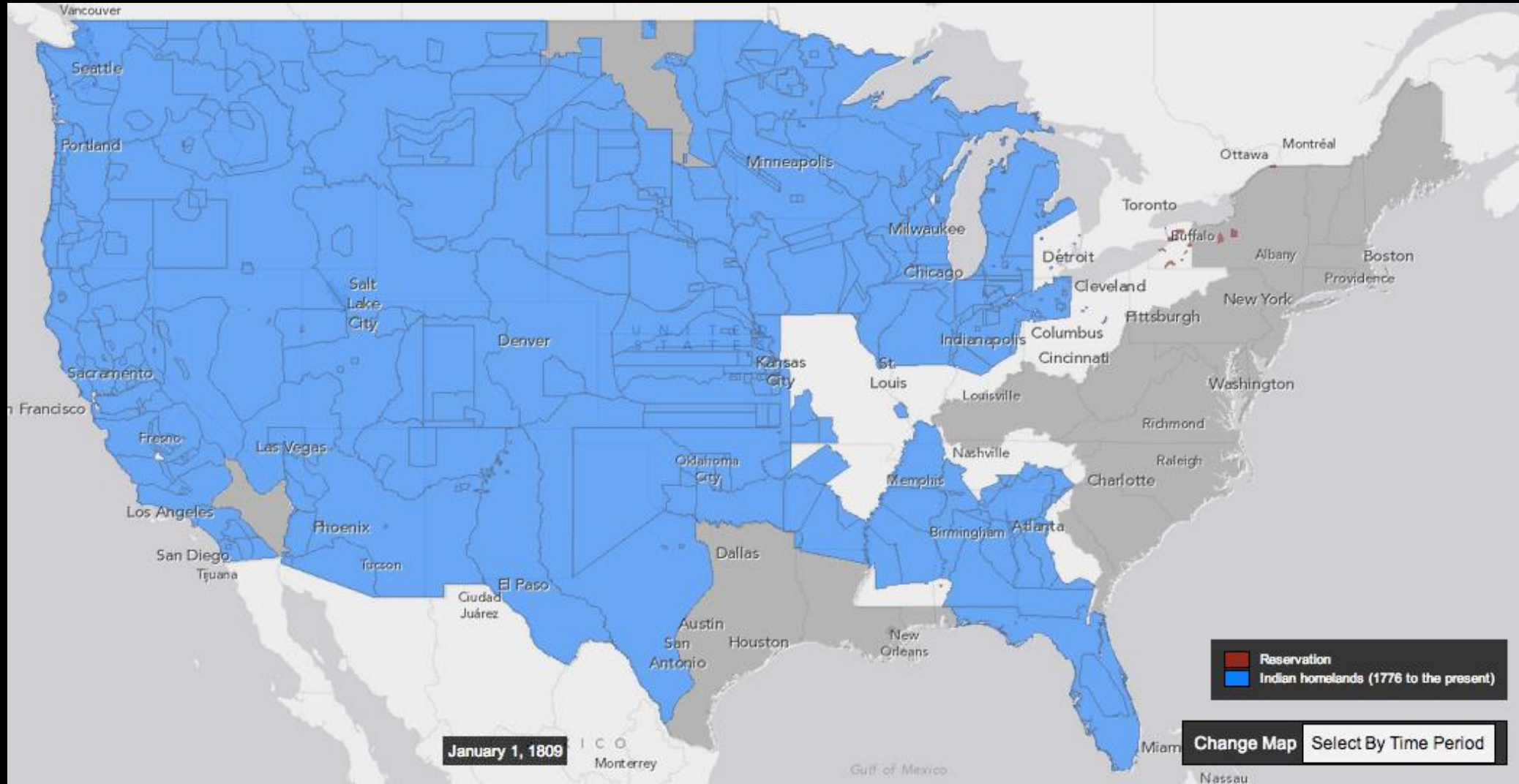
REVERSING THE GAZE: USING INDIGENOUS AND WESTERN WORLDVIEWS TO COMPARE COVERAGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE NEWS MEDIA

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Settler Colonialism



Research Question

How are environmental issues, such as climate change, discussed differently between Indigenous and Western news media outlets?

Media Framing

“Framing is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in a way to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for what’s being described.”

(Entman, 1995, p. 51)

Who's Doing the Framing? Why Does it Matter?

- Framing in the news media shapes how people identify what matters, who might be responsible, and what should be done (O'Neill et al., 2010)
 - Framing as intimately tied to the worldviews, values, and beliefs of who is writing the article, who is given a voice in the article, and who is reading the article
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Indigenous and Western Worldviews

Indigenous

- Holism, interconnectedness, and relatedness (Absolon, 2010; Grandbois and Sanders, 2012)
- Viewing non-human beings as kin (Kimmerer, 2013; Salmon 2000), and reciprocity with the Earth (Gonzales, 2020; Kimmerer, 2011)
- Circular, fluid, relational, transmitted, and nature based (Rahm, 2014)

Western

- Autonomy (Note, 2006)
 - A sense of separateness and superiority to other life (Knudtson and Suzuki, 2008)
 - Linear, mechanistic, analytic, scientifically derived, and time-oriented (Rahm, 2014)
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Indigenous and Western Worldviews

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Western

- Autonomy and personhood (Note, 2006)
 - A sense of separateness and superiority to other life (Knudtson and Suzuki, 2008)
 - Linear, mechanistic, analytic, scientifically derived, and time-oriented (Rahm, 2014)
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Qualitative, Comparative Content Analysis

- Indigenous and Western media
- National and regional focus

	Indigenous	Western	Totals
National	15 Indian Country Today articles	15 The New York Times articles	30 national articles
Regional	15 Navajo Times articles	15 The Salt Lake Tribune articles	30 regional articles
Totals	30 Indigenous worldview articles	30 Western worldview articles	60 total articles

Article Collection

- Search terms:
 - Climate change
 - Environment
 - Native American
 - Timeline: January 1, 2020, to June 1, 2021
 - 60 articles total, 15 from each news outlet
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Indigenous and Western Worldview Media Frames

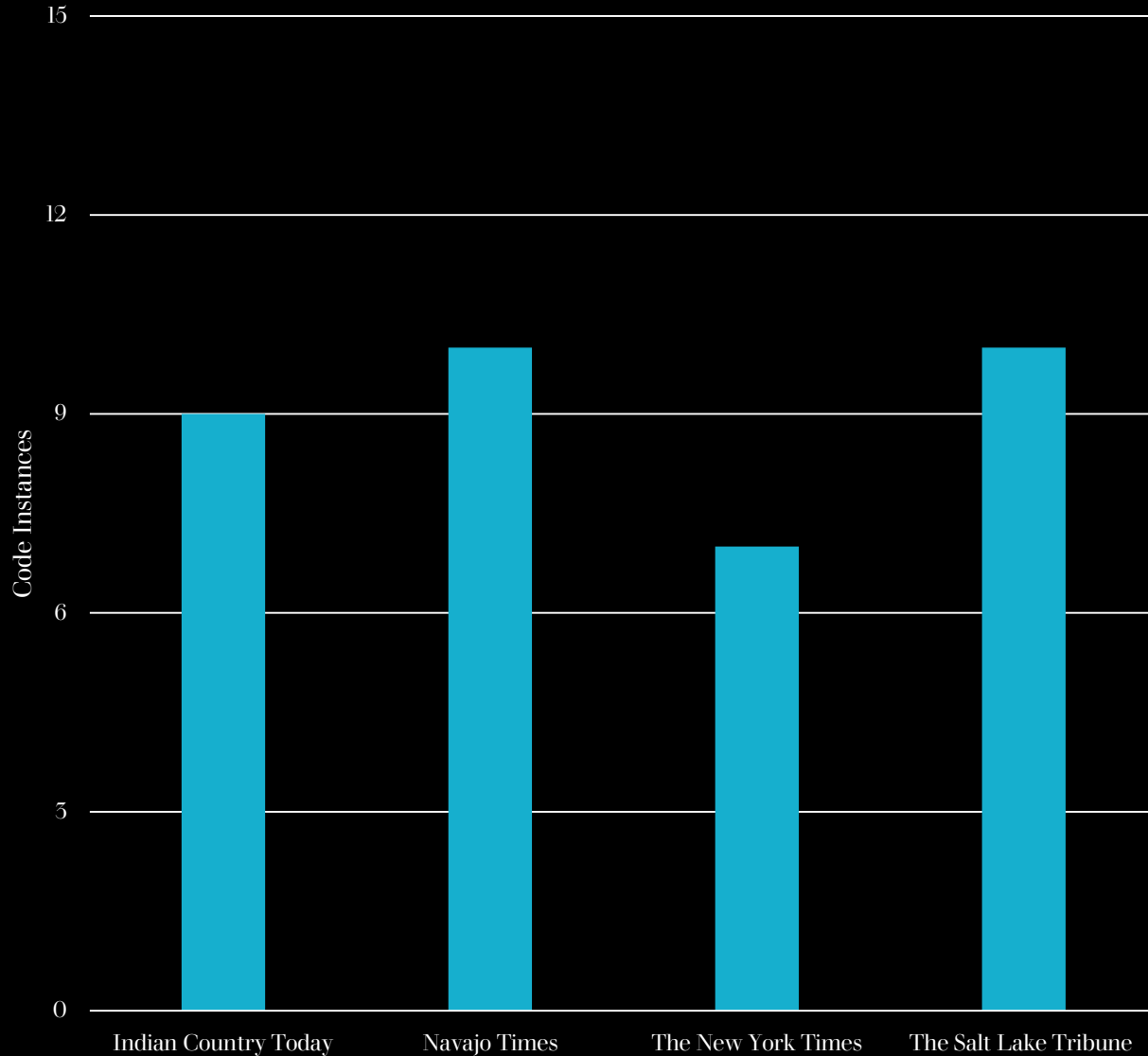
Indigenous Worldview

1. Colonization
 2. Liminal Space
 - a. Legal/Political Space
 - b. Racialized Space
 3. Assimilation
 4. Interconnectedness + Reciprocity
 5. Land-based Knowledges
 6. Intergenerational knowledges
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Western Worldview

1. Nature as commodity
2. Property Ownership
3. Separate from Nature

Colonization



- Indigenous media had more total references to colonialism
- *SLT* had the same number of colonialism references as *NT*
- Western media often lacked substantive discussions when colonialism appeared, whereas Indigenous media often included a first-person assessment of how settler colonialism continues to harm/impact Indigenous peoples

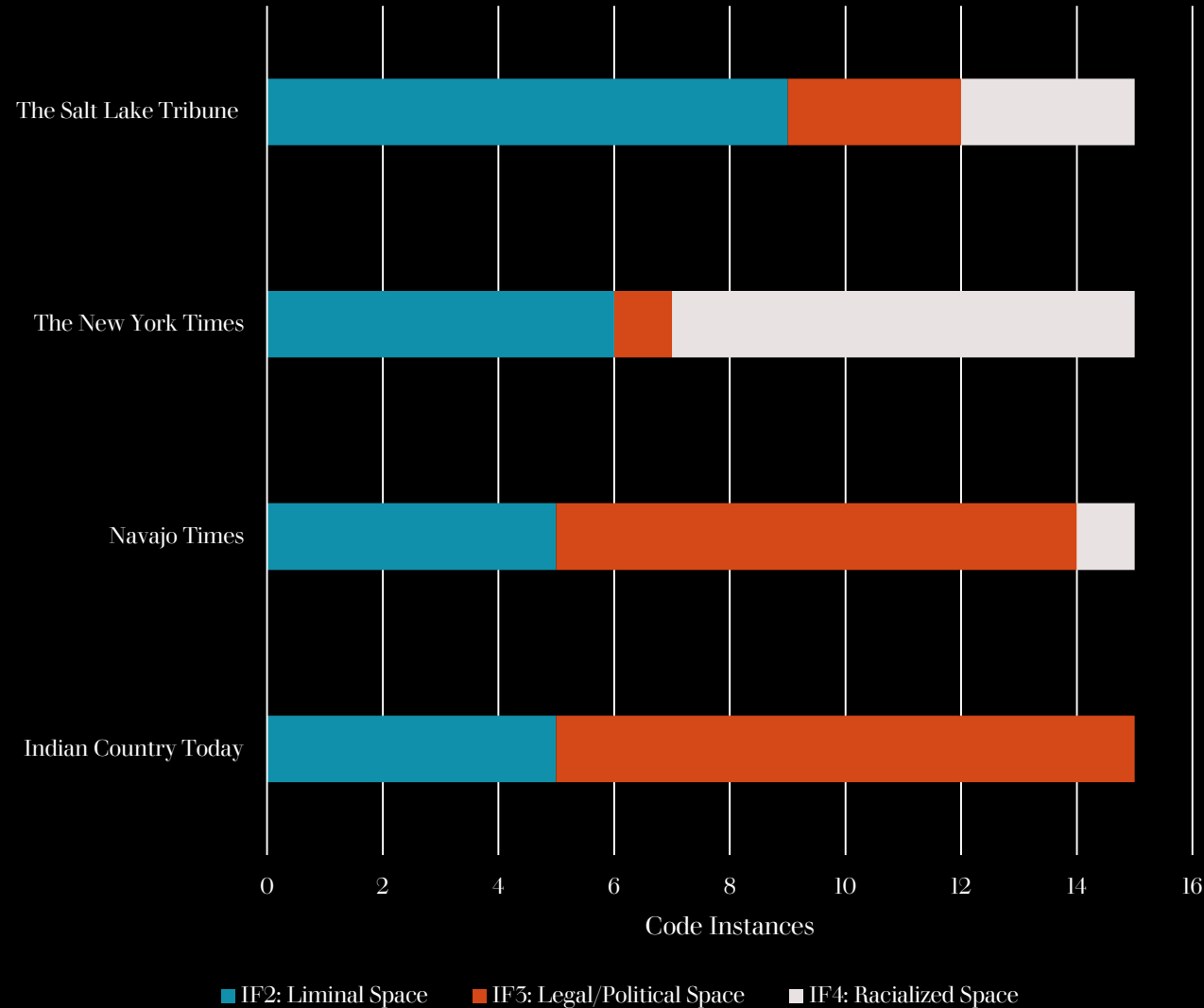
The New York Times

“In the 1850’s, Native American tribes in the Pacific Northwest signed treaties with the United States that relinquished their land but allowed them to retain the right to salmon fishing and other resources” (Fazio, 2021, para. 10)

Navajo Times

“But the Navajo Nation has to remember that the state governments stole all this water in the first place, he said. “I’m wary of continuing in the water rights framework for future Diné water policy,” said Curley. “We have never really exercised sovereignty over water and seem to want to grovel before colonial governments instead of just taking the water and putting it to use, which is exactly what the colonial governments did” (Becenti, 2020b, para. 15)

Representation



Three Representation Frames:

1. Liminal Space: legal/political *and* racialized language
2. Legal/political space
3. Racialized space

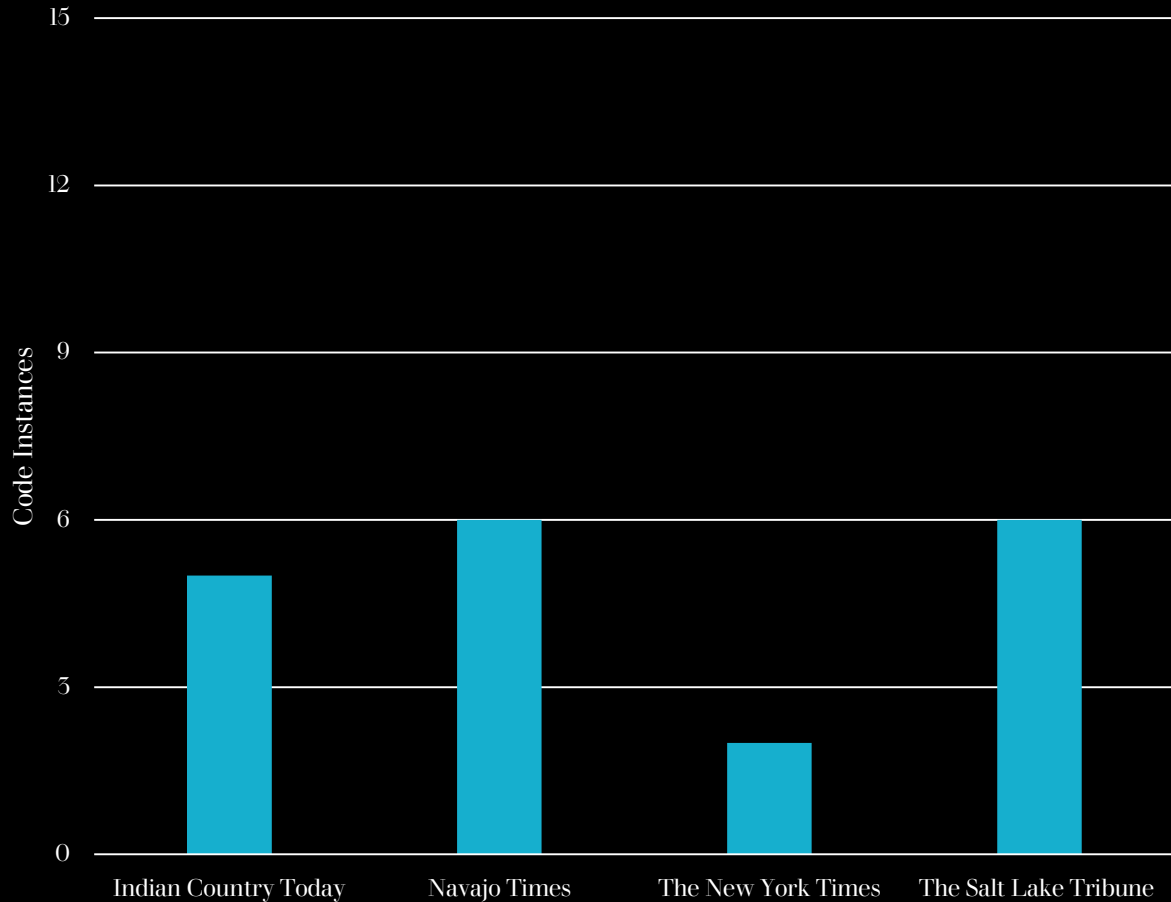
- Liminal space most common frame across all outlets
- Western media used predominantly liminal space, but had a high amount of racialized language
- Indigenous media used predominantly legal/political language (resistance)

The Salt Lake Tribune

*“Not only would Haaland be a compelling visionary leader at Interior, she would also be the first **Native American** in this role, giving her a firsthand understanding of our country’s obligations to **tribal nations**”*

(Metcalf, 2020, para. 7)

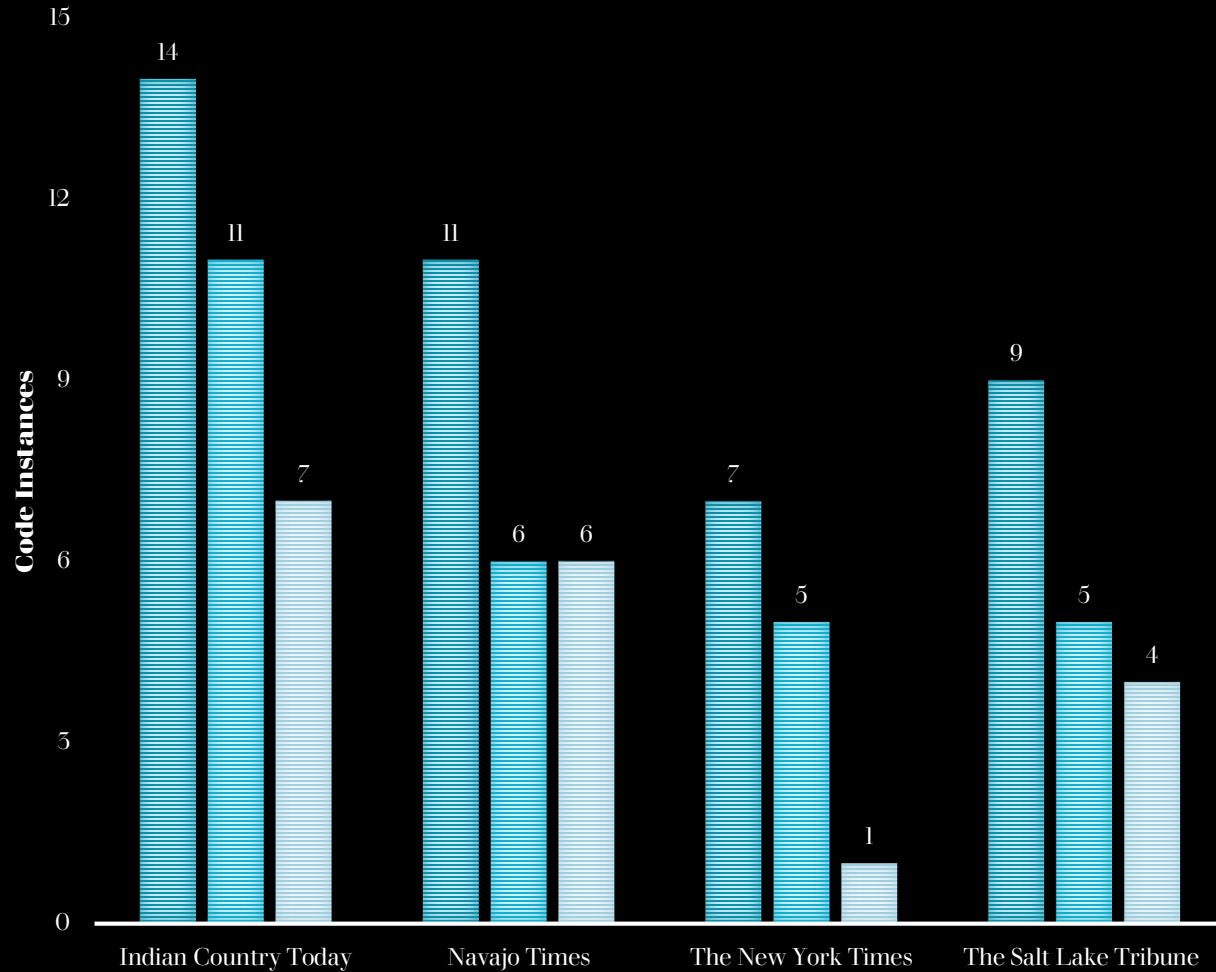
Assimilation



- Combined by worldview, Indigenous media had more references to assimilation
- *NT* and *SLT* had the same number of discussions about assimilation
- Western media discussions about assimilation were oftentimes one-dimensional, whereas Indigenous media discuss *impacts* of language loss, boarding schools, etc.

INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL WORLDVIEWS

■ IF6: Interconnectedness & Reciprocity ■ IF7: Land-Based Knowledges
■ IF8: Intergenerational Knowledges



Indigenous News Outlets

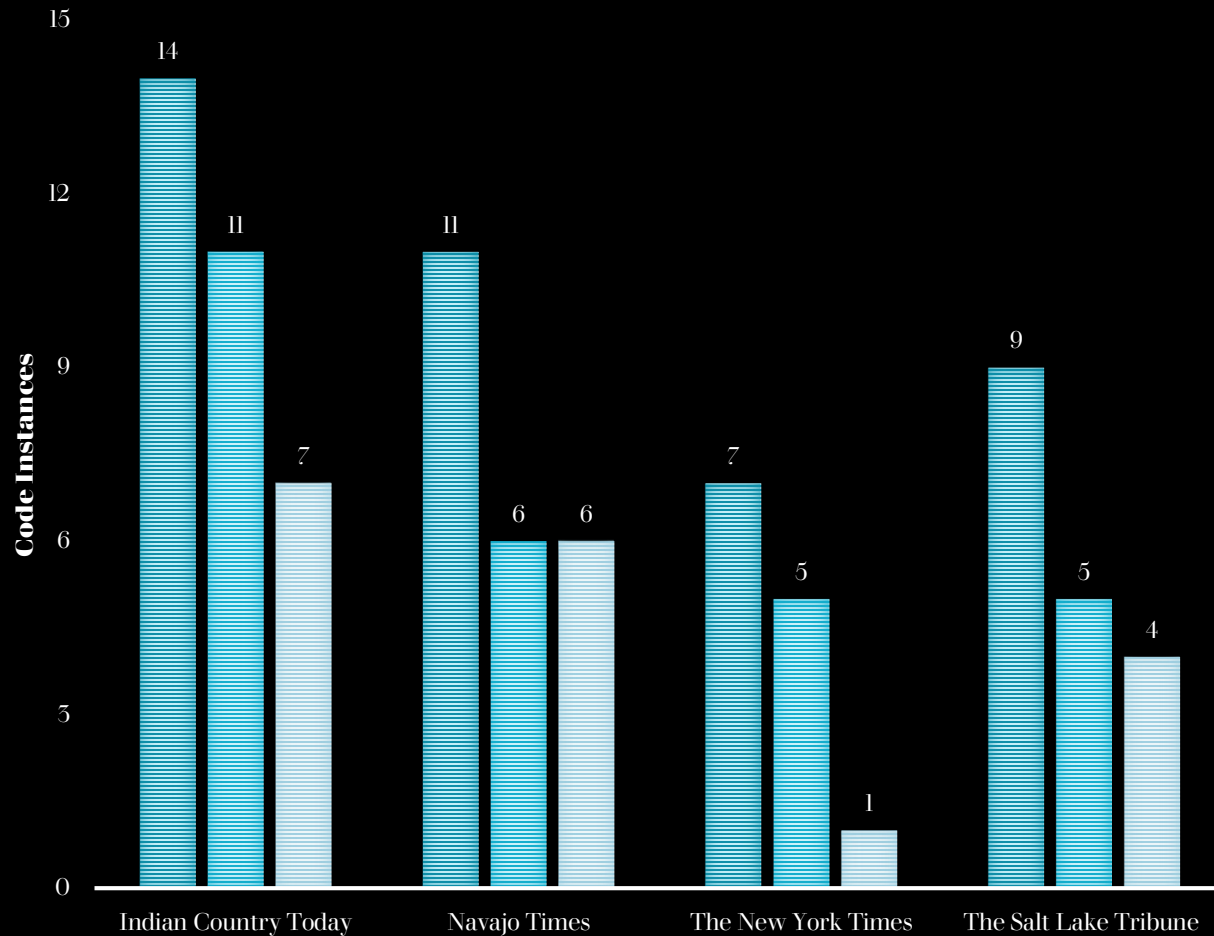
- Interconnectedness and reciprocity most prolific, found in 93% of *ICT* articles
- Indigenous media holistically incorporate their environmental worldviews into stories, doing so more often than Western media
- Indigenous media often refer to Indigenous environmental worldviews to *respond* to Western environmental practices and pitfalls

Navajo Times

“Part of climate change is a behavioral change, strengthening our reciprocal relationship with the land, and this potato relative who nurtures and sustains our way of life is at the heart of what we are taught as life givers” (Bitsóí, 2021, para. 19)

INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL WORLDVIEWS

■ IF6: Interconnectedness & Reciprocity ■ IF7: Land-Based Knowledges
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Western News Outlets

- *SLT* has equal or more coded instances of each Indigenous environmental worldviews frame than *NYT*
- Western media often engage Indigenous environmental worldviews in trivial ways to:
 1. Elucidate the Indigenous perspective of a problem
 2. Highlight a problems urgency

The New York Times

“Tell me, what water am I going to drink for 300 years?” Deland Hinkey, a member of the tribe, yelled as a federal official arrived at the reservation in March to brief tribal leaders on the mining plan. “Anybody, answer my question. After you contaminate my water, what I am going to drink for 300 years? You are lying!”

(Penn et al., 2021, para. 31)

WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL WORLDVIEWS



Indigenous News Outlets

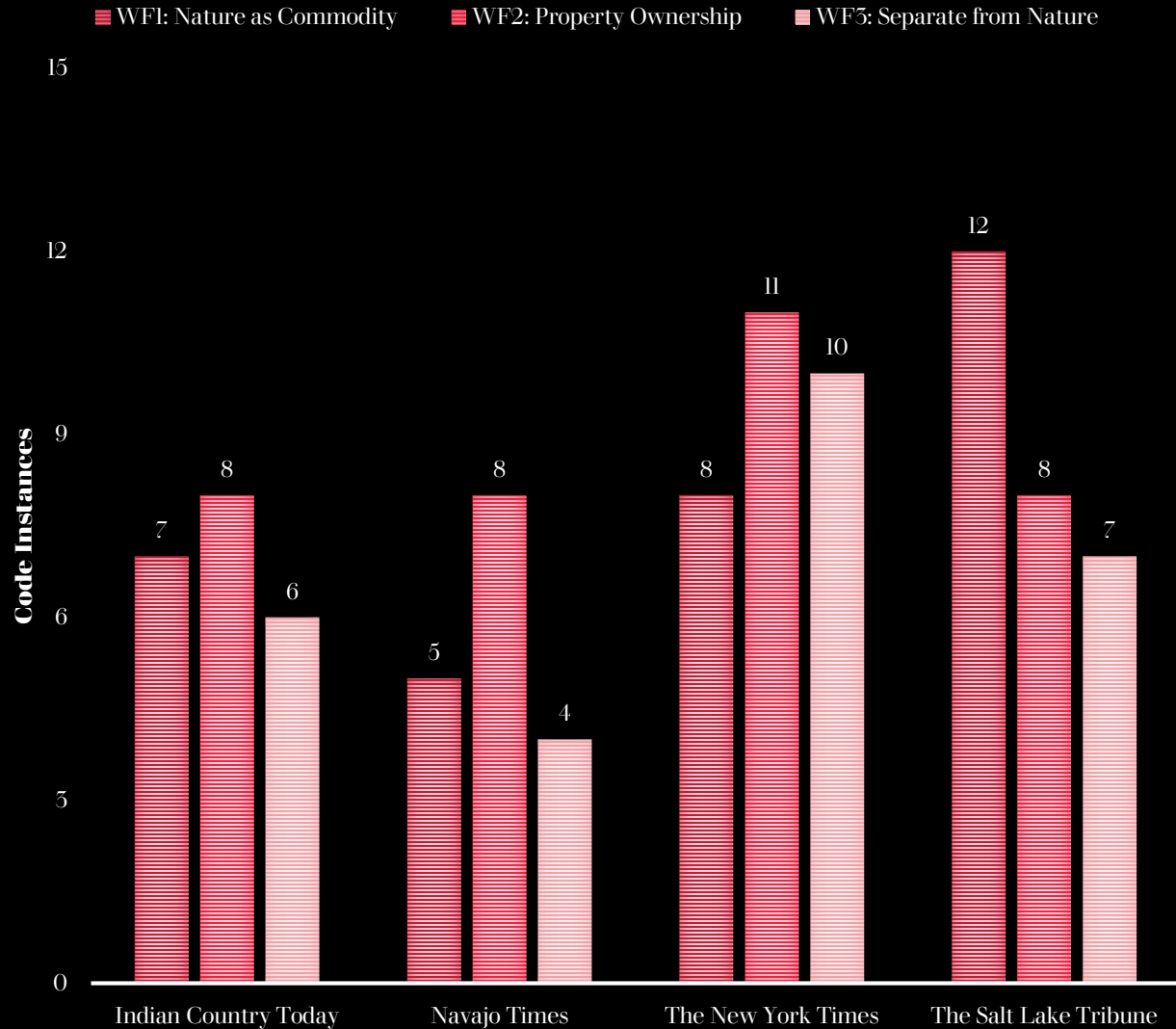
- Indigenous media appeal to Western environmental worldviews more-so than Western media appeal to Indigenous environmental worldviews
- *Two-Eyed Seeing* (Marshall, 2004) and *Second Sight* (Du Bois 1905; Itzigsohn & Brown, 2020)
- Indigenous media often engage WW for two reasons:
 1. Colonialist state + systems necessitate it
 2. To critique Western environmentalism

Navajo Times

*“The Navajo Nation therefore remains steadfast in its position that all NECR radioactive mine waste registering above U.S. EPA’s action level should be removed from the community. **Simply transporting it to a facility less than one mile away from the reservation boundary, while it technically is removing it from the Navajo Nation, in reality is just taking it from one side of the road to the other”***

(Becenti, 2021, para. 26) [emphasis my own].

WESTERN ENVIRONMENTAL WORLDVIEWS



Western News Outlets

- Nature as commodity and property ownership most prolific
- Commodification and ownership of lands/resources used as an opportunistic avenue to conserve and allocate them
- Western media embodied their environmental worldviews in the first-person, and often analyzed avenues to solve environmental problems through them

The New York Times

“Last year, thousands of steelhead trout were expected to run in a main tributary of the Snake River but there were barely 300 of them, she said. In Idaho, where communities rely on the sport fishing season, the loss of tourists when fish don’t arrive can be devastating. “I mean, the hotels were empty, everything was empty because there were no fish to catch,” she said. “It’s not just a biological crisis we’re having out here. It’s economic” (Fazio, 2021, para. 21)

Overall, this research...

- Demonstrates how settler colonial power dynamics operate through the media
 - But also, how Indigenous media combat this through critical reporting, accurate Indigenous representations, and discussions about the effects of ongoing settler colonialism
 - Documents important differences in climate change discourses and worldviews
 - Accentuates the limitations of solely quantifying a study such as this
 - Found a general fairness afforded to Indigenous worldviews from *SLT*
 - Created Indigenous worldviews media frames, hopefully prompting Western scholars to engage in more ethical content analysis research and ‘reverse the gaze’
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