



ALASKA  
NATIVE  
HERITAGE  
CENTER



HJR 17 Hearing Lach'qu Sukdu  
Presentation  
Sheldon Jackson and Frameworks of Violence



# Learning Objectives

- Alaska Boarding School History
- Historical/Source Criticism in conjunction with Alaska State History
- Structural Violence Model
- Recognizing the Structures of Violence that Impact Alaska Natives Today



# Boarding School Facts

- Assimilation project meant to “domesticate” Native children of North America
- ~500 US Alaska Native/American Indian Boarding schools, day schools, boarding home schools, and asylums
- Government-funded while being church-run
- Alaska Native/American Indian children were
  - forcibly abducted by Indian Agents
  - sent hundreds of miles away
  - beaten, starved, or abused
- Holy Cross, Alaska
- 10,000s did not return



# Alaska History includes Alaska Native History

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- Alaska Natives have been on these lands for 10,000 years
- Alaska is not the Last Frontier
- Indigenous knowledge and science is a whole knowledge system in and of itself, equal to all others
- The first Russian explorers didn't discover anything
- The word Alaska is an Unangax word
- When Alaska was sold from Russia to the US there ZERO Alaska Natives present
- Church- run Boarding Schools
- Federally-run Boarding Schools
- Boarding-home schools
- State Boarding Schools
- Unjust policies such as voting rights and 10-student minimum
- Alaska Natives make up 20 percent of our state's population
- 229 Federally Recognized Tribes in Alaska
- 12 Alaska Native Corporations
- More than 20 distinct Alaska Native Languages

# Definitions

-Missions

-Day School

-Boarding Schools

-1. **Housing** – The institution has been described as providing on-site housing or overnight lodging. This includes dormitory, orphanage, asylum, residential, boarding, home, jail, and quarters.

-2. **Education** – The institution has been described as providing formal academic or vocational training and instruction. This includes mission school, religious training,

-3. **Federal Support** – The institution has been described as receiving Federal Government funds or other Federal support. This includes agency, independent, contract, mission, contract with white schools, government, semi-government, under superintendency, and land or buildings or funds or supplies or services provided.

-4. **Timeframe** – The institution was operational before 1969 (prior to modern departmental Indian education programming including BIE).





## “Those Who Came from the Sky”-Our Future

- Age of healing where our peoples can and will thrive

### Revitalization Era (1945-Current)

- 1945-Elizabeth Peratrovich Anti-Discrimination Bill
- 1969-Boarding School Policy is Disassembled
- 1973-ANCSA
- 2024-Boarding School Truth and Healing Bill Comes to the Senate Floor

### American Era/Boarding Schools and US Colonization (1867-Current)

- 1867-Alaska Purchased by the United States
- 1877-Ft. Wrangell school taken over by Sheldon Jackson (First off reservation boarding school)
- 1880-Comity Plan occurs in NYC
- 1885-Jackson becomes secretary of Education (language becomes restricted, children forced to attend, etc.)
- 1932-BIA Takes over education of the Alaska Native population

### Contact/ The Russian Era

- 1732-Mikhail Gvozdev made contact with Alaska and Alaska Native Peoples/Right to Discovery
- 1741-Right of Occupation Established by Vitas Bering
- Birth of Furtrade-Wrecked havoc on Alaska Native peoples, cultures, and traditions
- 1786-First School opened in Kodiak by Grigori Shelikhov, considered the “founder of the Russian Colonies” in AK

## The Roots (Since Time and Memorial)

- Who we are and our history as Alaska Native stretching out for over 10,000 years of knowledge and being
  - Deeper than colonization or it's effects
  - Defined by the land and our Ancestors



# Sheldon Jackson

## •1877: Sheldon Jackson's First Trip to Alaska:

- Presbyterian Missionary Sheldon Jackson's initial visit to Alaska
- Accompanied Amanda McFarland, the first female teacher at Fort Wrangell
- Jackson considered one of the first "educators" and "collectors" in Alaska (Carlton, 1999)

## •Unauthorized Trip to Alaska:

- Jackson did not have permission from the Board Home Missions for his first Alaska trip
- Research indicates the lack of approval to travel or establish a mission (Carlton, 1999)

## •Establishment of First Boarding School:

- Despite initial unauthorized journey, Jackson secured permission in 1877
- First government-funded church-run boarding school opened in Sitka, run by Presbyterian Missionaries (Stewart, 1908)

## •1884: General Agent of Education in Alaska:

- U.S. Secretary of the Interior appointed Jackson as the General Agent of Education in Alaska
- During his tenure, Jackson advocated for government funds and urged Christian colleges to contribute to Alaska's "civilization" through missions (Williams, 2009)

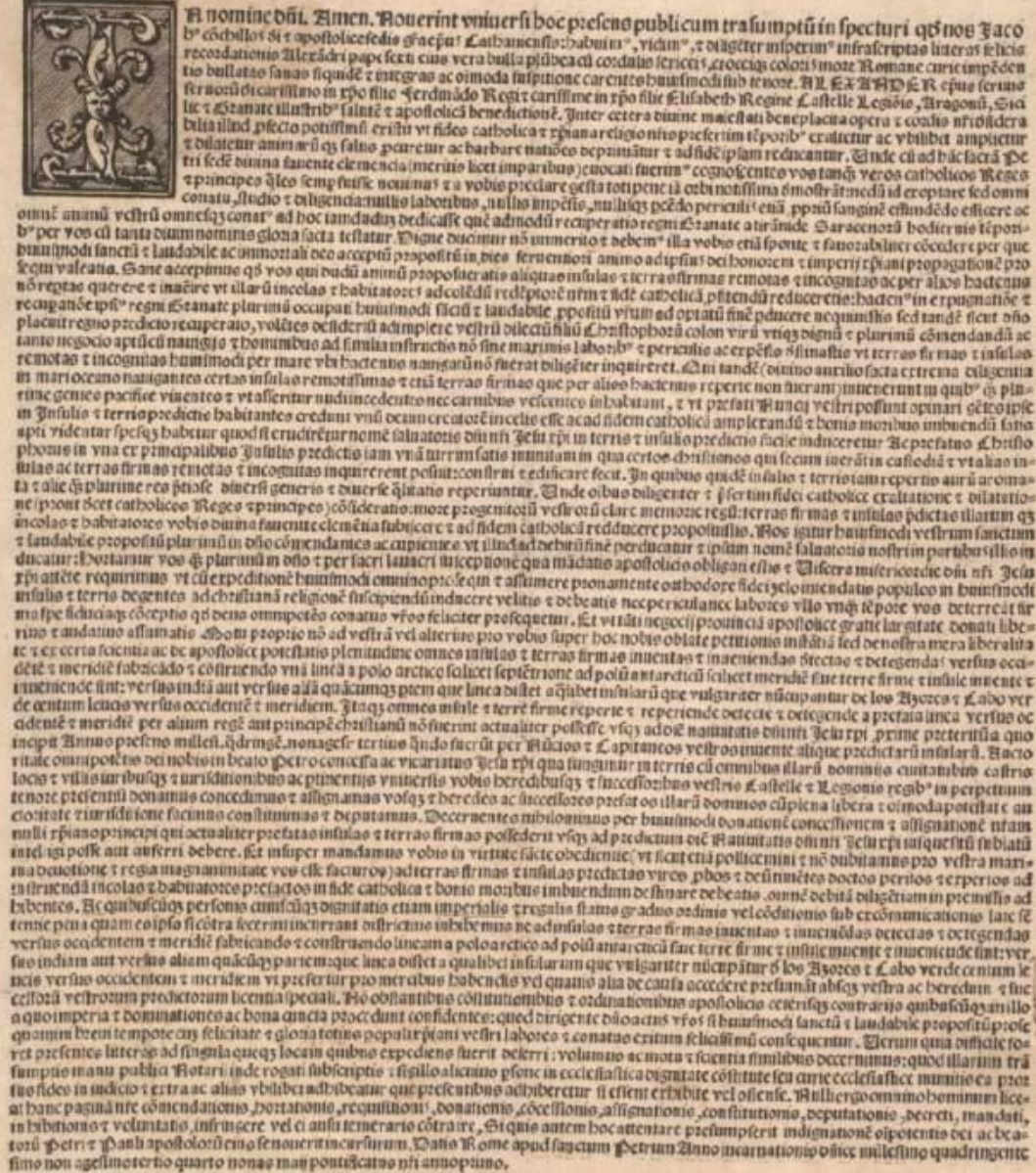
## •Church and State Connection:

- Jackson's efforts, though violating the modern concept of "Church and State" separation, were common during that era (Williams, 2009)

## •1874: Missionization Blueprint:

- The American Home Missionary Society published an article detailing a meeting in 1874
- Resulted in a blueprint for a large-scale missionization plan for Alaska

Alexandro sexto al Rey y a la Reyna nuestros señores de las Indias conforme al capitulo.  
 Per venerabilem. §. ratiombus. qui filiis sint legitimi y al cap. lxxviii. q. iiii.



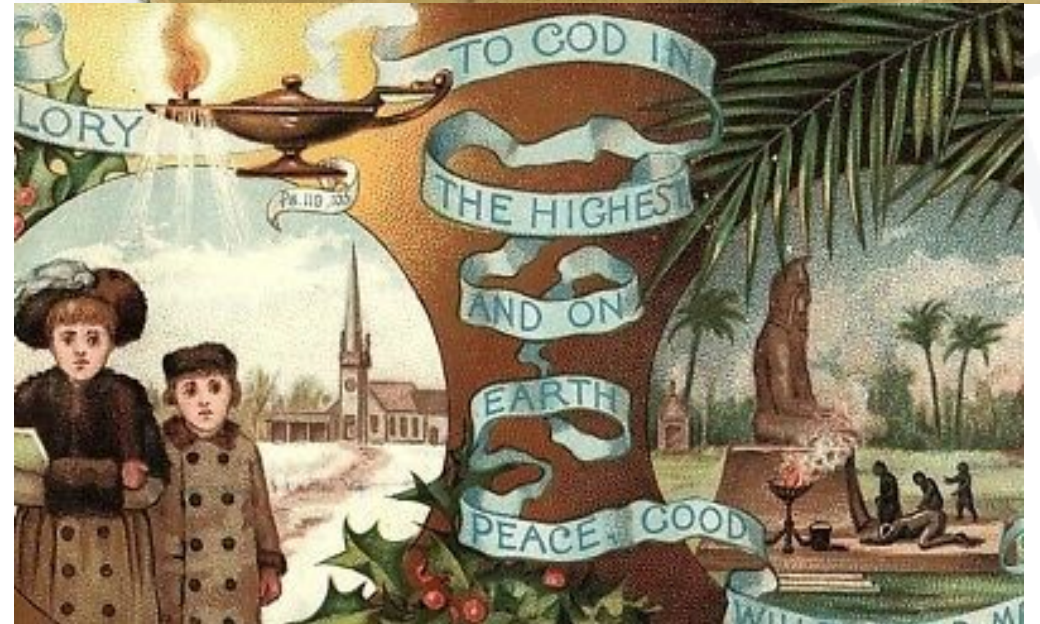
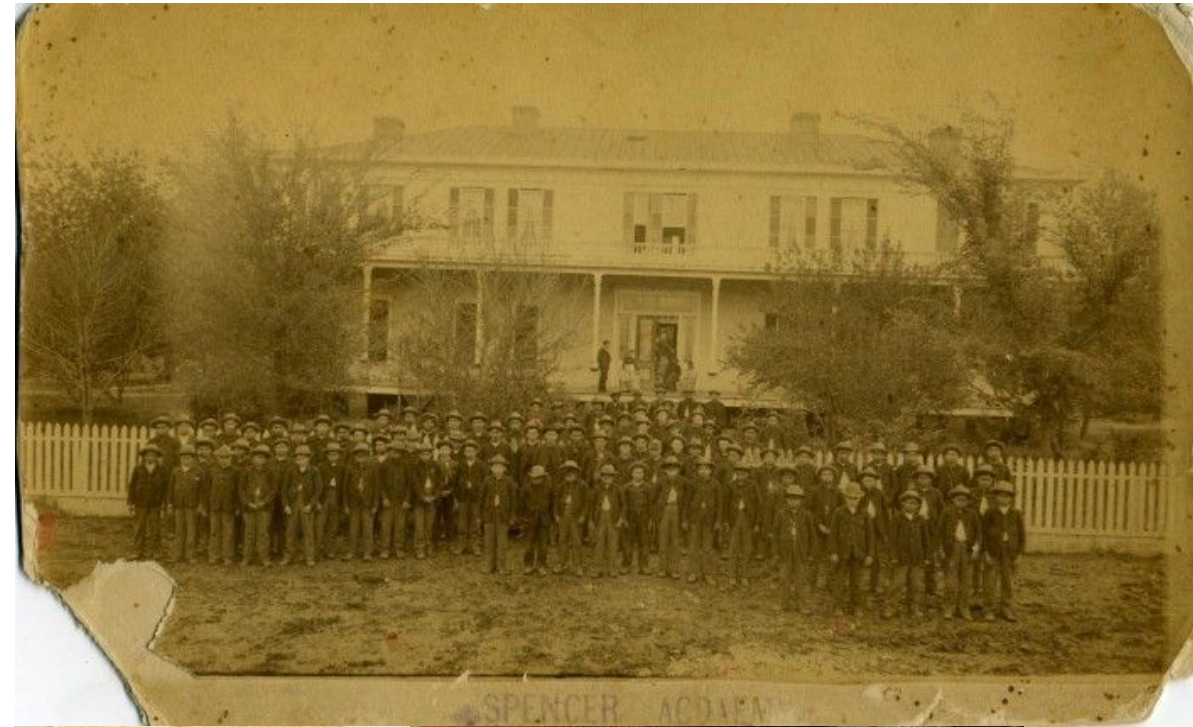
- Inter Caetera “Alexandrian Bulls”
  - “Christian Princes” are responsible for education of Indigenous population
- American Church and Interpretation
  - God’s Chosen Nation (i.e. City on a Hill)
  - Protestant Theology

- Calvin vs. Charles Hodge/Alexander McLeod
    - Individual v. National Election
  - Correlates to the 1819 Civilization Act
- Modern Day New Israel vs. New Canaanites



# Protestant Missions Organizations & Oklahoma

- Experimental Area
  - Foreign Board of Missions
- Union Boarding School/Osage
- Robert Loughridge
  - Creation of the Boarding School vs. Day School
- Sheldon Jackson
  - Board of Home Missions
    - Wisconsin, Minnesota, Wyoming, Montana, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado
  - US Indian Agent





(Utah vol 1)  
Library of  
Sheldon Jackson  
presented to the Presbyterian Historical Society.

WYOMING TERRITORY.—This Territory probably embraces the last of our vast national domain which remains to be thus organized. It is thought to be the richest of the cluster of Territories which embrace the Rocky Mountain peaks and slopes. Within this Territory, that rich mining district, but recently discovered, known as the Sweet Water Mines, is found. Cheyenne, having a population of from 3000 to 4000, is the capital. It is distant west 1000 miles from Chicago. Here the Union Pacific railroad has commenced the erection of extensive shops. Fort Russell is near by, with barracks for 1200 men.

It is into this Territory that some two or three young ministers, students in our Seminary, have recently gone, to lay the foundations of our church. Rev. Mr. Gage, of Minnesota, is at Cheyenne; Rev. Mr. Hughes has gone to Ogden and Corinne; and Mr. J. N. Hutchinson is to labor for the summer between Omaha and Cheyenne. This is as it should be. Our Board of Missions would do well to call some of our more experienced brethren to occupy one or more important points in each of these new States or Territories so rapidly developing on these vast mountain slopes.

Wyoming Territory, organized by act of July 25, 1868, lies between the twenty-seventh and thirty-fourth meridians of longitude west from Washington, and the forty-first and forty-fifth degrees of north latitude, with an average length of three hundred and fifty-five miles and width of two hundred and seventy-six miles. It has Dakota and Nebraska on the east, Colorado and Utah on the south, Montana on the north, and Utah and Idaho on the west, and embraces an area of 97,883 square miles, or 62,645,220 acres; larger than the state of Oregon, and equal to that of Alabama and Mississippi, or Georgia and New York. This newly erected political division, lying along the line of one of the most important of our great national highways, is brought into close relations with the adjacent States and Territories, and is destined to exert a most powerful influence in developing the immense resources of the west.

#### THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD OCCUPIED FOR PRESBYTERIANISM.

Messrs. Editors.—The Rev. Sheldon Jackson, acting for the Presbytery of Missouri River, has succeeded in securing three efficient young men for missionary work along this road.

Mr. J. N. Hutchison, licentiate, will occupy the four most important towns west of Omaha, between the Missouri River and the crossing of the North Platte.

The Rev. John L. Gage, after successfully erecting two church buildings, and being permitted to reap a spiritual harvest in Minnesota, has gone to Cheyenne and Laramie, to repeat his work of laying foundations and erecting church edifices.

The Rev. M. Hughes, compelled by the state of his health to resign his charge at Bellvue, Nebraska, has gone out to Rawlings, Bryan, Ogden, and Corinne, hoping, in the bracing atmosphere of the Rocky Mountains, to do full pioneer work.

In addition to the above, the Rev. Mr. Van Arsdale has commenced with great energy a second church enterprise at Omaha, in a part of the city wholly unoccupied by other evangelical bodies.

This gives stated Presbyterian preaching at nearly every important station along this great highway of nations, between Omaha and Promontory Point—a distance of more than one thousand miles. These fields will be trying ones, and the young men greatly need the prayers and sympathies of God's people. These missions will also be costly ones; and to carry them on efficiently, and at the same time keep up the other enterprises claiming the attention and support of the Church, will require of the churches largely increased contributions to the Board of Domestic Missions.



# Boarding Schools and Alaska: Misinformation and Romanticization

*“Did Alaska have  
boarding schools or was it  
just Canada?”*



# Comity Plan

- 1880 Comity Plan vs. Various Comity Plans
  - 10PM, January 19, 1880 @805 Broadway, New York,
  - First Described in John Field's "Our Western Archipelago"
  - Ecumenicalism and Structure
    - Baptist- Morehouse
      - Mining
    - Presbyterian- Henry Kendall
      - Lumber/Mines
    - Episcopal Church- Dr. Twing (absent)
      - Gold
    - Methodist-John Reid
      - Mining
    - Later Inclusions (Moravian/Congregationalist)
  - "He is glad that a bishop has been appointed for Alaska and that if he will take the valley of the Yukon, a valley two thousand miles long and into which settlers are pouring attracted by its gold mines, he will have a vast diocese..They will reach every heathen in the frozen North"



# Comity Plan

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- Special Congressional Committee
- Framework for future work
  - **1883 Board of Home Missions Report-Discussion of Resource Extraction and Locations to Do So:** (Alaska’s) great forests are yet unknown, its mines are undeveloped, its fisheries are hardly heard of, and its seal trade has only begun. What population may yet pour into the islands on its coast where the climate is mild and the means of subsistence easily obtained, no one can tell. Already there are here from thirty thousand to forty thousand Indians wholly dependent on our church for their education and religious advantages. (7)
  - **Extensive plan for Alaska and future boarding schools:** Also, much talk of mining rights, that the schools will be placed around “meeting places” of Native peoples and that the Presbyterians lay claim to the richest areas (26)
  - **Recommendation and resolution to create a committee** to sway the President of the United States and the Secretary of the Interior to create a government within Alaska and for them to support the creation of Industrial Schools (boarding schools) for Alaska Natives (133)
- 1888 Board of Home Missions Annual Report-”Missionary Comity Guidelines”
- 1903 “What Missionaries Have Done For Alaska”-Jackson Takes credit for Mining success in AK

# Comity Plan Continuation

- BIA Period
  - Still Ecclesial Run
  - Resource Extraction Based
- Eklutna Industrial Indian School
  - Teaching Trades that correlate to industries the head of the school ran
    - Railroad
    - Mining
    - Fishing

Fish, oil, bone and ivory.....	\$3,225,000
Furs.....	1,750,000
Gold.....	2,000,000
Silver.....	50,000
	-----
	\$7,025,000

The output of the canning factories has grown from 36,000 cases of four dozen one-pound cans in 1883 to 460,000 cases in 1889. The products of the mines, so far, are mainly gold and coal. There are a large number of excellent coal seams.

"Deposits of coal," says the report, "have been found in a dozen or more places upon the islands and coasts of southern Alaska, and at Cape Lisburne in the Arctic. Samples of many of them may be seen on exhibition at Juneau and Sitka. The coal fields of the Kenai Peninsula are very extensive, and the coal layers, three in number, one above another, with layers of clay between, aggregate fifteen feet in thickness at the place of the exposure upon the beach. It is convenient of access, with a good harbor, and it is estimated that it can be delivered in San Francisco for \$3.50 per ton. Its quality has been well tested and pronounced a cannel coal of great value. Last year some seventy-three tons were taken to San Francisco and used in tests and otherwise. So satisfactory were the results that a large quantity has been taken out this year, and coal claims have been filed upon 3,200 acres of land. The location of these claims is about twenty-five miles from Port Graham, where the Russians formerly mined coal for use in the Territory. The known area and productiveness of the various coal banks of Alaska," says Gov. Knapp, "exceed those of Newfoundland and the Atlantic coast generally."

In addition to the product of the canning factories, an immense amount of fish has been taken, and either used locally or shipped away. The dried codfish product for the year is about 5,000,000 pounds.

As for the people, while their condition is much better, both morally and physically, than it was ten years ago, there is still an appalling amount of disease among them, and an almost equally appalling amount of ignorance. Some schools are doing an excellent work, notably the Industrial Boarding School at Sitka, of which the United States General Agent of Education in Alaska, Dr. Sheldon Jackson, says: "This school has the largest plant and is doing

better work than any other school in Alaska." Dr. Jackson's recommendations in the report, which is printed as an appendix to the Governor's, are as follows:

First—That arrangements should be made enabling the general agent to visit the schools in Western Alaska.

Second—That a district superintendent should be appointed for the Sitka district.

Third—That Congress be asked to arrange a permanent fund for the Alaska schools.

Fourth—That Congress be asked to provide an obligatory attendance law.

Fifth—That a small allowance be made for the employment of native policemen, whose duty it shall be to see that all the children are in school.

Sixth—That the Secretary of the Interior be requested to ask from Congress for the ensuing year the sum of \$75,000 for the education of the children of Alaska, without distinction of race.

The recommendations of Gov. Knapp, based upon his careful study of the situation, are deserving of the most careful consideration of Congress. Among them are these:

Provision for the acquisition of land titles and for the purchase of timber.

Measures to regulate the fisheries.

Provision for weekly mail service in southeastern Alaska, and not less than four mails each way between Sitka and St. Michael's during the eight months suitable for traveling.

The use of a light draught, rapid running, wooden hull steamer of 100 tons burden, for the use of the Civil Government and under the control of the Government.

The appointment of a Commission to prepare a short code of laws for the government of the Territory.

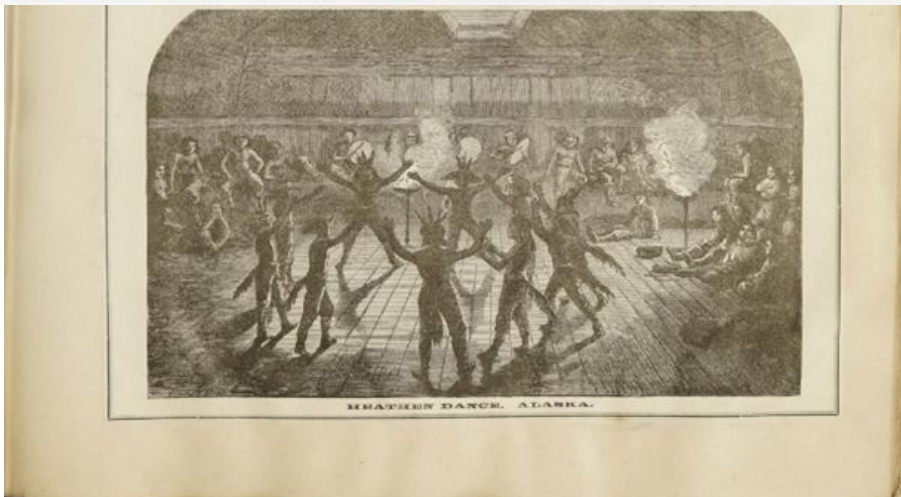
The representation in Congress of the Territory by its Governor as a Territorial delegate during the winter months.

If these recommendations are carried out, the development of Alaska will go forward with much more rapid strides: her lands will be prospected, agriculture will begin to flourish, new industries will be built up, a comparatively large white population will be attracted thither, and the mining and fishing industries will be vastly stimulated. Alaska has before it a great future, if progress is continued along the lines laid down by Governor Knapp.—*Mail and Express.*



# Sheldon Jackson Boarding Schools in AK

- Located in Sitka, Alaska
- Founded in 1877 as the oldest institution US of higher learning in the state of Alaska
- Sheldon Jackson fundraises both public & private (church) funds to start the school. He was successful in doing so
- 1885 Sheldon Jackson becomes General Agent of Education in Alaska
- Education for the missionaries means stripping Natives of all vestiges of their culture
  - Cultural Genocide



# Introduction of Women Protestant Societies

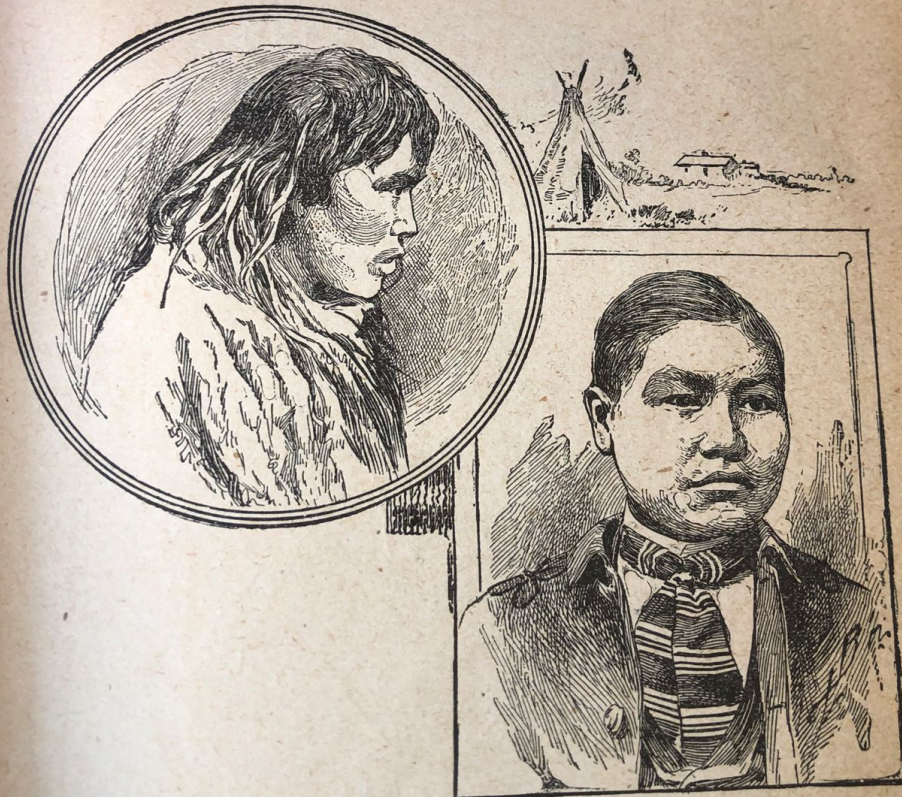
- Methodist's Involvement-1869
- Presbyterian-1877 Through Jackson
- Matrons For Schools
- Connection to Suppression of





states that the children that they had been allowed to take home at night were returned by order of the medicine men, who ascribed that much of the sickness was due to the slates and the pictures which the children made upon them—they were "bad medicine."

The teachers began their school work by learning the Eskimo names of the most important objects in daily use and training their pupils in the English equivalents. From words they proceeded to phrases and from phrases to sentences, teaching them to translate from Eskimo into English and *vice versa*. They gradually added English letters and numbers, together with some elementary geography and arithmetic. Although they had had a combined experience of thirteen years in the schoolroom in the States, the teachers declare that they never had more quick-witted, intelligent pupils than these wild Eskimo children. At the beginning of the school year only a few could count ten in a blundering fashion, and nine-tenths of the pupils knew practically no English whatever. At the close of the first school year they had a good working vocabulary, knew something of geography and map-drawing



Eskimo boy in a savage state.

David Skuvinka, Eskimo boy, at school.

understood thoroughly the decimal basis of our numbers, could count up to one thousand, work examples in simple addition, write and read simple English words, and carry on a conversation in English on everyday practical matters. The pupils showed a remarkable desire to learn for learning's sake.

Aniak Christ Church Mission, Protestant Episcopal; Rev. O. Parker and Rev. John W. Chapman teachers; enrollment 6 boarding and 38 day pupils; population Athabasca.





MRS. KILBUCK, TEACHER AT BETHEL, WITH HER DAUGHTER KATIE.

# Jackson and Alaska Native Culture



- Jackson's Relationship with AN Cultural Objects vs. Culture
  - Eradication of Culture
- He and the Presbyterian Church referred to any indigenous culture as "heathen," or "savage."
  - Separation within Jackson's mind between the cultural objects, the culture, and the peoples
  - Culture/People=Evil
  - Cultural Objects in his possession= Tools for future ministry
- Princeton Theological Seminary
  - Exhibitions for funders to show what Jackson was "saving" Alaska Natives from (paganism)
  - Grave Robber
  - Made Children create art after he was unable to grave rob and these objects became less accessible



# Domestication of Alaska Natives



INDIAN GIRLS IN THE "McFARLAND HOME," FORT WRANGEL, ALASKA.

- **Domestication through Farming & Ranching**
  - Boarding School was never meant to prepare AN children for their futures, but to pacify the future generations for the acquisition of resources (i.e. mining)
  - Comity Plan
  - Much talk of the resources within Sheldon Jackson's/ Presbyterian General Assembly reports, especially within Sitka
- **Reindeer**
  - Food was needed within certain areas of Alaska, which became the rationalization for this form of domestication
- **Different initiatives to promote farming amongst Alaska Native Families.**
  - Attempts to change AN diet and
  - Breaking up the family/tribal structure meant breaking up the resistance/identity

# Historical/Source Criticism

- Sheldon Jackson's Representation in non-Native arenas
- Native Representation within these Histories
- Imperialism/Colonialism Romanticized at the Expense of Indigenous Identities
  - Resource Extraction
- Implications for Today



1635

Unalaska District  
 Includes all of Alaska not comprised  
 in the Sitka and Juneau Districts.

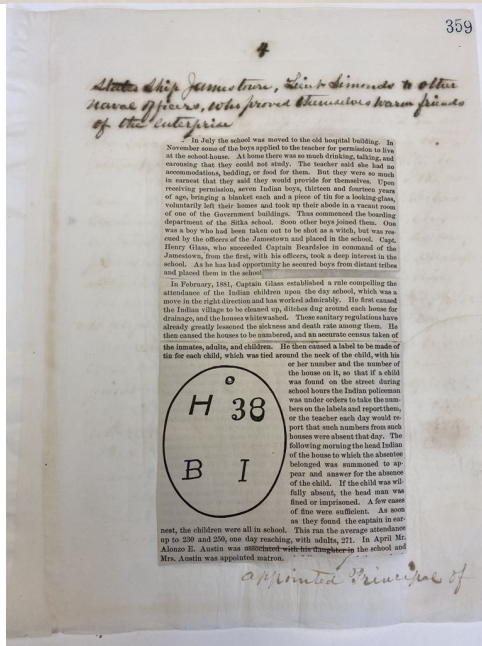
Population

Civilized Whites	187
" Aleuts	2145
" Eskimos	1526, 3808
Uncivilized	
" Innuits (Eskimo)	17617
" Tutch (Indian)	5913 = 23530
Total	27338.
Total for Alaska	34,708.

Very truly yours  
 Sheldon Jackson  
 U.S. Genl Agent

# P. & S. Abuse

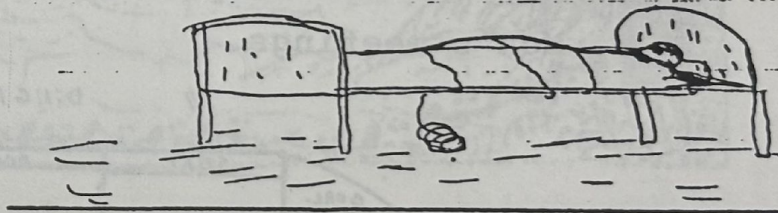
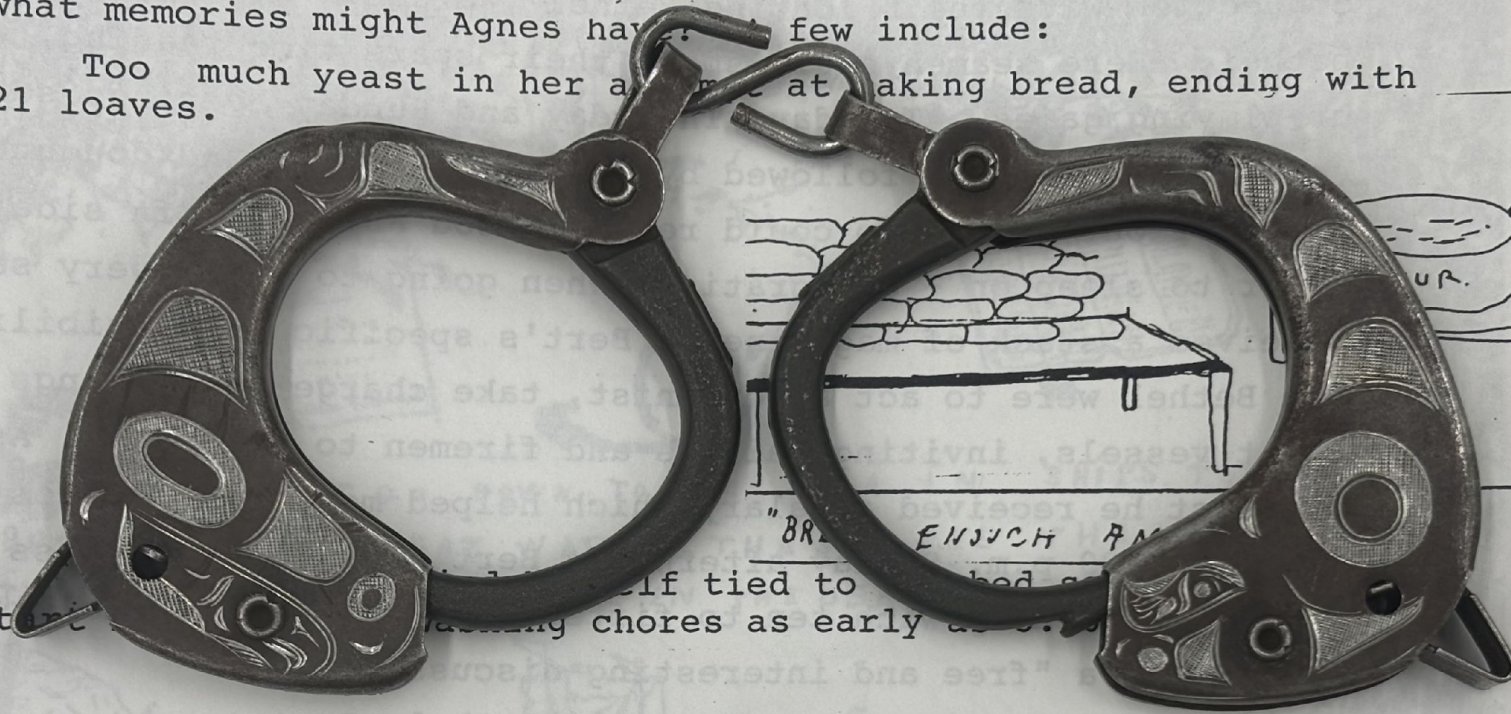
- Designation of Civilization Based upon People groups
  - Americanization & Nationalistic Religion
- Connection between levels of Civilization and Both Physical and Sexual Abuse
  - Belief that they would get away with the action
- **Dog Collars (Primary Source)**
- De-Humanization
- Often Associated with Canada, this is the first instance seen within the context of the United States and even the world
- **Physical Abuse (Elder Testimonies)**
- Connected to the use of language
- Fighting Rings
- Inmates
- Chains





what memories might Agnes have? A few include:

Too much yeast in her bread at making bread, ending with 21 loaves.



"A PRISONER."

# Historical Amnesia

- No state-wide Curriculum that teaches about the atrocities and cultural genocide that took place at Sheldon Jackson Boarding School, Wrangell Institute, or any other Boarding School in Alaska.
- Most people do not know about or acknowledge the Boarding Schools in Alaska (especially the Churches)
- No real education about Sheldon Jackson
- Unable to connect structural violence w/ what has happened
  - Taking Children and cultural genocide is enough



# Structural Violence Model

- Structural Violence- the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is.
- Structural Violence & Historical Trauma
- Community vs. Individual
- Affects all Indigenous Peoples
- Recognizes the structures put into place that institutionalizes violence for Indigenous peoples
- Lets us know we are never alone





# Structural Violence Model Applied

- **To be defined as the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is..**
  - Violence that is “Psychological” and/or “Physical,” which turns into a cycle
  - Violence that was “positively” or “negatively” influenced.
    - “At least we gave you...”
  - Violence if “there is a hurt object that exists.”
    - Unseen Pain
  - Visible “subject that acts”
    - Abuse of one vs. Many instances
  - Whether this event was unintended or “intended” by the “subject.”



# Data Tells a Story

- More than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) women (84.3 percent) have experienced violence in their lifetime.
- One out of every two AI/AN women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime
- 40% Native Incarceration Rate - Alaska Native men and women are more likely to be arrested than any other race in Alaska. From a national perspective, AI/AN are more likely to be arrested than any other race.
- 60% Native children in Foster care
- Suicide rate 4 times the national average
- Homicides twice the national average, rape of Native women at a third higher than the national average, and underreported and accidental deaths by Natives disproportionate to their numbers.

# Boarding Schools and MMIWG



- **Destruction of Identity, inward and outward**
  - Boarding Schools were meant to destroy the ways Native peoples not only see ourselves, but how society sees us as “less than” or “sub-human”
- **S.A. as Institutional**
  - Levels of civilization of Alaska Native children (societal worth) made sexual abuse permissible, leading to a high percentage of abuse within these schools
  - Boarding Schools also were a means for resource extraction, which led to a large amount of sexual abuse of Native Women
- **Lasting Effects**
  - According several studies, the children of a parent who has been sexually abused are more likely to be the target for abuse, becoming a cycle that has become genetically embedded\*
  - The factors of continued negative societal identity and resource extraction within Native communities with the study above, reveals how one of the many continued legacies of these institutions can be seen in the MMIWG crisis,
  - These factors can also explain why it has continued to be allowed by governmental entities which do not see Native peoples on the same level of personhood, leaving way for abuse to be unchecked



## Boarding School Initiative

- In June 2021, U.S. Secretary of the Department of Interior (DOI) Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) issued a memorandum directing the DOI to coordinate an investigation into the Federal Indian boarding school system to examine the scope of the system, with a focus on the location of the schools, burial sites, and identification of children who attended these schools. This memorandum forged the DOI-led Boarding School Initiative.
- The DOI report was the first of its kind in our nation's history.
- It illustrated that between 1819 and 1979, the United States operated or supported more than 408 boarding schools across 37 states, including 25 schools in Alaska.
- DOI hosted 10 listening sessions across the country; One in Alaska at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in 2023.

## Senate Bill 2907

- **Purpose of Senate Bill 2907:**
  - Establish a Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States
  - Define powers, duties, and membership of the Commission
- **Commission Duties:**
  - Investigate impacts and ongoing effects of Indian Boarding School policies
  - Develop recommendations for:
    - Safeguarding unmarked graves and associated land protections
    - Supporting repatriation and identification of tribal nations from which children were taken
    - Ending removal of indigenous children from families and tribal communities by social service departments and agencies

# Research Landscape

## THIRTY YEARS LATER: THE LONG-TERM EFFECT OF BOARDING SCHOOLS ON ALASKA NATIVES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

September 2005

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## "It was bad or it was good:" Alaska Natives in Past Boarding Schools

Diane Hirshberg

In 2004 and 2005 my colleagues and I gathered information on the boarding school and boarding house experiences of 68 Alaska Native artists who attended boarding schools or participated in the urban boarding house program throughout the 1900s, throughout the early 2000s. From the early 1900s, to the 1970s, Alaska Natives lived under different conditions that included either primary or secondary schools and boarding schools run by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), by private churches or, later, by Alaska's state government. Some were directed to boarding houses or attend school in various places. Their experiences varied a glimpse of both the positive and negative effects of past boarding schools. Many spoke with understanding about their boarding school experiences, feeling both proud and sad emotions. This article presents some of the findings of this study.

The history of formal schooling for Alaska Natives, from the time of the U.S. acquisition of Alaska in 1867 to the present, is a troubled one. The initial push of formal education in the North went to Christians and "civilized" Alaska Natives (Dorell & Harris, 1999, p. 52). They were the federal, territorial, and state governments established a boarding school system to accomplish these goals. For the first three quarters of the 20th century Alaska Native children were sent to boarding schools or boarding houses, either inside or outside Alaska.

The federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) developed the boarding school system for American Indian/Alaska Native students in the 19th century, with the explicit intent of assimilating these youngsters. By 1900, there were 68 boarding schools throughout the country, serving 3,000 students (McDermid, 1994). In the early part of the 20th century, academically talented Alaska Native students were sent to vocational boarding schools outside Alaska. These students had largely unsuccessful experiences, and in the 1930s the federal government closed three vocational boarding schools for Natives in Alaska. For two decades these schools functioned as the sole BIA-sponsored secondary education option for Alaska Native students. However, these first boarding schools fell into disrepair, and in 1947 the BIA opened a single consolidated boarding school in Sitka, AK, Edgemont (Cotton, 1994; McDermid, 1999).

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# Historical Healing

- The more we understand, the easier it is to bring healing to the next generation
- Recognizing how this has continued and how it has hurt our families, our people, make us more understanding and willing to help others who experience this pain and fight against these injustices
- Building up and taking back what our ancestors passed down to us, our identity
- Knowing that we our loved and that colonization is not what defines us
- Our cultural identity is proof that we are never alone
- When we know who we are, we begin to realize our purpose as Native peoples



# Steps Taken By ANHC

- Identified over 40 locations that house religious primary source material pertaining to the Boarding Schools in North America, including contacts within said locations
- Convene a boarding school meeting at the Alaska Native Heritage Center
- Signed MOU with the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition
- Creation of a “Healing Totem” honoring all former Alaska Native boarding school students – to be installed at the Alaska Native Heritage Center (Kawerak, Inc.) Discovered connections between churches, resource extraction, the structure of the boarding schools, and the lasting effects of the Boarding Schools.
- Five (5) Academic Journals concerning the Boarding Schools to be published over the next year
- Passed AFN Resolution 23-14
- Partnerships with various ecclesial institutions and Universities



ALASKA  
NATIVE  
HERITAGE  
CENTER

CHIQINIK

QUYANAQPAK

QUYANA

HÁW'AA

GUNALCHÉESH

TAIKUU

CHIN'ANMAHSI' CHOO

QAGAASAKUNG

