An(i)ti: An Examination of Settler Discourse and Politics in Guåhan

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Abstract

Guåhan is an unincorporated territory of the United States which exists in a "liminal space, betwixt and between, somehow outside the normal order of sovereignty or integration" (Stade, 1998, p. 47). Often referred to as the "Tip of America's Spear," the island sits at the nexus of the United States' co-constitutive capitalist, militarist and imperialist agenda. Consequently, the CHamoru people, the Indigenous people of Guåhan, are the subjects of a settler colonial/militarist order. This is a relation of domination which is mediated by what is characterized as an extant colonial mainstream mediascape, a media structure which reproduces settler ideology, politics, and reality.

In this thesis, I examine mainstream news media in Guåhan to draw out the presence of pro-American ideologies which operate through what John B. Thompson identifies are ideological modes of operation. That is, rhetorical strategies which work to reproduce American settler colonial/militarist hegemony. By looking at particular discursive events which occurred primarily during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, I elucidate how such media environments perpetuate the dominant order of American militarization and imperialism overseas.

This thesis also theorizes an alternative CHamoru media framework which counters settler colonial/militarist cultural productions. This framework, which I refer to as Fanhigaiyan, comprises a set of principles from CHamoru worldviews and drawn from conversations with journalists and CHamoru activists in Guåhan during the research period. Fanhigaiyan as a concept illustrates how CHamoru media activists not only create and spread information, but also build relationalities amongst each other and with their audiences in translocal solidarity as a means of subverting their colonial status.

Contents

Table of Figures

List of Tables

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed: Manuel Lujan Cruz

Date: July 29, 2021

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On September 19, 2020, China's air force released a video depicting a simulated attack on what looked like Guåhan.[1] In the video, a riveting score plays in the background as we see glimpses of a desert air base at sunset. A jet bomber, the PLA's Xian H-6K, prepares to take off from the runway as crews inside the control tower guide the aircraft into the sky. A series of aerial shots jump-cut from one to the other until, about halfway through the video, a fighter pilot flicks a switch that sends a digitally rendered missile spiraling toward Andersen Air Force Base which, until April 2020, was home to the U.S. Air Force Continuous Bomber Presence. The fleet of Xian H-6Ks fly off victoriously and touch down once again at the desert air base—fade to black.

The video was the latest in a series of back-and-forth provocations between China and the United States (U.S.). The United States, for its part, frequently holds large-scale military exercises, such as the U.S. military's Valiant Shield, an 11,000-person operation involving personnel across multiple branches of the military, in which participants run drills of potential conflicts with China and North Korea (Kaur, 2020, September 15). In September, U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper also held a joint meeting with his Japanese counterpart, Defense Minister Tarō Kōnō, on Guåhan to discuss ongoing military policies in light of China's developing offensive capabilities. To regional governments, the event signaled the United States' interest in vamping up its forward positioning in Asia-Pacific, and a commitment to keeping China's power at bay. However, to the Indigenous people of Guåhan, the CHamoru,[2] the meeting signaled there would be no end to the ongoing military buildup and tensions, and that rather than acting as a deterrent for war, the increased American military presence would make the island yet an even bigger target for world powers in Asia.

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[1] Guåhan is the orthographically correct spelling and pronunciation of "Guam" and is used deliberately in this thesis to contest the United States' claims to ownership of the island.

[2] Similarly, "CHamoru," is the orthographically correct spelling and pronunciation of the alternative, "Chamorro," and is used in this thesis to identify the Indigenous people of Guåhan.

The threat of destruction was not unprecedented for Guåhan, which Sasha Davis (2015) observes is one of a number of islands which are intensely militarized as a means of maintaining U.S. hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region along with the Northern Mariana Islands, Okinawa, Jeju, the Hawaiian Islands, American Samoa, and the Philippines (p. 2). The island is often defined by its strategic importance to the U.S. military and has been called the "tip of America's spear," "America's permanent aircraft carrier," "America's unsinkable aircraft carrier," and "Fortress Guam" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020). Camacho and Monnig (2010) state the U.S. military is engrained in the everyday ways of life and "further enhances an ethos of fear on Guam over the withdrawal of U.S. military facilities and employment opportunities" (p. 159). In 2017, North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un threatened to envelop the island in fire with the launch of a Hwasong-12 nuclear missile to take out key U.S. air force and navy bases (Calamur, 2017, August 9). The threat drew the attention of national and international news corporations to the island to report on what many thought would be the beginning of a nuclear conflict between the two countries—from ground zero. As a *geographically strategic*[3] place in the Pacific, Guåhan has, at other points in history, been a site of contestation. The island was also the site of a major World War II battle when, after three years of Japanese occupation, the United States recaptured the island on July 21, 1944 (a date which, quizzically, is celebrated as "Liberation Day," despite the people's non-self-governing status). To military strategists, Guåhan is juncture point in the United States' island chain strategy: two north-south chains of islands held and fortified by the US and its allies as a way to hem in Asian powers while simultaneously giving the US forward bases from which to launch rapid offensive maneuvers (Davis, 2020, Location no. 1433). The island is effectively a buffer zone meant to absorb the brunt of military attacks in defense of the continental United States (Chan, 2020, July 9).

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[3] Guåhan is routinely referred to by military officials as being "geographically strategic" for its proximity to Asia. See Rogers, R. F. Guam's Strategic Value. *Guampedia.* https://www.guampedia.com/guams-strategic-value/.

It would be difficult not to view American settler colonialism/militarism as permanent fixtures of global politics. After all, while the United States recorded over 600,000 deaths from COVID-19 and over 34 million infections, its military activities in the Pacific seemingly went unobstructed with the U.S. Marine Corps activating its first base in 68 years (Daily Post Staff, 2020, October 3). Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, as it was called, was named after the first CHamoru Marine to achieve the rank of general, and cost $8 billion. The base is part of the U.S. military's ongoing plan to relocate thousands of marines from Okinawa to Guåhan. The plan itself entailed the clearing of thousands of acres of pristine limestone forest and the desecration of multiple ancestral sites and remains despite the protest of CHamoru activists and government of Guam elected leaders. Adding further insult to injury, former President Trump openly stated what most U.S. officials speak of only behind closed doors: Guåhan, and the other U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) would not be granted statehood under his presidency. "With 53 states, he said, 'What is the flag going to look like? It's a very, very sad thing for our country – very, very sad thing,' Trump said" (Daleno, 2020, October 3). Put in more polite terms by President Biden, Congress' territorial policy is critical to the "mission of preserving the rule of law."[4] Statements such as these are dismaying even for island residents who may not feel inclined toward independence, yet imagine that Guåhan could one day become a state.

That Guåhan's status can be described as nothing other than colonial is a banal point since, in addition to being a tourist destination for travelers from Asia, the island routinely becomes a topic of discussion concerning U.S. territories and America's militaristic might overseas, during which the island makes its way into the international and national spotlight, particularly during flashpoints such as the North Korean missile threat. To onlookers form the US continent and abroad, Guåhan and the CHamoru people are held in stasis—a state

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[4] See "Statement by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. on Puerto Rico," WH.gov, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/07/statement-by-president-joseph-r-biden-jr-on-puerto-rico/.

of perpetual rediscovery (and recolonization). They are an anachronistic reminder to the world that, as Nick Estes (2019) states, colonization is "supposed to have disappeared…. They incarnate the inconvenient truth that the United States was founded on genocide and the continuing theft of a continent" (p. 173). Yet, as Daniel Immerwahr (2019) asserts "the history of the United States is the history of empire" (Location no. 6798). The topic of empire, however, rarely appears in U.S. textbooks while, as Tiara Na'puti (2020) observes, "ongoing imperialism, militarism, and colonialism are disappeared" (p. 96). When the topic of empire does appear, it is the U.S. which opposes empire, not participate in it:

> The country perceives itself to be a republic, not an empire. It was born in an anti-imperialist revolt and has fought empires ever since, from Hitler's Thousand-Year Reich and the Japanese Empire to the "evil empire" of the Soviet Union. It even fights empires in its dreams. Star Wars, a saga that started with a rebellion against the Galactic Empire, is one of the highest-grossing film franchises of all time. (Immerwahr, Location no. 319)

While the façade is undoubtedly maintained by the hundreds-of-billions of dollars American taxpayers spend annually on the national defense budget, it is the power of ideology which corrals the myriad U.S. officials, weapons manufacturers, diplomats, contractors, CEOs, hotel and bar owners; etc. to keep the gears of the war machine rotation in a perpetual exercise of ideology which, Göran Therborn (1999) asserts, is a social process that operates "through discursive processes inscribed in matrices of non-discursive practices" (p. 82). More precisely, ideology is the logic of a society or an individual which is reaffirmed and reproduced through corporeal actions (non-discursive practices) that reify the logic of an ideology. Integral to this process is the operation of mass media and its role in manufacturing consent (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). It is on this point that this thesis is chiefly concerned.

In this thesis I argue local and national mainstream news media function as apparatuses of American settler colonialism/militarism through the reproduction of settler/colonial discourses about Guåhan and the CHamoru people. Further, that local news media constitute what can only be described as an extant colonial mainstream mediascape, the legitimacy of which is

threatened by the mediation of CHamoru resistance through social media. Despite its size, what happens to/in/on Guåhan is of global importance. As Davis (2020) states:

> [A] loss of political control over any of the islands in the western Pacific is a threat—not just because it undermines the actual strategies for a conflict with China in the Pacific but also because it would undermine the stable political geographies on which U.S. strategies have been imagined over the past seventy years. (Location no. 1462)

The decolonization of Guåhan is thus a complex issue with implications on numerous fields of inquiry, including Communication Studies, Critical Indigenous Studies, Pacific Studies, and so on.

Using critical discourse analysis informed by John B. Thompson's concept of ideological modes of operation, I seek to answer the following research questions: (RQ1) What influence does extant colonial mainstream media have on public discourse in Guåhan (RQ2) How does CHamoru digital media activism affect decolonization politics and discourse offline; and (RQ3) What model does CHamoru digital media activism present for decolonial journalism?

This thesis takes place during a period of unprecedented global crisis, and seeks to contribute to an understanding of settler colonialism/militarism through an examination of news discourse and the operation of ideology. To critique ideology, Slavoj Žižek (2012) states, "is precisely to discern the hidden necessity in what appears as a mere contingency" (Location no. 107). Thus, far from being issues of exclusively local relevance, the decolonization of the CHamoru people and the demilitarization of Guåhan are of global necessity to the project of dismantling the status quo. If, indeed, another world is possible, we will only get there through the realization of Indigenous sovereignty which, in the context of the CHamoru people not only means to be recognized as a sovereign nation-state but, as Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2021) argues, the unrestrained ability "to draw on and exert the lifeforce we share with and derive from our creators, ancestors and relatives that inextricably unite us with the earth and to our respective shared territories" (p. 259).

The title of this thesis captures this spirit of CHamoru resurgence. It is apt in that it reflects competing Western and CHamoru worldviews. Prior to Spanish colonization, the term "aniti" referred to the spirits of our ancestors, which play an integral role in CHamoru life. However, the meaning of "aniti" changed to mean the devil, or something evil. Today, it exemplifies how CHamoru are retaking ownership of our language, our culture, and our sovereignty in ways which subvert our status as a U.S. colony.

1.1 Guåhan in Political Context

Despite the presence of American military bases, nuclear submarines, fighter jets, and drones, Guåhan is also marketed to tourists and military personnel stationed on the island as, rather benignly, "Where America's Day Begins," a phrase that links colonial ownership with colonial notions of temporality. Of all the current distortions of the island, no title is perhaps more deceptive than its legal status as an "unincorporated territory" of the United States.

Figure 1. A mural in the capital, Hagåtña, includes the popular slogan, "Where America's Day Begins."
Source: R Mendez, *Flickr*, January 17, 2010.

This political ambiguity was perfectly captured in a statement by U.S. House of

Representatives member Marjorie Taylor Greene who, at the Conservative Political Action

Conference 2021, listed Guåhan alongside foreign countries stating, "We believe our hard-

earned tax dollars should just go for America, not for what? China, Russia, Middle East,

Guam, whatever, wherever," (Kaur, 2021, March 10). This ambiguity was codified in U.S.

law in the Insular Cases of 1901, in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unincorporated

territories were "foreign… in a domestic sense" (Downes v. Bidwell, 182 U.S. 244 at 341-

342). Literally, its status means it is neither part of the United States, nor is it politically

sovereign, while only selected parts of the U.S. Constitution apply (U.S. Department of the

Interior, n.d.). What is more, the rights of people in such territories are not so much rights at

all but rather privileges, as U.S. Congress exercises what is called "plenary power." That is,

as Juan R. Torruella (2015) states, "means 'practically unfettered colonial power'" (p. 67).

However, this unfettered power is not exercised solely by Congress, as the U.S. military

systematically capitalizes on Guåhan's lack of sovereignty. The island, after all, is:

> not a foreign nation, and therefore, does not have the ability to limit the activities
> of the U.S. military in its borders [and so] the U.S. military can exploit the
> environment on Guam in ways it might not be able to do elsewhere, for those
> who call it home have no say in what the military may or may not do. (Bevacqua
> & Cruz, 2020, pp. 132–133)

Thus, political ambiguity serves the dual purpose of both suppressing rights and allowing the

U.S. military to operate unbounded by legality. As Robert McChesney (2018) asserts,

"militarism and democracy is a contradiction. This isn't even a controversial point" (p. 24).

1.2 Continuity of CHamoru Resistance

Of course, American incursions onto CHamoru sovereignties have not gone uncontested. At

many points throughout the U.S.'s occupation, CHamoru have actively sought either greater

representation within the U.S. political framework or self-determination. Today, CHamoru

activists are vocal in their opposition of heightened militarization, while advocating for

political independence. Groups such as Independent Guåhan and Prutehi Litekyan are part

of a network of translocal activist groups in militarized island communities which contend "that military operations negatively affect the health, security, and well-being of people living on the islands and should be stopped" while calling "for sovereignty and local control over politics" (Davis, 2015, p. 73).

The translocal aspect of anti-militarization activism is integral to understanding contemporary CHamoru activism, and to resisting the Western view of islands as small and isolated. As Shinnosuke Takahashi (2019) notes, "place-based social movements are not solely a local phenomenon but stand somewhere between the local and global spheres, and play a role in transforming different levels of political space" (p. 48). Activists in Guåhan thus join a growing number of island communities affected by U.S. imperialism in opposing colonization and militarization. Further, this translocality is increasingly mediated and maintained through digital media, allowing groups to organize with greater efficiency.

1.3 Positionality

I approach this thesis from my positionality as a CHamoru activist-scholar and former journalist that is committed to the work of decolonization. This guides my approach to ideological criticism and discursive analyses to attend to the implications of U.S. imperialism, settler colonialism, and militarization as mutually constitutive structures of dominance and oppression.

1.4 How the Thesis is Organized

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature informing this thesis. Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis attend to RQ1 by offering in-depth analyses of national and local news coverage of discursive events that occurred over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Using discourse analysis informed by John B. Thompson's concept of ideological modes of operation, these manuscripts elucidate how local and national mainstream news media constitute an apparatus of settler colonialism/militarism that constructs a particular version of Guåhan that is productive of, and consistent with, the United States' imperial agenda.

Focusing specifically on local mainstream news companies in Guåhan, I argue that such companies reproduce American settler hegemony through the construction of a conceptual field I refer to as the extant colonial mainstream mediascape. Chapter 5 seeks to answer RQ2, and presents a pivotal moment in this thesis by aiming to replace settler colonial/militarist discourse and Western claims to knowledge with a discourse and news practice centered on CHamoru decolonization discourse, activism, and knowledge—a conversation which is further elaborated upon in Chapter 6, resolving RQ3 by theorizing a CHamoru activist media framework from conversations with participants.

Research questions	Chapter title
	Chapter 3: "*News Media Complicity in the Reproduction of Settler Colonial Ideology in Guåhan*"
RQ1: What influence does extant colonial mainstream media have on public discourse in Guåhan?	**Chapter 4:** "*Saying the Quiet Parts Out Loud: Guåhan, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, and the Role of Journalism in Reproducing Colonization in the Time of COVID-19*"
RQ2: How does CHamoru digital media activism affect decolonization politics and discourse offline?	**Chapter 5:** *"CHamoru Digital Activism and the Anti/Colonial Media Binary in Guåhan"*
RQ3: What model does CHamoru digital media activism present for decolonial journalism?	**Chapter 6:** *In* Discussion *With* - Discussion Chapter

Figure 2. Thesis research framework

Manuscript 1

In "News Media Complicity in the Reproduction of Settler Colonial Ideology in Guåhan," I examine the presence and function of the modes of dissimulation and legitimation in local news coverage of the 2020 Japan-U.S. Joint Defense meeting which took place in Guåhan, and the U.S. Supreme Court's refusal to hear the government of Guam's appeal over the *Davis v. Guam* ruling. The case studies in this manuscript are brought into conversation with the lasting legacy of settler governance through the Insular Cases of 1901, which defined the United States' policy regarding newly acquired territories overseas following the

Spanish-American War. This manuscript was first submitted to *The Journal of Rhetoric, Politics & Culture* on September 16, 2020, and was accepted for publication on June 2, 2021.

Manuscript 2

In "Saying the Quiet Parts Out Loud: Guåhan, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, and the Role of Journalism in Reproducing Colonization in the Time of COVID-19," I examine more closely the impact of certain discursive practices that lead to the reproduction of settler colonial/militarist ideology, such as news media's reliance on establishment sources, and the ongoing challenge of journalists' to increase their productivity while facing resource shortages. Such discursive practices help us to understand the rhetorical strategies associated with modes of fragmentation and reification which were employed in local and national news coverage of the USS Theodore Roosevelt COVID-19 Outbreak that occurred between March and April of 2020. The article also examines local news media's dehumanizing of CHamoru decolonization and demilitarization activists who protested the quarantining of sailors among the island population. This manuscript was published in the *AAPI Nexus Journal* 17 (1 & 2).

Manuscript 3

The final manuscript in this thesis, "CHamoru Digital Activism and the Anti/Colonial Media Binary in Guåhan" provides an introduction to the competing media frameworks in Guåhan and was published in *Media Fields Journal* on March 14, 2020. Using the 2017 North Korea Missile Threat, I examine the function of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape, and CHamoru activist counter-discourses. The article then looks at the social and political contexts surrounding CHamoru digital activism, setting the foundation for more elaborate conversation about CHamoru media activism, as well as delineating a CHamoru media activist framework called Fanhigaiyan, which takes place in the Discussion section.

In bringing settler ideology, news media, and CHamoru media activism into conversation with Western media analysis and ideological criticism, it is my hope that this thesis draws attention to the ways mediascapes can operate as apparatuses of settler power. In particular, I seek to develop understanding around how local, national, and international news all play a significant role in the perpetuation of the United States' colonization and militarization of Guåhan. Further, I hope to theorize a CHamoru media framework which counters settler ideology toward CHamoru sovereignty.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 U.S. Militarization, Colonialism, & Guåhan

Shigematsu and Camacho (2010) assert Asia and the Pacific Islands have been shaped by the "interconstitution of Japanese and U.S. colonialism" and their complicit histories of imperialist violence which today "constitute the conditions of possibility for ongoing forms of militarization" (p. xv-xvi). As Vine (2015) notes, the United States currently operates approximately eight-hundred military bases around the world (p. 10). These bases function, Cachola et al. (2010) observe, "with the consent—whether by flattery, bribery, bullying, or coercion—of 'host' governments" (p. 169). The U.S. also spends about $732 billion on national defense—more than the next ten countries combined (SIPRI, 2020). While the Pentagon officially recognizes about 686 of these bases, many more of these installations are comprised of what the U.S. military refers to as *lily pads*: "small, covert sites scattered around the globe" (Vine, 2015, p. 291). Even still, some of the most geographically strategic bases are held in U.S. territories, "once called colonies" (Vine, 2015, p. 86). Islands such as Guåhan, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands which "have neither full independence nor the full democratic rights that would come with incorporation in the United States" (Vine, 2015, p. 86).

Contrary to the perception that military bases are established to defend the areas they are situated in, Davis (2015) argues the military presence on these islands primarily ensure the function of critical economic and logistical processes (p. 6). Cachola et al. (2010) further state militarism contributes to "violence against women, human trafficking, health effects of environmental contamination caused by preparations for war, the challenges of base conversion to civilian use, and the everyday militarization of our societies" (p. 165). Further, militarization "jeopardizes people's opportunities to live in sustainable ways… due to inadequate services due to inflated military budgets at the expense of socially useful programs" (Cachola et al., 2010, p. 165).

Guåhan is the site of some of the most important U.S. military bases in the world due to both

its geographic location and its ambiguous political status as an unincorporated territory. Yet,

as Robert Underwood (1982) has stated, for the CHamoru people, living under American

occupation has meant "uncertainty, neglect and inattention to basic human and civil rights

for most of the time since 1898" (p. 3). As a non-self-governing territory (NSGT), the U.S.

considers the political status of Guåhan to be a domestic issue, and so sits outside the

purview of international concern (Bevacqua & Cruz, p. 130). In many ways, this is exactly

what makes the island so alluring to U.S. military planners. As U.S. Navy lieutenant

commander David Zielinski (2009) noted:

> When asked in an interview about the advantages of Guam as a base, former
> Commanding Officer of Naval Base Guam, Captain Robert A. McNaught[,]
> reiterated the argument that the island's primary advantage [lay] in its political
> status. By being sovereign U.S. territory [sic], Captain McNaught indicated that
> U.S. forces could operate unconstrained from the political requirements of host
> countries, either in training or during actual conflicts. (p. 3).

Similarly, U.S. Marine lieutenant general John Goodman was quoted as stating "Why

Guam? The answer is because I can't go to the Philippines. If our alliance with the

Philippines would allow us to go there, I would move 8,000 Marines right now to Manila Bay"

(quoted in Davis, 2015). What Goodman is essentially stating is that, in/on Guåhan, the

military can do as it pleases. This is a point of tremendous significance to global affairs. As

Immerwahr has stated, "Guam may be a small island, but it matters tremendously that there

is this one spot, far into the Pacific, that the U.S. military can use without asking anyone's

permission" (Kindle, Chapter 22).

The scale and magnitude of U.S. militarism in the Marianas is projected to increase in the

coming years, as the U.S. Department of Defense continues with its plans to shift an

additional 5,000 U.S. Marines, their dependents, and supporting personnel (contractors,

construction workers, etc.) from Okinawa to Guåhan by 2025. For the past decade, the

move has been accompanied by the repeated and ongoing destruction of CHamoru

ancestral sites and artifacts due to the construction of a live-fire training range. It has also

been abetted by the finalizing of the Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) Study Area, which is effectively the world's largest military training area (Office of Vice Speaker Therese M. Terlaje, 2017). The MITT is also part of a Pacific transit corridor for U.S. forces between the Hawai'ian islands and the Marianas. The buildup is expected to exacerbate existing social and economic issues, "overwhelm[ing] Guam's infrastructure, creat[ing] economic hardship, and caus[ing] serious cultural and environmental damage" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 13).

2.2 Settler Colonialism

Patrick Wolfe (2006) has asserted that settler colonialism is a structure, and not an event (p. 390). Rowe and Tuck (2017) go on to argue that it is an "ongoing, organizing force within U.S. global power relations," which necessitates the "continuously renewed erasure of Indigenous people" (p. 6). As Kanaka Maoli scholar Maile Arvin (2019) states, settler colonialism is fixated on the domination and exploitation of land operating through an assemblage of economic, legal, and ideological power (p. 15). The term *settler militarism*, advanced by Juliet Nebolon (2017) further encapsulates how "settler colonialism and militarization have simultaneously perpetuated, legitimated, and concealed one another" (p. 25). Both settler colonialism and settler militarism are terms which, Craig Santos Perez (2017) asserts "resonate with the various ways of drawing lines of boundary around and through archipelagoes" turning islands and oceans into "militarized space[s] of empire" (p. 106).

2.3 Settler Governance: The Insular Cases

Michael Lechuga (2020) situates Western legal frameworks as part of the abstract machine of settler colonial ideological power in its "organizing logics of subjectivity and sovereignty circulated through narratives of settler logic" (p. 381). Western legal frameworks reinscribe settler power by ensuring that, as Estes (2019) asserts, "the arc of the Western moral universe never bends toward Indigenous justice" (p. 229). He goes on to argue that such legal frameworks are "crude and archaic" in that it draws from:

expressions of its own past to determine 'justice' in the present, therefore setting precedent for future cases. Only congressional or executive action can redirect the course of law away from its inherent conservativism, avenues that have provided little relief for Indigenous peoples. Otherwise, as is often the case for major Indian court decisions, a 'bad' decision becomes doctrine. By following its own legal traditions, the arc of the Western moral universe never bends toward Indigenous justice. At best, it ignores it. At worst, it annihilates it. (Estes, 2019, p. 229)

For Guåhan, settler governance is no better characterized than by the Insular Cases of 1901, which dictate in very material ways the form and function of colonization. As Gerald L. Neuman (2015) states, the Insular Cases are a *relic of colonialism* which affects "their [people living in the colonies] civil rights directly, and it affects all their rights by limiting their political rights, which in turn reduces their ability to influence the laws that regulate them" (p. xiv).

As such, under a concept the U.S. Supreme Court calls "plenary power," the government of Guam has no legal authority which is not derived from Congress (*Puerto Rico v. Sanchez Valle*, 136 S. Ct. 1863, 2016). Plenary power is an ambiguous term which Juan R. Torruella (2015) asserts that what is actually meant is "'practically unfettered colonial power'" (p. 67). Ambiguous legal and political doublespeak is evident in the determination of *Downes v. Bidwell*, in which Justices declared that unincorporated territories are "foreign… in a domestic sense" (pp. 341-342). Efrén Rivera Ramos (2015) thus states the Insular Cases "were intended to provide a constitutional basis for U.S. rule over those lands. They legitimized, via constitutional argument, the possibility of an indefinite condition of political subordination." (p. 35).

2.4 Media Reproductions of Settler Common Sense

The cultural and legal spheres of settler power are coordinated by settler ideology, what Mark Rifkin (2014) defines as settler common sense: the given, unmarked, "generic conditions of possibility for occupancy, association, history, and personhood" (Introduction). Settler common sense organizes and orchestrates the tendrils of settler colonial/militarist power, which "infiltrate and shape the intimate and public spaces we live in" (Arvin, 2019, p.

32). Settler common sense is what designates Guåhan as the "tip of America's spear," "Fortress Guam," "America's permanent aircraft carrier," and "America's unsinkable aircraft carrier" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 127). Settler common sense constructs and registers places which "exist exclusively for colonization and militarization" (Na'puti, 2019, p. 3). As Ronni Alexander (2014) observes, these colonized and militarized sites are demarcated by chain link fences enclosing military bases, delineating "one or many engendered, colonized, and militarized physical, temporal and/or imagined spaces, including those involved in the current military build-up" (p. 869).

In the case of cultural production, settler common sense also exists as any number of tropes which communicate that, as Perez (2017) states, Guåhan and the CHamoru people are "considered too small and meaningless to be of any historical, political, cultural, or demographic significance" (pp. 97-112). Concurrently, settler common sense provides an unending set of rationalizations which, as Shigematsu and Camacho (2010) assert, depict militarized departure and militarized settlement in terms of 'economic progress' for the [I]ndigenous and settler populations of Guam and Okinawa" (pp. xxii).

2.5 Decoloniality

As this thesis presents not just a critique of news media, but a critique of news media in the context and operation of U.S. colonialism, a sufficient analysis cannot be done without mentioning decoloniality as a counter-logic to colonialism and modernity. This modernity/coloniality paradigm was first introduced by Peruvian scholar Anibal Quijano and further developed by Walter D. Mignolo (2011) who argues coloniality is the "underlying logic of the foundation and unfolding of Western civilization from the Renaissance to today of which historical colonialisms have been a constitutive, although downplayed, dimension" (pp. 1-2). Mignolo and Walsh (2018) further state modernity is a fiction perpetuated by "actors, institutions, and languages that benefit those who built the imaginary and sustain it, through knowledge and war, military and financial means" (Location no. 2779). Such means

also include colonialism and the oppression of Indigenous peoples. Thus, "there is no modernity without coloniality" (Mignolo, 2011, p. 3).

Despite the appearance of objectivity and the presentation of seemingly genuine debate surrounding topics such as decolonization and militarization, Guåhan-based mainstream media continue to propagate colonial narratives imbued with white paternalist, pro-American discourses underscoring a point made by Glen Coulthard (2007) that the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and their perspectives are allowed only in such a way that "the foundation of the colonial relationship remains relatively undisturbed" (p. 451).

2.6 Ideology

The concept of ideology has a wide range of historical meanings[5] which, as Terry Eagleton (2007) states, very often "refers to the ways in which signs, meanings and values help to reproduce a dominant social power; but it can also denote any significant conjuncture between discourse and political interests" (p. 221). To attempt to compress these meanings into one definition would "be unhelpful even if it were possible" (Eagleton, 2007, p. 1). Yet, what is clear is that ideologies are, as Göran Therborn (1999) states, ongoing social processes which communicate to a society what exists (and what does not exist); what is good, right, and just (and its opposites); and what is possible and impossible (p. 18).[6] Thus, ideology is such that it has the power to structure the order of nature, such as conceptualizations of time, which is evident in the catch phrase, *where America's day begins*. As Māori scholar Rangi Matamua (2021) states, "time is bound to culture, to place, and to people. It is embedded within ritual, routine, calendars, devices, environments, discourse, myth, practice, labor, religion, spirituality, science, and all facets of cultural life.

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[5] Similarly, Slavoj Žižek (2012) notes the concept can "designate anything from a contemplative attitude that misrecognizes its dependence on social reality to an action-orientated set of beliefs, from the indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relations to a social structure to false ideas which legitimate a dominant political power" (Location no. 95).
[6] In a similar fashion, one might consider Albert Memmi's (1965) colonizer/colonized dialectic, in which the paradigm of colonialism is both destructive and creative in that "[I]t destroys and re-creates the two partners of colonization into colonizer and colonized" (p. 89).

Ultimately time orientates how people interact with everything," (p. 65). This phrase thus characterizes a settler colonial/militarist attempt to relegate *Guam time*[7] into "a Western ideology and accordingly, [the CHamoru people's] political, religious and cultural paradigms" (Matamua, 2021, p. 66).

It is not the objective of this thesis to offer yet another definition of ideology. Nor is it this thesis' goal to critique existing definitions of ideology by Western scholars. Rather, I wish to attend to the operation of ideology in mainstream news media in order to "study the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination" (Thompson, 1990, p. 56). Ideology, as used in this thesis, is understood as a by-product of power which operates to sustain relations of domination. From this assumption, the discourse analyses in this thesis study ideology by locating what Thompson refers to as "modes of operation of ideological phenomena." These are:

> Legitimation - Relations of domination are represented as legitimate, "that is, just and worthy of support;"
>
> Dissimulation - Relations of domination are "concealed, denied or obscured, or [by] being represented in a way which deflects attention from or glosses over existing relations or processes;"
>
> Unification - Relations of domination are "established and sustained by constructing, at the symbolic level, a form of unity which embraces individuals in a collective identity, irrespective of the difference and divisions that may separate them;"
>
> Fragmentation - Relations of domination are maintained by "fragmenting those individuals and groups that might be capable of mounting an effective challenge to dominant groups, or by orientating forces of potential opposition towards a target which is projected as evil, harmful or threatening;" and
>
> Reification - Relations of domination are sustained by "representing a transitory, historical state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural, outside of time… portrayed as events of a quasi-natural kind." (Thompson, 1990, pp. 60-65)

Thompson's modes are not exhaustive, as there are a multitude of ways institutions may deploy ideology. For researchers of colonialism, such a model is beneficial as it provides a

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[7] The term, *Guam time* is often used when relating time to persons in/outside of Guåhan. It also encapsulates a CHamoru notion of time as fluid and informal "with little focus on small units of time" (Matamua, p. 65).

malleability that is required for analyses of nuanced circumstances. Further, Thompson's

modes enable researchers to determine how ideology operates through the use of language

in particular contexts to achieve outcomes that benefit dominant classes, noting that

ideology, in itself, as it appears in language is often indefinite. That is, "[i]deology is a realm

of contestation and negotiation, in which there is a constant busy traffic: meanings and

values are stolen, transformed, appropriated across the frontiers of different classes and

groups, surrendered, repossessed, reinflected" (Eagleton, 2007, p. 101). What's more,

ideologies can, in many cases, operate beyond spatial and temporal boundaries:

> The power of ideology operates not only in conjunctures of high drama, but in slow, gradual processes as well. Ideologies not only cement systems of power; they may also cause them to crumble and set them drifting like sandbanks, still there though not in the same place and shape. Yet both cases will involve complex concatenations of forces and voices, in which patterns and relationships may be distinguished and rendered amenable to material explanation. (Therborn, p. 125)

Essentially, Therborn's argument is that even within a context of subordination, ideology

can, through complicity and a certain "buying into," bestow a degree of agency to the

oppressed.

2.7 Discourse

This thesis uses a definition of discourse as "actually occurring instances of communication"

(Thompson, 1990, p. 286). These are, for example:

> [A] conversation between friends, a classroom interaction, a newspaper editorial, a television programme. These instances form linguistic units which generally exceed the limits of a single sentence. They often involve a concatenation of sentences or expressions, which are combined together in a specific way to form an ordered, supra-sentential linguistic unit. (Thompson, 1990, p. 286)

The types of discourse this thesis is primarily concerned with are online news articles and

editorials, news broadcasts, military press releases, and political speeches, all of which

exemplify how settler common sense is reproduced through discourse. These forms of text

were selected due to the timeframe of this research project, which mainly took place during

the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Online news stories are archived and easily accessible,

and thus allowed me to continue my research while in Aotearoa (New Zealand) when many parts of the world, Guåhan included, were locked down. Further, the analysis of digitally archived news texts showcase, as Lynch and Galtung (2010) observe, "what the media in fact do, and the effect that has on people and how they act. What media report and what people do are related, and hypotheses may be tested empirically" (p. 57).

Moreover, John E. Richardson (2007) asserts, "meaning is constructed through an interaction between producer, text, and consumer" (p. 15). Within these interactions, discursive analyses work, as Titscher et al. (2000) states, to examine and draw out relationships "between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power-relations" (p. 146). Thompson (1990), also warns against one-dimensional discursive analyses, noting instead that:

> [i]n order to employ the study of syntactic devices or of narrative structures for the analysis of ideology, one must seek to show how such devices or structures facilitate the construction of meaning which serves, in specific social-historical circumstances, to support relations of domination; in other words, one must develop an argument about the interrelations between meaning and power. (p. 293)

A sufficient examination of the interrelations between meaning and power must therefore consider discourse in its relation to systems of power, as well as social and cultural contexts.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an example of a framework which is interpretive, contextual, and constructivist, meaning that discourse is situated "within the context in which it occurs, rather than just summarizing patterns or regularities in texts" (Richardson, 2007, p. 15). In other words, CDA is a method of investigation of discourse as simultaneously "text, discursive practice—which also includes the production and interpretation of texts—and social practice" (Titscher et al., 2000, pp. 149-150). Applied to news media, CDA is used "to draw out the form and function of the text, the way that this text relates to the way it is produced and consumed, and the relation of this to the wider society in which it takes place" (Richardson, 2007, p. 37). This thesis is thus concerned with the features of news discourse, such as word choice and argumentation, in relation to the discursive practices influencing

news production, and the social practices surrounding American colonialism and militarization.

2.8 Hegemony

The critiques of ideology and discourse in this thesis are influenced by Antonio Gramsci's core conception of hegemony—the direct and indirect rule of dominant institutions through the shaping of popular consent—and its implications on mainstream media. For Gramsci, hegemony encompasses the ways (both discursive and non-discursive) a governing power wins consent from those it subjugates (Eagleton, 2007, p. 112). Ideology, therefore, is deployed in the service of hegemony as one of a number of methods to sustain dominance. Hegemony likewise materializes (that is, it enacts) ideology, or as Eagleton states:

> If the concept of hegemony extends and enriches the notion of ideology, it also lends this otherwise somewhat abstract term a material body and political cutting edge. It is with Gramsci that the crucial transition is effected from ideology as 'systems of ideas' to ideology as lived, habitual social practice—which must then presumably encompass the unconscious, inarticulate dimensions of social experience as well as the workings of formal institutions. (2007, p. 114)

Of chief concern here is the ways in which news media as a superstructure functions both discursively and non-discursively as hegemony through the reproduction of ideology, noting that news itself is an "exercise of power over the interpretation of reality" (Schlesinger, 2005, p. 81). This exercise, Sarah Sobieraj (2011) observes, has the ability to extend its shaping of public discourse beyond geographical and temporal boundaries (p. 68). Likewise, Thompson (1990) states mass media's inherent capacity for storage and preservation "greatly expands the scope for the operation of ideology in modern societies for it enables the symbolic forms to be transmitted to extended and potentially vast audiences which are dispersed in time and space" (p. 265).

While the ideological power of hegemony is far-reaching, Eagleton (2012) notes, that hegemony can never be exhaustive, and any ruling class must contend with oppositional forces, or *counterhegemonic* forces, that are "partly constitutive of its own rule (Chapter 9).

Taking this into the context of Guåhan, CHamoru decolonization activists are the counterhegemonic force created by settler colonial power and militarization–a dynamic which is mediated by cultural productions such as news media.

2.9 News Media and Power

Despite what Andrew Mullen (2010) observes is a perception that "media serve as a guardian of the public interest and as a watchdog on the exercise of power" (p. 674), mainstream news media on Guåhan tend, at best, to further obfuscate the terms of Guåhan's settler colonization/militarization; and, at worst, openly support its perpetuation. This is in direct contradiction of the idea that there is a "marketplace of ideas" from which the general public may freely choose from (Ginsberg,1986). A more appropriate account of news media from a U.S. colonial setting is perhaps, as Gurevitch et al. (1982) argues, that news media are:

> part of an ideological arena in which various class views are fought out, although within the context of the dominance of certain classes; ultimate control is increasingly concentrated in monopoly capital; media professionals, while enjoying the illusion of autonomy, are socialized into and internalize the norms of the dominant culture; the media, taken as a whole, relate interpretive frameworks consonant with the interests of the dominant classes, and media audiences, while sometimes negotiating and contesting these frameworks, lack ready access to alternative meaning systems that would enable them to reject the definitions offered by the media in favour of consistently oppositional definitions. (p. 2)

Thus, mainstream news media is a site in which the ideologies of elite classes are mediated to a public which has limited access to counter-discourses, enabling a homogenous interpretation of reality that is consistent with elite interests which must be accepted in order for ruling interests to prevail.

Todd Gitlin (1980) argues mainstream media is a "significant social force in the forming and delimiting of public assumptions, attitudes, and moods—of ideology" (p. 9). However, as the previous excerpt illustrates, the process of media production is not impervious to hegemony. Rather, hegemony is exercised through editorial practices and functions even more subversively in a set of routines "structured in the ways journalists are socialized from

childhood, and then trained, recruited, assigned, edited, rewarded, and promoted on the job"

decisively shaping "the ways in which news is defined, events are considered newsworthy,

and 'objectivity' is secured" (Gitlin, 1980, pp. 11-12). Likewise, Graham Murdock (1973) also

argued news media provides people with the framework of definitions and explanations with

which they approach situations in a self-perpetuating process (p. 141).

Moreover, hegemony operates not explicitly through outright coercion, but by the consent of

the dominated. As Jean-Paul Sartre (2006) demonstrated in 1957, both the informers of

France and the people were complicit in the violence of colonialism in Algiers—the former,

for refusing to account for the horror of France's crimes; and the latter, for choosing to

remain willfully ignorant, leading him to state that "concealing, deceiving, and lying are a

duty for those who inform France; the only crime would be to disturb us" (p .65). Broadly

speaking, these latent ideologies are perpetuated by a number of actors according to their

positionalities in contextualized hierarchies. Or as Thompson (1990) argues:

> Individuals situated within socially structured contexts have, by virtue of their
> location, different quantities of, and different degrees of access to, available
> resources. The social location of individuals, and the entitlements associated
> with their positions in a social field or institution, endow them with varying
> degrees of 'power', understood at this level as a socially or institutionally
> endowed capacity which enables or empowers some individuals to make
> decisions, pursue ends or realize interests. (p. 59)

Along these lines, "gate-keeper" models of journalism seek to explain news phenomena in

terms of the individual power and agency journalists exercise in the production of culture and

the establishment of dominant narratives through story selection. Gans (2005) identified four

theories of story selection in journalism: (a) Journalist-centered: the news as a product of

professional news judgements; (b) Routinization; organizational requirements: commercial

imperatives; structure of the news operation; (c) Event-centered: that news "mirrors" or

"reflects" the actual nature of the world; and (d) Theories based in institutions or social

conditions outside the news organization. While gate-keeper models identify the privilege

journalists hold in the reproduction of hegemony, Jeffrey Klaehn (2002) argues gate-keeper

models are "principally concerned with how "decisions of particular editors and journalists influence news production and news selection processes" (p. 158).

2.10 Structural Critiques of News Media

Allan Luke (2002) argues, "what texts 'do' in the world cannot be explained solely through text analysis or text analytic language" (p. 102). Rather, analyses must be conducted under "broader social theoretical models of the world" (Luke, 2002, p. 102). Structural analytical models, such as the Herman and Chomsky Propaganda Model (PM), attend to the connections between text and material conditions. The PM, for instance, "emphasizes that media personnel internalize beliefs and attitudes which in turn influences media performance" (Herman and Chomsky, 2002, p. 151). Thus, the selection of topics and the slant of a news story is predetermined by a set of hegemonic factors which are largely imperceptible to journalists and editors. In essence, the PM, first introduced in 1988 in Herman and Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, "highlights the multilevel ways in which money and power influence media performance, argues that media interests and choices routinely amount to propaganda campaigns, and suggests that media performance reflects the fact that dominant media firms share interlocking common interests with other institutional sectors" (Herman and Chomsky, 2002, p. 170).

Althusser (2008) alerted us to the *reproduction of the conditions of production*, in which "every social formation must reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces, and in order to be able to produce. It must therefore produce: (1) the productive forces, and (2) the existing relations of production" (Chapter 1). In terms of the reproduction of labor power, Althusser notes, social formations require that certain skills benefitting the ruling class are reproduced, as well as the reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology (Althusser, 2008, Chapter 1). He thus asserted there are two co-constituting apparatuses: (1) Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs): which achieve submission through ideology; and (2) Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs), which achieve submission by violence, such as

the police, military, judiciary, etc. (Althusser, 2008, Chapter 1). Mass media falls into the category of the ISA, of which Althusser asserts there exists a plurality of manifestations. Mass media, as the PM asserts, controls the boundaries of debate and the range of credible topics (p. 162.) Mass media thus maintain "the illusion of genuine debate" (Herman & Chomsky, 2002, p. 298) through the operation of five "filters" of truth:

> (1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms; (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media; (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power; (4) 'flak' as a means of disciplining the media; and (5) 'anti-communism' as a national religion and control mechanism. (p. 2)

Some authors, such as Klaehn (2002) have charged Herman and Chomsky with presenting a deterministic and conspiratorial view of news media as "purveyors of ideologically serviceable propaganda" (p. 156). Herman and Chomsky responded to these criticisms by stressing that the PM is essentially a free market analysis of mass media, "with the results largely an outcome of the working of market forces" (p. 148). That mainstream media institutions operate in the service of ruling classes is not, however, a conclusion unique to Herman and Chomsky. Hall (2016) asserts, for instance, the integral and irreversible relation of force between the structure and superstructure which determines "whether or not they effectively reproduce the social and political conditions for the real expansion and development of the capitalist mode" (p. 158). The PM merely explains this in terms of free market forces.

The vast changes to telecommunication technology and the mediascape make structural news critiques, such as the PM, have only become increasingly relevant. In the 2002 reprint of *Manufacturing Consent*, the authors remarked that what technological, economic, and political changes occurred at the time, only further proved the PMs credibility. Journalist Matt Taibbi (2019) locates the inception of the PM prior to "three massive revolutions" (p. 13). These are:

> The explosion of conservative talk radio and Fox-style news products. Using point of views rather than "objectivity" as commercial strategies, these stations

presaged an atomization of the news landscape under which each consumer had an outlet somewhere to match his or her political beliefs. This was a major departure from the three-network pseudo-monopoly that dominated the *Manufacturing Consent* period, under which the country debated a commonly held set of facts.

The introduction of twenty-four-hour cable news stations, which shifted the emphasis of the news business. Reporters were suddenly trained to value breaking news, immediacy, and visual potential over import. Network "crashes" —relentless day-night coverage extravaganzas of a single hot story like the Kursk disaster or a baby thrown down a well, a type of journalism one TV producer I knew nicknamed "Shoveling Coal For Satan" —became the first examples of binge-watching. The relentless *now now now* grind of the twenty-four-hour cycle created in consumers a new kind of anxiety and addictive dependency, a need to know what was happening not just once or twice a day but every minute. This format would have significant consequences in the 2016 election in particular.

The development of the Internet, which was only just getting off the ground in 1988. It was thought it would significantly democratize the press landscape. But print and broadcast media soon began to be distributed by just a handful of digital platforms. By the late 2000s and early 2010s, that distribution system had been massively concentrated. This created the potential for a direct control mechanism over the press that never existed in the *Manufacturing Consent* era. Moreover, the development of social media would amplify the 'flak' factor a thousandfold, accelerating conformity and groupthink in ways that would have been unimaginable in 1988. (Taibbi, 2019, p. 13.)

Similarly, Alan MacLeod (2019) states the arrival of the Internet and social media has led to the creation of unprecedented monopolies over learning and information like Google and Amazon (p. 47). MacLeod further argues that, "far from challenging the hegemony of the old media, the arrival of the Internet has allowed them to spread their dominance into a new sphere" (MacLeod, 2019, p. 47.). According to Statista (2018), ten of the largest online news sites in the United States by visits are establishment media: *CNN*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Fox News*, *USA Today*, *Forbes*, and *Time*, which impact the reporting of lower-tier news media outlets in local settings. The free market analysis, which the PM facilitates, thus remains applicable to contemporary contexts. Yet, most applications of the PM are largely confined to the continental U.S. and other Western countries, thus some scholars advocate the application of the PM and other structural analyses of the media "in countries with different economic and political systems to see if they hold true" (Mullen, 2010, p. 682).

2.11 Stuart Hall and the Encoding/Decoding Framework

While the media theorists cited thus far present a top-down analysis of mainstream news media, particularly Herman and Chomsky, Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding framework presents a model which acknowledges the agency of individuals to decode messages according to their own perceptions. Hall (1973) remarks that messages are polysemic, that is, having multiple meanings; yet these interpretations themselves are ordered along a scale of "preferred meanings" ranging from dominant to subordinate imprinted upon by the dominant institutional/political/ideological order (p. 14). Hall identified three positions from which decodings can be made:

> The dominant-hegemonic position: where the viewer decodes the message in terms of the codes legitimated by the encoding process and the dominant cultural order.
>
> The negotiated position: a contradictory position where the viewer has the potential to adopt and oppose the dominant televisual codes.
>
> The oppositional position: 'One of the most significant political moments' (E/D: 138) for Hall, where the viewer recognises the dominant televisual codes and opposes them. (Procter, 2004, pp. 69-70)

Thus, Hall's formation enables an analysis of the ways CHamoru activists and the Guåhan public sphere interpret and negotiate their own engagements with mainstream news media; as well as their own activities reproducing counter- hegemonic discourses both online and offline.

2.12 News Media on Guåhan as an Extant Colonial Mainstream Mediascape

The mediascape is integral piece of the abstract machine of settler colonial/militarist power, "out of which non-native ethics, ideals, and orientations emerge" (Rifkin, Introduction). Arjun Appadurai (1990) formulated the term "mediascape" to mean the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information, as well as "the images of the world created by these media" (pp. 298-299). Mainstream news media on Guåhan are artifacts of American post-World War II occupation. The island's most read newspaper, the *Pacific Daily News*, was originally the post-World War II military periodical, *The Navy News*, before it was bought by

Gannett decades later, and was a means of keeping sailors informed of affairs in the continental United States and within the American cultural periphery while stationed in Guåhan (Stade, 1998, 146). Throughout this time, the practice of preferentially hiring off-island (most often white male) journalists to write locally became a fixture of the local news industry, and with it the import of white male, Americanist perspectives that influenced the way CHamoru have looked at events on their island, and how they have looked at themselves (Cruz, 2020).

Simultaneously, in both national and local news coverage, CHamoru perspectives are mostly absent, which exemplifies what Na'puti (2020) argues is the function of a series of "consequences of colonialism and its erasure of blackness and indigeneity as phenomena that profoundly impacts discursive constructions and material conditions of the Pacific" (p. 100). Historically, this has meant the news perception that the government of Guam is inefficient, corrupt, and, most importantly, incapable of managing itself without the United States—a perception that is reinforced by the pandemic, as the island is severely underfunded by the federal government and has just one public hospital to serve a population of approximately 162,000, many of whom live below the federal poverty line. Davis (2015) argues this narrative is held together by the coercive and paternalistic belief that the colonizer "knows what is best for the place, even when the history of the place demonstrates, in the extreme, that this is a complete fallacy" (p. 111).

Francis Dalisay (2009) observed the *Pacific Daily News* has served as a site through which dominant American ideologies are reinforced (p. 254). The same can also be said of its print rival *The Guam Daily Post*, and virtually all other news companies on Guåhan since, as Therborn (1999) asserts that technology and the "ecology of communication" influence ideological relations of force (p. 80). One of the primary functions of news in U.S. colonies such as Guåhan, is, as Dalisay (2014) further argues, to maintain a sense of indebtedness as colonial debt, "an acceptance of colonization manifested through a sense of obligation toward colonizers" and is associated both with pro-U.S. military/pro-buildup ideologies and

less resistance to militarization (p. 11). Dalisay (2012) also observes narratives countering the media's pro-American agenda are kept in check by news media's facilitation of a "spiral of silence" phenomenon, in which "dominant viewpoints flourish and unpopular perspectives become marginalized" (pp. 482, 484).

2.13 Pacific and Indigenous Models of Alternative Journalism

Callison and Young (2020) state that, "'in contrast to the long history of misrepresentations they labor against, Indigenous journalists are producing distinctive coverage and challenging media systems and organizations that reflect deeply colonial priorities" (p. 160). Thus, this thesis seeks to theorize a CHamoru media framework, which I elaborate on in Section 6.5. This framework counters settler cultural productions founded in, and are an extension of, the U.S. settler colonial/militarist project. Such colonial media systems cover issues related to Indigenous rights and decolonization from the United States from positions which reinforce and (re)produce the status-quo. Brendan Hokowhitu (2013) states "the development of Indigenous-controlled media has largely occurred because Indigenous peoples have witnessed their misrepresentation and nonrecognition by others" (p. 102). Hokowhitu further draws from Dunbar in observing that, from the 1960s onwards, "Māori news journalists created 'parallel institutions to counter the monocultural depiction of their reality in mainstream'" (2013, p. 103).

David Robie (2019) observes Western and Eurocentric models of journalism have failed to seriously take Pacific and Indigenous cultures; and their world views into account (p. 3). In contrast to normative top-down approaches to journalism, Robie (2014) has advocated for a talanoa approach to news reporting which holds greater emphasis on "grassroots sources, and less attachment to elite and establishment sources" (pp. 332-333). A talanoa approach "is more reflexive, more nuanced about cause and effect, and also gives greater weight to grassroots and 'citizen public opinion' than dominant top-down views" (Robie, 2019, p. 14). Robie argues:

> Instead of entertainment, 'infotainment' and sensationalism, a talanoa media would always emphasize public interest, civil society and community empowerment, running stories that encourage people to 'act' with possible solutions being identified. Also, in contrast to normative mainstream codes that are widely perceived to be ineffective, talanoa journalism recognizes and deploys Indigenous, diversity and cultural values. (Robie, 2019, p. 14)

Thus, a CHamoru approach to journalism, or at least the production of meaning, is one that is constructed from CHamoru cosmology, ontology, epistemology, and axiology to oppose settler common sense. Instead, such a framework, which I theorize in Chapter 6, would encourage journalists and other media producers to aid in the CHamoru quest for decolonization.

2.14 Inafa'maolek

A number of CHamoru values and beliefs find continuity in the present day despite the various colonial regimes the CHamoru people encountered. Yet inafa'maolek is perhaps the most prominent value, and is used to describe interconnectedness. It is an affirmation that humans have responsibilities to one another which are cemented in various social roles and functions (Underwood, 1978, p. 170). As Bevacqua (2020) notes, "Inafa'maolek has many meanings, but all of them focus around expressing community through interdependence or through cooperation. It is about working together to sustain a society. It is about humans sustaining nature, sustaining their families and so on" ("Inafa'maolek").

Inafa'maolek can be expressed in several ways, so long as the intent is to achieve and maintain a sense of equality and harmony. The stratification of classes brought by late-stage capitalism has brought about significant challenges to inafa'maolek, and yet it is because of inafa'maolek that the CHamoru people are able to resist and subvert settler colonialism/militarization. It is a guiding principle of CHamoru activism, politics, and daily life. Thus, inafa'maolek significantly determines how CHamoru negotiate productions of meaning.

2.15 "Håfa Iyo-ta": Themes in Contemporary CHamoru Activism

Two central themes emerge from anticolonial and antimilitarism groups practicing affinity geopolitics in islands across the U.S. empire: "First, there is the contention that military operations negatively affect the health, security, and well- being of people living on the islands and should be stopped. Second, there is usually a call for sovereignty and local control over politics" (Davis, 2015, p. 73). Richard J.F. Day (2005) defines affinity politics as striving for non-hierarchical and non-coercive interdependence by enhancing one's ability to "determine the conditions of their own existence, while allowing and encouraging others to do the same" (p. 13). There are important intersections between affinity politics and Indigenous conceptions of kinship and relationality.

For instance, while Davis (2015) asserts affinity geopolitics is informed by "respect and mutual aid among communities and nations rather than one of domination, threats, and violence" (p. 3), the CHamoru phrase "Håfa Iyo-ta" bears a double meaning ("What we own"/"What is ours") which demonstrates the contention between Western notions of ownership and property versus CHamoru notions of belonging. As Na'puti and Frain (2017) state, the "latter translation conveys a meaning of collectivity beyond ownership and carries a connotation of belonging with others" offering "a united association of relationality for collective peoples, rather than conveying that things belong to peoples" (pp. 12-13). Both Independent Guahan and Prutehi Litekyan regularly utilize rhetoric which highlights that what is gained by achieving political decolonization from the United States are CHamoru rights to land, and membership among other Pacific islands as a sovereign entity, as opposed to the current exclusion of Guahan from regional and international spheres resulting from its settler colonial/militarist present.

2.16 Digital Activism and CHamoru Sovereignty Struggles

There is a prolific research interest which has emerged around the dynamics between media, communication, civic engagement and social change (Tufte, 2017, p.3). Specifically, given the changing character of communication practices between citizens and institutions, researchers seek to understand how "development, agency, participation, media use and

communication practices" are conceptualized, how young citizens make use of digital media; and what synergies are sparked between old and new media and communication practices (pp. 2-3), such as whether the two eventually merge into one, or whether divergence processes prevail and bring about distinct new forms (Doudaki, V. & Spyridou, L.P., 2013, p. 918). The utility of digital technologies is often defined by users themselves. As T.V. Reed (2017) states, "technologies are always used in particular cultural contexts which reshape them even as they reshape the cultural contexts" (p. 11).

Up until the mid-2000s, most Internet users experienced online political participation as a one-sided affair (Margetts et al., 2016, p. 38). However, Bouvier and Machin (2018) observe the Internet and social media have now come to define many aspects of how we communicate and run our lives—creating for non-mainstream views (pp. 179-180). The Internet has become increasingly interactive and participatory, with 2016 being, according to Angela Nagle (2017), "remembered as the year the media mainstream's hold over formal politics died" (p. 3). The implications of this shift to politics on Guåhan are especially apparent.

For instance, Cruz and Somera (2014) have observed the emergence of an increasingly digitized CHamoru activism which uses social media to maintain group identity, disseminate information, and advocate against U.S. military activities in the Marianas (pp. 6, 22). Additionally, Na'puti and Frain (2017) argue digital media has enabled CHamoru activists to manifest Indigenous counter-hegemonic politics in various ways, across emerging media platforms and digital spaces circumventing mainstream media (p. 15). While Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2017) has argued the Internet inhibits Indigenous relationality, a growing number of Pacific scholars, such as Lana Lopesi (2018), argue the Internet is now integral to the contemporary Moana experience as a way to remain connected, share information, construct public identities and have a say in local, national, and international politics (Location no. 902).

The Internet is a tool that is shaped and reshaped by its user and assigned certain qualities. It has allowed CHamoru activists access to circles of discussion, and "the ability to shape public opinion and transform civil society" (Sobieraj, 2011, p. 21). This happens simultaneously with, what Nagle (2017) argues is the death of old media, in which "gatekeepers of cultural sensibilities and etiquette have been overthrown, notions of popular taste maintained by a small creative class are now perpetually outpaced by viral online content from obscure sources, and culture industry consumers have been replaced by constantly online, instant content producers" (p. 3). T.V. Reed (2017) entertains this idea, stating "an ordinary individual can be an I-Witness reporter, alerting the world to breaking news of natural disaster or a political crisis. A layperson can be a scientist or scholar participating in a crowdsourced research project. An amateur Sherlock can go online to help detectives solve real-world crimes" (p. 43).

This entry into the public sphere was once contingent on mainstream media coverage, then a "'master forum' in which matters of common concern are raised for discussion, exploration, and contestation" (Sobieraj, 2011, p. 105). Having access and literacy of social media is now, as Martin Scott (2014) argues, a necessary precondition for democratic participation and empowerment in modern information societies (p. 89). Thus, it is the pervasiveness of social media which allows activists access to a master forum, allowing counterhegemonic actors to bypass traditional media channels (Simpson, 2017, Location no. 3493).

To be clear, I do not wish to argue that digital activism alone can amass and sustain a large-scale indigenous and/or decolonial social movement. One reason being that few Indigenous activists have the skills needed to create tailored digital infrastructures which are independent of the surveillance-capitalist economy. Indeed, Simpson et al. (2018) express their own anxieties about this when they state, "I don't know how to protect myself from state surveillance. [But] I do know how to do exactly what the large corporations—Facebook, Apple, Twitter, and Google—want me to do to make them money, and I do it for the most part uncritically" (p. 79). This apprehension is indeed legitimate, as the emerging scholarship

of "surveillance capitalism" reveals. Jacob Silverman (2017) argues under such "dataveillance," the individual becomes commodified under the algorithmic gaze as a "data source capable of being parsed, scanned, assessed, and monetized by other, invasive interests" (p. 149). At the center of the surveillance economy is the smartphone, "a personalized surveillance machine, producing ever more granular reports about its user" while stifling personal privacy and autonomy (Silverman, 2017, p. 155).

How then can Indigenous activists hope to utilize digital media? One response has been to "securitize the self" (p. 160), reflecting a strong ideological common ground with punk and anarchist Do-It-Yourself (DIY) culture (Duncombe, S., 1997). Robert W. Gehl (2014) puts forward four characteristics of a socialized activist media: "true two-way communication, decentralization, free and open-source software, and encryption" (p. 142). For CHamoru activists, this often includes using anonymized and encrypted software such as Tor and Signal—or at the very least, WhatsApp—to facilitate organizational and other "behind the scenes" communication. To this point, Lingel (2017) argues, "it is not just a matter of whether to use technologies but how to use them" (p. 94).

2.17 Genealogies of Contemporary CHamoru Resistance

Michael Lujan Bevacqua (2017) states, CHamoru resistance to colonization in the Marianas has been a long-term endeavor spanning centuries since Chief Hurao organized a large-scale rebellion in the 1600s (p. 174). Thus, contemporary CHamoru resistance must be understood in the larger arc of imperialism, including both the collaborative and competing dimensions of Spanish, Japanese, and American imperialisms. As such, there have been a number of significant events in the ongoing struggle for CHamoru sovereignty.

Anne Perez Hattori (1995) has stated that during the U.S. Naval Era (1898–1950), the island was placed under the administration of a series of appointed naval governors who unilaterally held all executive, legislative, and judicial power (p. 5). Such officials created and enforced laws which overtly sought to erode CHamoru social order, and some which were

simply absurd. For instance, Kelly G. Marsh (n.d.) states Governor William W. Gilmer "issued more than 50 general orders—from prohibiting whistling, banning dancing after 10 pm, requiring males to turn in five dead rat heads to their district commissioner each month, to banning interracial marriages" ("US Naval Governors: Contributions and Controversies"). CHamoru resisted naval governance by circulating petitions and presenting them to Congress requesting greater sovereignty and representation in the United States political structure. Between 1901 and 1949, several petitions were filed, but were consistently thwarted by U.S. naval opposition to citizenship and civil rights for the Chamorro people" (Hattori, 1995, pp. 5-6).

In 1944, the U.S. recaptured Guåhan from the Japanese following thirteen days of aerial and naval bombardment, "a scale and length of time never before seen in World War II" (qtd. in Immerwahr, 2019, Location no. 3435). The American attacks destroyed the island's capital, destroying every major building and about four-fifths of the island's homes. When American soldiers finally set foot on the island, CHamoru were "interned" in camps while the navy proceeded to build a military base over what was left of the capital (Immerwahr, 2019, Location no. 3435). Immediately following the war, the island was returned to naval governance. Four years later, CHamoru, with their lands destroyed as they struggled to rebuild their lives, were incensed by their continued maltreatment at the hands of their supposed "liberators," and staged the Guam Congress Walkout, resulting in the passing of the Organic Act of Guam in 1950. However, the Organic Act, while extending certain constitutional rights to the CHamoru and U.S. citizenship, "was not a benevolent gift from a generous colonizer nor a prize awarded to the Chamorro people for their loyalty throughout a brutal wartime experience" (Hattori, 1995, p. 1). Rather, the Organic Act was designed to enhance the colonial authority of the United States (Hattori, 1995, p. 45).

In the late-1970s the connection between CHamoru issues and issues of sovereignty and political status emerged around the opposition to the ratification of a local constitution, then seen as the next logical step in CHamoru political development (Underwood, 2015, p. 102).

Activists "influenced by liberalization movements and struggles for the expansion of citizen's rights, such as the Black Power and Red Power movements" and "partly sustained by the United Nations and other organizations" (Altamirano-Jiménez, 2010, Location no. 3785), asserted that the ratification of a constitution before determining the island's political status would result in circumstances not unlike its status-quo colonialism (pp. 104-105). Whereas the Guam Congress Walkout was an act of resistance led by CHamoru political elites, movements during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s were led by a new class of university-educated activists, many of whom were Fino'CHamoru (CHamoru language) teachers in the public school system. Groups which led the opposition to the constitution, such as PARA-PADA (People's Alliance for a Responsible Alternative—Peoples Alliance for Dignified Alternative), took their advocacy to the United Nations, introducing the island to an international legal framework and a discourse of rights which transcends any expectation for legal recourse under the U.S. Constitution.

Bevacqua and Bowman (2018) observe the 1990s was an era which introduced direct-action Chamoru activism through the grassroots organization Nasion Chamoru, which became a "serious ideological force on Guahan and had a tremendous effect on reshaping the contours of Chamorro consciousness" (p. 74). At the local level, part of the group's success is evident in the creation of the Chamorro Land Trust, a program which set aside government lands for CHamoru families. But it also forever changed CHamoru conceptions of sovereignty and normalized imaginings of a "'decolonized' future for Guahan, one in which the island deserved to be more than just an American possession, where it would be either integrated into the United States (most likely as a state) or recognized as an independent country" (Bevacqua & Bowman, 2018, p. 74).

Between the Nasion Chamoru era of Guahan activism and the emergence of a Guahan-based digital activism in 2009, the diasporic group Famoksaiyan was formed in 2006. Organized by a number of young CHamoru attending universities in the United States, the group sought to bring national attention to the issue of decolonization in the Marianas, and

coalesce diasporic CHamoru communities, many of whom have been displaced due to military service or the lack of economic opportunities at home, around political action.

Many key Famoksaiyan organizers eventually returned to Guahan (Michael Lujan Bevacqua, Victoria Leon Guerrero, and Lisa Natividad to name only a few) to oppose the condemnation and desecration of CHamoru lands for the ongoing U.S. military buildup. Contemporary iterations of CHamoru resistance to colonialism build upon the legacies of previous activism efforts at the local, national, and international levels and are "manifested in various ways, including with new media platforms and across digital spaces" (Naputi & Frain, 2017, p. 15). This pivot toward digital media as a site for CHamoru resistance began in 2009 with the advent of We Are Guahan (WAG), the first CHamoru decolonization activism group to utilize and engage with new media, and forming around the release of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) outlining the Department of Defense's plans for the U.S. military buildup (Na'puti, 2013, p. 11). The group utilized Facebook, digital photography and video; and an archival webpage to educate the public about the buildup, organize political action, and maintain community identity among supporters while "galvanizing strong public opposition to the buildup" (Na'puti, 2013, p. 11). WAG disbanded after filing a lawsuit against the Department of Defense and successfully ending their plans to confiscate Pågat, an ancestral village, for the construction of a live-fire training range.

While WAG still maintains a Facebook forum page which is used primarily for the sharing of news articles and publications relevant to militarization and political status, the majority of its core members went on to develop other social movement organizations, transposing the spirit of WAG, and its adoption of digital activism strategy to groups like Our Islands are Sacred; and later Independent Guahan and Prutehi Litekyan, which continue to organize resistance to militarization locally, nationally, and internationally at increasingly urgent points in the U.S. military buildup timeline. These movements are aided by developments to digital technology and social media and the ability to "span the distance between producers and viewers" (Lingel, J., 2017, p. 27). Such movements sit at a further series of tensions

identified by Ratto and Boler (2014) "between experts and novices, between individuals and communities, and between politics as performed by governments and politics and DIY grassroots democracy" (p. 5).

The diverse selection of literature I have presented in this chapter provides a suitable foundation from which I can examine the existence of settler ideology in mainstream news media, a mediated CHamoru opposition, and the effects of these entities on politics in Guåhan. I address these topics in the manuscripts that follow in relation to specific discursive events which provide exemplary case studies of mainstream media's entanglement with U.S. imperialism and militarization. Finally, in Section 6.5 I theorize a CHamoru media activist framework with implications on the practice of journalism in Indigenous lands occupied and militarized by the United States.

Chapter 3: News Media Complicity in the Reproduction of Settler Colonial Ideology in Guåhan

3.1 Introduction

This chapter applies Thompson's concept of ideological modes of operation to analyze the news coverage of a Japan-U.S. Joint Defense meeting which took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2020 coverage of the *Davis v. Guam* case to illustrate how modes of dissimulation and legitimation work to reproduce settler ideological power in Guåhan. Dissimulation is understood as a mode in which attention is deflected away from relations of domination. Legitimation is a mode which represents a relation of domination as legitimate. This chapter provides a theoretical grounding in settler colonial theory, which is integral to the study of Guåhan's cultural and sociopolitical contexts.

Specifically, this chapter articulates the ideology present in Guåhan's media using Native scholar Mark Rifkin's (2014) notion of settler common sense. That is, the given, unmarked, "generic conditions of possibility for occupancy, association, history, and personhood" (Introduction). The implication of settler colonial theory on the critique of ideology is thus that relations of domination are understood not only as being particular to class or race. Rather, it presents a fuller comprehension of the intersections of American imperial power through the specific attention to the structures of power which work expressly to remove Indigenous peoples from their lands in order to replace them or, in the case of Guam, to militarize their lands for the projection of military power across the Asia-Pacific region.

This chapter also introduces the concept of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape, which provides a way of understanding media discourses as part of the larger structure of settler colonialism/militarism in politically ambiguous places such as Guåhan. The chapter ends with a recentering of CHamoru activist discourses, and discusses activist efforts to counter the extant colonial mainstream mediascape and foster translocal solidarities, particularly during a time of political unrest in the wake of the Black Lives Matter riots which

took place across the United States. Lastly, the practice of ideological critique is situated as a potentially *unsettling* process, which can assist decolonization efforts through the upending of the normalized logics of settler colonial/militarist oppression.

3.2 News Media Complicity in the Reproduction of Settler Colonial Ideology in Guåhan

3.2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I use the concept of ideological modes of operation to analyze discursive events in mainstream news media during the COVID-19 pandemic in Guåhan, between February and October 2020. As an "unincorporated territory" of the United States, the island lacked the authority to close its borders during the height of the pandemic, and thus documented over 7,700 positive cases,[8] while the majority of Pacific Islands were virtually unaffected. With the outbreaks on Guåhan due largely to military personnel and travelers from the continental United States, the pandemic can be understood within the longer arc of U.S. settler colonial governance and militarization of the island and the CHamoru, the Indigenous people of the Marianas Archipelago. The current moment thus exacerbates and illuminates the existing dynamics of oppression, which has continued unencumbered by the pandemic, and in many ways has even been accelerated by it.

This term "CHamoru" is the more orthographically correct form of "Chamorro" which is used broadly among contemporary activists and cultural practitioners in Guåhan to de-center colonial authority over place and identity. My positionality as an Indigenous activist-scholar informs my use of, and identification as, "CHamoru." This further guides my approach to ideology and discourse to attend to the implications of the U.S. nation-state, as Bevacqua and Na'puti (2015) assert, as an empire, "highlight[ing] that nationalism, imperialism, and settler colonialism must be understood as interconnected spheres in an encompassing system" (p. 839). This entanglement presents a unique opportunity for translocal solidarity

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[8] Guam Homeland Security, "JIC RELEASE NO. 586 - Results: One of 111 Tests Positive for COVID-19; Vaccination Clinics to Resume Once Vaccine Supply is Restored" (press release, 2021).

and brings the CHamoru people's struggle for sovereignty into conversation with popular uprisings in the U.S. continent and around the world.

Choctaw/Cherokee scholar Kevin R. Kemper (2014) argues ideology, as an ongoing social process, functions "for the benefit of the colonizers" (p. 42). Modes of operation further explain how such discourses establish and sustain relations of domination (Thompson, 1990, p. 56). This discursive process further occurs within what I (2020) refer to as the "extant colonial mainstream mediascape" (p. 7). This concept provides a way of understanding media discourses as part of the larger structure of settler colonialism/militarism in politically ambiguous places such as Guåhan. which remain "somehow outside the normal order of sovereignty or integration" (Stade, 1998, p. 47).

There is a growing body of literature regarding news discourses concerning militarization and colonialism in the context of Guåhan. CHamoru scholar Tiara R. Na'puti argues dominant discourses relegate Pacific Islands and Pacific Islanders to "objects or subjects *on which* American, Asian, and European hegemonies are *enacted*" thus removing CHamoru agency (p. 96). Meanwhile, Francis Dalisay (2009) observes local mainstream news outlets "(re)enculturate Guam's residents with dominant American ideologies" and "reaffirm the status quo" (pp. 253-254). CHamoru scholar Michael Lujan Bevacqua and I (2020) contend Guåhan is often portrayed in national discourse as both "too small to matter, but also in the same manner highly valuable for the promotion of the U.S. imperial military complex" (p. 135). Further, as I argue in Chapter 4, national news media instinctively naturalize the United States' projection of military power and colonization over Pacific Islands in order to maintain the veneer of America's role as a leader of democracy. I expand on this in this chapter by calling attention to the structure of settler colonialism, and thus the implications of this structure on CHamoru life and lands. Moreover, I posit that settler colonial/militarist ideology is co-constituted by the material conditions of settler colonialism/militarization.

Such research illustrates how news discourses about Guåhan tend to limit the range of possibilities for the discussion of decolonization and demilitarization in the public sphere. Yet the impacts of imperialism, militarization, and settler colonialism on Pacific Islands and Islanders also permeate throughout legal and academic institutions oriented toward landcentric perspectives which "privilege landmasses over expansive seas, islands, and archipelagoes, while islands are understood primarily as tiny, micro, and barely worthy of being mapped or placed at the margins (if they are depicted at all)" (Na'puti, 2019, pp. 2-3).

At a policy level, islands and archipelagoes are conceived of as "ideal states—becoming enclosed, easily governed, boundless outposts of power governing from across the ocean" (Naputi, 2019, p. 7). Meanwhile, Western ideological critiques of mainstream news media,[9] often ignore structures of settler colonialism/militarism and the attendant discourses in Pacific islands. Similarly, Indigeneity and U.S. colonialism are barely spoken of in Rhetorical Studies and related fields (Na'puti, 2019b, p. 498). I seek to challenge this by contributing to the decolonizing work of Bevacqua, Na'puti, and other Indigenous scholars by further illuminating the paradoxes of U.S. colonialism, militarism, and racialization operating in the contemporary moment[10] through the analyses of two ideological modes of operation:

> Dissimulation - Relations of domination are "concealed, denied or obscured, or [by] being represented in a way which deflects attention from or glosses over existing relations or processes;" and
>
> Legitimation - Relations of domination are represented as legitimate, "that is, just and worthy of support." (Thompson, 1990, pp. 60-65)

In utilizing such modes, journalists and other editorial staff actively exert settler colonial/militarist power and are complicit in the reproduction of the "devastating consequences" of settler colonialism/militarism on CHamoru lands, oceans, and bodies (Arvin, 2019, p. 32). By considering the ways in which Guåhan's mainstream news media constitute an extant colonial mainstream mediascape, I am bringing settler colonial studies and critical Indigenous studies into conversation with the fields of rhetoric and

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[9] Therborn, 2001; Gitlin, 1980; Klaehn, 2002; Herman & Chomsky, 2002; Gans, 2005.

[10] I am grateful to the reviewers of this published manuscript for making this point more explicit.

communication studies using discourse analysis to examine how a settler ideology reproduces the militarization of Pacific islands.

I begin by providing updated context to the increasing militarization of Guåhan during the pandemic. In Subsection 3.2.2, I ground this chapter in settler colonial theory and provide a discussion of the field in relation to ideology. Next, I discuss media perceptions of Guåhan's political status and militarization in terms of settler common sense. I then close this section by situating the island's news media as an ideological apparatus of settler colonial power, which is necessary to further examine the news industry as part of an extant colonial mainstream mediascape.

Sections 3.2.6 and 3.2.10 are the analysis portions of this chapter, which begin with an examination of the Japan-US Defense Meeting in terms of ideological dissimulation through strategies of passivity, place, and the normalization of the status quo. Following this, I analyze media coverage of the *Davis* case through terms of ideological legitimation using the insistence of finality and presupposition. I conclude with a reorientation toward CHamoru counter-discourses by describing political and grassroots resistance that has taken place over the course of the pandemic while making a call for translocal solidarity building.

3.2.2 Militarization During the Pandemic

The USS Theodore Roosevelt COVID outbreak in March (Pacific Daily News, 2020, June 10) was not the only display of military exceptionalism and disregard for the health and safety of the island's population during the pandemic. During this time, the defense department also raced to complete its construction of a new Marine Corps base, and in the process disturbing over 40 CHamoru ancestral sites to accommodate an influx of military personnel and dependents (Kaur, 2020, July 13). The Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) Study Area project was also finalized, turning the Marianas Archipelago into what is effectively the world's largest military training area (Kaur, 2020, June 16). The military also announced the near completion of its Live Fire Training Range Complex (LFTRC) where

over 6.7 million bullets will be fired annually,[11] raising the threat of lead contamination in the island's main source of drinking water, the Northern Guam Lens Aquifer. In addition to engulfing the ancestral village of *Litekyan,* the LTFR includes an accompanying Surface Danger Zone (SDZ) that extends approximately three miles outward over the ocean, closing off ancestral fishing grounds to CHamoru fishers (Kaur, 2020, November 8). These are all projects which are part of the Department of Defense's plan to relocate approximately 5,000 marines from Okinawa to Guåhan in response to Okinawan demilitarization activism and unrest,[12] and they edge toward completion while social and economic conditions worsen due to COVID-19.

3.2.3 Settler Colonial/Militarist Ideology and Power in Guåhan

Kanaka Maoli scholar Maile Arvin defines settler colonialism as a structure of dominance fixated on the domination and exploitation of land operating through economy, laws, and ideology (p. 15). As a structure (and not event), it is an "ongoing, organizing force within U.S. global power relations," which necessitates the "continuously renewed erasure of Indigenous people" (Rowe & Tuck, 2017, p. 6). The term *settler militarism* adds another dimension to analyses in the context of Guåhan, as it encapsulates how "settler colonialism and militarization have simultaneously perpetuated, legitimated, and concealed one another" (Nebolon, 2017, p. 25). Both regimes "resonate with the various ways of drawing lines of boundary around and through archipelagoes" turning islands and oceans into "militarized space[s] of empire" (Na'puti, 2019, p. 7; Perez, 2017, p. 106).

Settler colonial/militarist power is reproduced both through "cultural productions [which] remain complicit with ongoing settlement" (Rowe & Tuck, 2017, p. 6). Michael Lechuga (2020) further states this reproduction occurs through legal frameworks which create

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[11] See Ridgell, C. (2017, September 7). Prutehi Litekyan continues to push to stop firing range above Ritidian Wildlife Refuge. *Pacific News Center*. https://www.pncguam.com/prutehi-litekyan-continues-to-push-to-stop-firing-range-above-ritidian-wildlife-refuge/.
[12] See Knodell, K. (2020, November 1). Japan Is paying for new U.S. military facilities in Guam and the CNMI. Here's why. *Honolulu Civil Beat*. https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/11/japan-is-paying-for-new-u-s-military-facilities-in-guam-and-the-cnmi-heres-why/.

"organizing logics of subjectivity and sovereignty circulated through narratives of settler logic" (p. 381). As an unincorporated territory, Guåhan is held in a perpetually ambiguous and "indefinite condition of political subordination," where only some constitutional rights are applied while others are withheld (Rivera, 2015, p. 35). It is, as the U.S. Supreme Court continues to argue, "foreign… in a domestic sense" (Downes v. Bidwell). This type of legal arrangement reinscribes settler power by ensuring that "the arc of the Western moral universe never bends toward Indigenous justice" (Estes, 2019, p. 229).

Both the cultural and legal spheres of settler power are coordinated by what Mark Rifkin identifies as "settler common sense," or the given, unmarked, "generic conditions of possibility for occupancy, association, history, and personhood" (2014, Introduction). Settler common sense organizes and orchestrates the tendrils of settler colonial/militarist power, which "infiltrate and shape the intimate and public spaces we live in" (Arvin, 2019, p. 32). Na'puti uses the concept of *cartographic violence* to understand the "dynamics of constructing and registering places as existing exclusively for colonization and militarization" (Na'puti, 2019, p. 3). Settler configurations of space are organized and structured by power systems and, as is the case of Guåhan, reinscribe itself on the land by chain link fences enclosing military bases, delineating "one or many engendered, colonized, and militarized physical, temporal and/or imagined spaces, including those involved in the current military build-up" (Alexander, 2014, p. 869).

3.2.4 Media Reproductions of Settler Common Sense

In the case of Guåhan, settler common sense takes the form of white journalist "perception[s] that the government of Guam is inefficient, corrupt, and, most importantly, incapable of managing itself without the United States" (Cruz, 2020b, p. 115). It is the perception that, as CHamoru poet Craig Santos Perez observes, Guåhan and the CHamoru people are "considered too small and meaningless to be of any historical, political, cultural, or demographic significance" (Perez, 2017, pp. 97-112). Simultaneously, settler common sense reifies militarization through depictions of militarized departure and militarized

settlement in terms of 'economic progress' for the [I]ndigenous and settler populations"

(Shigematsu & Camacho, 2010, p. xxii)

Guåhan is often referred to as the "tip of America's spear," "Fortress Guam," "America's

permanent aircraft carrier," and "America's unsinkable aircraft carrier" (Bevacqua & Cruz,

2020, p. 135). Due to its high enlistment rate, it is also a military recruiting paradise (Na'puti

& Frain, 2017, p. 14). These incessant tropes normalize and celebrate the island's

occupation, and persist in American media signaling the continuation of settler

colonial/militarist policy in the Pacific. In the 2020 Netflix film, *Operation Christmas Drop*,

which takes place in Guåhan, the main character, Erica, convinces her boss (a

congresswoman bent on closing U.S. military bases around the world to save American tax

dollars) not to shut down Andersen Air Force Base stating, "The Joint Chiefs call this island

an unsinkable aircraft carrier. Couple that with the training and the work with the outlying

communities, you have a very compelling argument to take this base off the list" (Wood,

2020).

3.2.5 The Extant Colonial Mainstream Mediascape

The mediascape is an integral piece of the abstract machine of settler colonial/militarist

power, "out of which non-native ethics, ideals, and orientations emerge" (Rifkin, 2014,

Introduction). Arjun Appadurai (1990) formulated the term "mediascape" to mean the

electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information, as well as "the images of the

world created by these media" (pp. 298-299). In the context of Guåhan, the contemporary

mediascape is shaped by post-World War II legacies of settler colonialism/militarism. As

such, the four largest news companies (*Pacific Daily News*, *The Guam Daily*, *KUAM News*,

Pacific News Center) are inheritors and proponents of a settler common sense "inflected

very much by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness" of white journalists in the

decades following World War II (Stade, 1998, p. 296). At the same time, Guåhan is held

within the U.S. cultural sphere, with digital media transposing American ideologies and

dispositions across spatial and temporal boundaries (Therborn, 1999, p. 125). The public, as

well as news media actors on Guåhan, are thus left to negotiate between a local extant colonial mediascape and a broader imperial mediascape (Stade, 1998, pp. 148-149). Both structures work to manufacture consent over military and political affairs which "create economic hardship, and cause serious cultural and environmental damage" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 132).

The permeation of right-wing COVID denial from the United States into local discourse is a fitting example of this dynamic (Reston, 2020, July 19). On August 21, 2020, a group of about 50 predominantly white business owners marched down the main strip of the island's tourism district, Tumon, during the "Give Us Back Our Freedoms" protest (Losinio, 2020, August 25). Parroting similar pro-business, anti-government rhetoric seen across the United States, the group waved large American flags as they responded to the purported tyranny of not being able "to go to the beach" (O'Connor, 2020, August 26).

The protest was stoked by conservative, white settler commentators across local mainstream media, such as Bob Klitzkie, who took to his morning talk radio program to accuse the governor of "overreach" for mandating the use of masks and enforcing social distancing guidelines in public areas (Klitzkie, 2020, August 21). In between playing syndicated Fox News clips, Klitzkie's co-broadcaster Ray Gibson asks "What if everybody just said 'no?'" to the government's lockdown measures, coaxing listeners into a deeper distrust of the local government while dismissing the severity of COVID-19 (Gibson, 2020, August 21). Similarly, the former publisher of the *Pacific Daily News*, Lee Webber, used his weekly column in *The Guam Daily Post* to ask, "What possible loss of freedoms will be next?," while maligning the governor and the Guam Legislature by stating, "neither the governor nor this do-nothing Legislature has come up with a viable plan to flatten this outbreak and keep it that way while simultaneously not crippling the island's economy any more than it has been crippled already" (2020, August 24). These discourses are part of the milieu of settler cultural productions which continue to drive the dispossession and militarization of CHamoru land. There is a not-so-subtle message being communicated by

the Klitzkies, Gibsons, and Webbers of Guåhan that is reminiscent of the United States'

paternalism following the Spanish-American War: "the island is better run by white business

owners and military brass, than by CHamoru people." Such examples illustrate how the

extant colonial mainstream mediascape presents a homogenous settler common sense

under the guise of objectivity and genuine debate.

3.2.6 Modes of Dissimulation in the Japan-U.S. Defense Meeting

Decades of (re)enculturation in the media have forged an intimacy between the CHamoru

people and the United States, in which the national security interests of the United States

are conflated with the interests of the CHamoru. Guåhan has one of the highest military

recruitment rates per capita,[13] and so often, as Bevacqua (2010) states, "the 'home' that

soldiers serving abroad are staunchly defending becomes far more than just *Nåna* and her

Fina'tinas Chamorro, but Uncle Sam and his military status quo as well (p. 39). Military

activity and development on Guåhan are thus framed as overtly positive, with proponents

claiming potential economic and security benefits while adverse impacts are downplayed.

The duplicity of this strategy constitutes a mode of dissimulation, which reproduces settler

colonial/militarist common sense through the concealment of relations of domination, which

are present in the news coverage of a joint military meeting between the United States and

Japan in August 2020.

At the time, tensions between the United States and China flared while Guåhan was

experiencing a spike in COVID cases. As the U.S. Department of Defense bolstered its

aggressive forward presence in the Pacific, the Chinese Communist Party fired a missile it

aptly named the "Guam Killer" into the South China Sea on August 27,[14] just days before a

joint defense meeting between U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper and Japanese

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[13] See Letman, J. (2016, August 29). Guam: Where the US Military is revered and reviled. *The Diplomat*. https://thediplomat.com/2016/08/guam-where-the-us-military-is-revered-and-reviled/.
[14] See "China fires 'aircraft-carrier killer' missile in warning to US," *Al Jazeera*, August 27, 2020, accessed September 12, 2020, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/08/china-fires-aircraft-carrier-killer-missile-warning-200827011000716.html.

Defense Minister Taro Kono. Guåhan is often portrayed in mainstream news media as either too small to matter or hugely important to the U.S. military. This is evident in the *Washington Examiner's* coverage of the joint defense meeting, in which the island is described as both "a virtual speck in the vast Pacific Ocean. But… vital to U.S. Pacific defense" (Mahshie, August 31, 2020). Further elucidating this sense of unimportance, the *Stars and Stripes* referred to Esper's visit to Guåhan (as well as Hawai'i and Palau) as simply a "jaunt" (Robinson, 2020, August 20). The U.S.-Japan defense meeting also became a discursive event in local news media, which used the event to reinscribe the island's position as "America's permanent aircraft carrier" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 135).

3.2.7 Passivity in Rhetoric and in Practice

News narratives surrounding Guåhan often portray U.S. military hegemony as a natural order of things, while the island is merely a backdrop for potential conflicts between the United States and major powers in the Asia-Pacific. This point is made clear by Zack Cooper of the American Enterprise Institute who stated that, while Guåhan "happens to be perfectly placed from a military standpoint," in future conflicts it faces the risk of "landing of Chinese special operations forces to ballistic missile attacks and cruise missiles from the air" (Mahshie, August 31, 2020). In so doing, it is assigned passivity and rendered voiceless in geopolitical affairs while the violence of occupation and militarization are enacted upon it.

On August 21, 2020 *The Guam Daily Post* published an article titled, "U.S., Japan defense chiefs to meet on Guam," centering Esper's agenda (namely to increase military presence in the region to preempt the projection of China's military power). At the same time, the island's governor, Lou Leon Guerrero, is portrayed as a third wheel to the two parties not being on Esper's agenda, and having no seat at the table alongside the two diplomats:

> Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero said Thursday the military leadership on Guam and her staff are trying to set up a meeting. The meeting with the governor is expected separate from the two defense chiefs' one-on-one meeting on Andersen Air Force Base.

> This will be the two defense chiefs' second meeting since January.

Esper hosted Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono at the Pentagon on Jan. 14, according to the Defense Department.

The governor said she wasn't sure if the meeting will be face-to-face or via video conference but she plans to thank Esper for the Defense Department's assistance to the island during the pandemic.

The governor said she will also emphasize that, for any military expansion on Guam, "we expect the military to honor and respect our environment, our people, our natural resources, our heritage."

This excerpt conveys not only a sense of uncertainty, but also an indication that the governor lacks the discretion and influence to assure that such a meeting will take place. Leon Guerrero's lack of authority is apparent when she openly states her administration is *trying* to set up a meeting with the two defense officials, indicating that this was not part of Esper's agenda. In the final paragraph of this excerpt, the governor also states that she *expects* the military to respect the environment, natural resources, the people, and our heritage. Local non-military residents are *required* to follow laws aimed at protecting the environment, public health, and cultural and historical artifacts and places. However, for the military, it is only an expectation that they would do the same.

This is a level of military exceptionalism that exceeds the text and is exercised in day-to-day local-military relations. The U.S. navy, for instance, established a set of "safe haven" locations during the pandemic, wherein thousands of sailors onboard aircraft carriers could disembark "and get [rest and relaxation] for the crew, a chance to relax a little bit—get some burgers, swim in the water, that type of thing" (Harkins, 2020, June 4). Navy Surgeon General Rear Adm. Bruce Gillingham was surprisingly forthcoming in stating the "safe haven" locations, such as Guåhan, were "areas under our control [where we have] the ability to create a safe haven" (Harkins, 2020, June 4). There is no elision in Gillingham's statement. Under a settler common sense, Guåhan is, as he states, a place under the control of the navy, where military planners have the ability to do as they please. In this instance, the assignment of passivity to Guåhan works in tangent with military exceptionalism as a mode of dissimulation to normalize settler militarist dynamics of power, with military officials having full discretion over what happens on/to the island and its people.

3.2.8 "Military Turf" and the Politics of Place

Even when the governor is mentioned as more than a passive figure, news discourses tend to reproduce settler colonial/militarist hegemony. The lead paragraph of an August 29 *PDN* article, for instance, reinscribes a settler colonial/militarist spatial configuration of CHamoru land in stating, "U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper met with Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero on *military turf* [my emphasis] Saturday, at the Joint Region Marianas headquarters in Nimitz Hill," presupposing that Nimitz Hill, which sits between two CHamoru villages of Assan and Ma'ina is, in fact *military turf* (or that there is such a thing as "military turf" on Indigenous land to begin with).

Sasha Davis (2020) argues "places are hybrids constructed by physical and social processes that emanate from within a local site and from far away" (Introduction). Nimitz Hill, named after Admiral Chester Nimitz after the United States reoccupied the island during World War II, is an apt example of this, as it is the headquarters of the Department of Defense's Joint Region Marianas office, from which many critical military actions in the region are decided. The site is, in many regards, a concrete manifestation of the contemporary American colonial nexus in that it is a critical component of local subjugation, as well as a node of global military power. In categorizing the area as *military turf*, the *Pacific Daily News* therefore normalizes this structure of oppression and the legitimacy of such *turfs* demarcated by barbed wire and chain-linked fences surrounding approximately one-third of Guåhan's land mass (Alexander, 2016).

According to the article, the agenda of the meeting between Esper and Leon Guerrero was more or less dictated by the defense official, who stated the United States' plans to make its presence in the Pacific "the most effective footprint and defense in the region and how they were exploring different options to accomplish that goal." Leon Guerrero, on her part, used the meeting to *request* the return of unused military lands, federal improvements to the islands port, and a visa waiver for foreign laborers to reduce the cost of development projects off-base stating, "'Due to Guam's size and the strong military presence, she

reiterated that all Guam projects, inside or outside the fence, are military related. Gov. Leon Guerrero requested for support to allow for the use of H2B workers from the Philippines for all projects on the island,' the release stated."

Leon Guerrero's statement reaffirms a settler common sense which understands islands in terms of smallness and isolation. This perception is the by-product of landcentrism which centers the continental United States and is juxtaposed to Indigenous worldviews which perceive islands not as isolated but interconnected by the ocean in a "sea of islands" (Hau'ofa, 1993). Through dissimulation, Leon Guerrero's statement further obfuscates the island's colonization and the project of U.S. militarization by presenting "the strong military presence," as a timeless and shapeless fixture without an origin or endpoint. The strong military presence, as well as the conflation of projects "inside or outside the fence" as singularly *military related*, present a settler colonial/militarist perception of Guåhan that reifies the island's political subordination and increased militarization as naturally occurring events.

3.2.9 "Preserving status quo"

While the operation of dissimulation often requires concealment or deceit, in some cases it operates just as effectively when the agenda of a hegemonic power is stated plainly. After the U.S.-Japan defense meeting, *The Guam Daily Post* continued to cover the event by publishing an article titled, "Esper, Kono reiterate partnership, discuss preserving 'status quo' in Guam" (Ngirairikl, 2020, August 31). Reading the headline within the context of the article itself, the reader is left to assume that "status quo" is referring to the existing defense partnership between the United States and Japan; or to the existing presence of presence of military personnel and facilities on Guåhan. Read within the broader socio-political context of Guåhan, however, the term *status quo* holds a set of more dismal implications to CHamoru sovereignty.

While NSGTs are given three options to self-determine their future political statuses, American territories, what CHamoru scholar Robert Underwood (1999) refers to as "comfortable colon[ies]" are often dissuaded from pursuing sovereignty, opting instead for *status quo* in local referendums, due to the fear of losing "economic advantages" of being tied to the United States.[15] Status quo is, very literally, the continued colonization of U.S. possessions and is thus not a path toward self-governance, and is therefore not an option that is recognized in Guåhan's political status referendum law.

However, pro-American commentators have advocated for status quo as a legitimate political status option (Daily Post Staff, 2019, November 25). In order for Esper and Kono "preserve the status quo," Guåhan's settler colonial/militarist status quo must also continue. That is, the CHamoru people must continue to be denied self-governance, ancestral remains and artifacts must continue to be destroyed; and the environment must continue to face the devastation of underwater detonations, live-fire trainings, aerial bombing exercises, and sonar testing so regional military powers may continue to operate without repercussion. This is the summative agenda of the defense meeting.

3.2.10 Modes of Legitimation in News Coverage of *Davis v. Guam*

Whereas modes of dissimulation obscure relations of domination through deflection away from inherent injustices, legitimation operates to portray relations of domination as legitimate and positive—for the greater good even. Modes of legitimation are perceptible in news coverage of the *Davis* case, which was used to diminish CHamoru claims to sovereignty while simultaneously reinforcing the perception of the *Davis* outcome as beneficial, just, and absolute. In terms of settler ideological power, coverage of the *Davis* case reify the power of

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[15] See United Nations. (2017). Written Statement of the American Samoa Government on Behalf of the Honorable Lolo Matalasi Moliga Governor of American Samoa. *Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: the future for decolonization in the Non Self-Governing Territories: what are the prospects?*. https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/sites/www.un.org.dppa.decolonization/files/2017_5_nsgt_am erican_samoa.pdf.

settler legal frameworks and the overarching plenary power of the federal government over U.S. territories.

On July 29, 2019, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals dealt the government of Guam and CHamoru sovereignty activists an expected (but no less devastating) blow when they ruled the island's self-determination plebiscite law to be unconstitutional (Limtiaco, 2019, July 30). *Davis v. Guam* was a nearly decade-long legal battle in which retired U.S. Air Force officer Arnold "Dave" Davis, represented by the right-wing Center for Individual Rights, sued the island's government in federal court, arguing that the restriction of participation in the political status plebiscite to "native inhabitants of Guam" was unconstitutional race-based discrimination against non-native island residents (Davis v. Guam Election Commission).

The case perfectly illustrates how, as CHamoru human rights attorney Julian Aguon (2014) argues, "law has been called on by states to provide domestic legal cover for their subjugation of chosen peoples within their polities" (p. 283). By invoking the Fifteenth Amendment, the court's ruling was an exercise in the reassertion of the status quo, and reifies what Brendan Hokowhitu (2011), a Māori scholar of Ngāti Pūkenga descent, observes is a dominant belief of a universal worldview where all disputes are mediated through the U.S. Constitution, upholding a "Western conception of individual 'man'," which "interprets the self-determination of others (i.e., Indigenous peoples) to be an encroachment upon the rights of the Western individual" (Chapter 13).

For Indigenous peoples under the administration of the Unite States, "the language of civil rights ha[s] been the justification for termination" (Estes, 2019, p. 176). This has been particularly true for Kanaka Maoli in Hawai'i in *Rice v. Cayetano* and more recently, CHamoru in Guåhan in *Davis v. Guam*—two cases which are inextricably linked by the settler colonial agenda of U.S. law. In *Rice*, Judy Rohrer (2016) states Harold "Freddy" Rice, a fifth-generation white settler, filed a lawsuit against the state of Hawai'i, arguing "that the Hawaiians-only voting restriction for trustees of OHA [Office of Hawaiian Affairs] constituted

unlawful racial discrimination in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments" (p. 106). A virtually identical conclusion was reached by federal justices in the *Davis* case, accomplishing by day, "what was done by night in Hawai'i" (Aguon, 2014, p. 282).

Fundamental to the outcome of both cases is what Rohrer identifies is a *color-blind ideology* "based on ignoring historical and institutional white privilege" (p. 107). Serrano (2018) states this ideology "ignores the history of colonization" (p. 503). Meanwhile, it simultaneously denies the history of white domination and the subordination of racialized groups in order to "reinscribe institutionalized racial inequalities and hierarchies, including white power and privilege, by pretending they do not exist" (Rohrer, 2016, p. 124). Color-blind ideology functions with three motives which reify settler colonial power: "to (1) accept the teleological narrative of development [Americanization]; (2) problematize collective native identity; and (3) naturalize white settler subjectivity" (p. 107). Rohrer's conception of color-blind ideology can better inform understandings of modes of operation in the context of settler colonialism, particularly in terms of legitimation, in which structures of power are expressed as legitimate, just, and worthy of support (Thompson, 1990, p. 61). After all, what could be more worthy of support than the assertion that, regardless of ancestry, we are all equal? Benign expressions like these are integral to settler common sense, and call to mind how rhetorical strategies, like settler moves to innocence, a concept introduced by Tuck and Yang (2012), are used to eschew reconciliation with Indigenous peoples so that dispossession can continue unabated, while we "move forward, however regretfully, with 'our' settler future" (p. 17).

3.2.11 Writing the End CHamoru Sovereignty

Coverage of the *Davis* case tended to evoke a sense of finality in the court ruling, and with it, a characterization of the U.S. legal system as absolute and unquestionable. The Government of Guam was denied a review of a second appeal of the ruling by the Appeals Court on May 4, 2020, just as the island was in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following day, *The Guam Daily Post* published an article titled, "Arnold Davis wins 'final

victory and justice' in plebiscite appeal," making extensive use of direct quotes by Davis' attorney, J. Christian Adams (Daily Post Staff, 2020, April 2). Teun van Dijk (2001) states headlines are semantic macrostructures which "embody [the] most important information about a discourse" (Chapter 5). Referring to the decision as a "final victory," the article is exemplary of mainstream news media's participation in settler colonialism by presenting the illusion of normalcy and legitimizing the end of CHamoru self-determination through a framing of the court ruling as an absolute, concrete truth. The author and Adams further frame the legal designation "Native Inhabitants of Guam," as a racially discriminatory classification as a means of erasing Indigenous opposition:

> Guam law permits only those who meet the definition of "native inhabitants of Guam" to vote in the plebiscite. It was this definition that Davis and the Center for Individual Rights alleged excluded Davis and other individuals who live on Guam and are otherwise registered to vote in Guam elections.
>
> "It is a shame that so much energy was devoted to a divisive, racially discriminatory voting qualification," said Davis' attorney J. Christian Adams. "The legislature could have years ago opened up the plebiscite to all citizens living on Guam. Those status questions could have been resolved by now, but instead money and time were wasted." (Daily Post Staff, 2020, April 2)

Adams's rhetoric, and its support by mainstream news outlets is exemplary of what Michelle Kelsey Kearl (2018) states is an established "decades-old rhetorical practice of claiming analogical links between contemporary struggles for equality and the legacy of MLK [Martin Luther King, Jr.] and the CRM [Civil Rights Movement]" (p. 185). Such appeals are found in a number of debated public arenas ranging from marriage equality and disability rights to abortion and Israeli settlements on the West Bank (Kearl, 2018, p. 185).

This role reversal, where the colonizer is the victim and the colonized is the aggressor, has a legacy in American pop culture where "invasion looks like self-defense, and the settlers, hiding in their militarized forts, are the 'real' victims of an encircling native aggression" (Estes, 2019, p. 247). In Davis's case, the appeal for equality and justice is used to legitimize the inclusion of settler-colonizers in a vote to determine a decolonized political status for the Indigenous people of Guåhan "for the benefit of white American Arnold Davis"

who claimed he was "unlawfully discriminated in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments" (Serrano, 2018, p. 503).

3.2.12 Editorials and Presupposition

One key aspect of mainstream media's function as an ideological state apparatus is the utilization of op-ed articles, which enable newspaper editors to comment on events and address their readership directly (Reah, 2002, p. 46). Editorials, in a sense, contain the most overt and discernable artifacts of ideology which have been internalized by editorial staff, in that they do not follow the same discursive restraints placed on news articles (namely objectivity). *The Guam Daily Post* regularly publishes editorials which are pro-militarization, pro-America, and which oppose decolonization from the United States. Following the Davis v. Guam ruling, the newspaper published an editorial titled *After the 9th Circuit decision, time for GovGuam to be inclusive* which echoes the rhetoric of Davis's legal team. In the editorial, the newspaper's editorial staff frame the Government of Guam is corrupt, incompetent, and racist. What's more, the term "GovGuam [Government of Guam]" is conflated with "native inhabitants of Guam" or "Chamorro people." In either case, it is inferred by the article that the Government of Guam is constituted exclusively by CHamoru. Thus, the paper's criticisms of the insular government can be directed more broadly to CHamoru residents. The article concludes with the editorial staff advocating on behalf of Davis while decontextualizing the contemporary CHamoru struggle for sovereignty:

> And instead of holding a plebiscite that excludes others who have the right to vote, maybe it's time for GovGuam to cut its mounting legal bills, which could cost it more than $1 million, and follow the Constitution.
>
> The 9th Circuit gave a language cue that GovGuam's officials would find tough to ignore.
>
> When in doubt over the 15th Amendment's boundaries, the 9th Circuit stated, "we err on the side of inclusiveness."
>
> Let the vote be inclusive. It's one person, one vote – native or not. (Guam Daily Post, 2019).

Legitimation occurs through the use of presupposition, in which the authors presuppose that there are others "who have the right to vote" in a plebiscite for decolonization—other than

those who are colonized. This is also present when the authors suggest the Government of Guam should simply "follow the Constitution." Presuppositions are "taken-for-granted, implicit claim[s] embedded within the explicit meaning of a text or utterance" (Richardson, 2007, p. 63). By inferring both that there are others who have the right to decolonize (other than the colonized) and that the local government should act only in accordance with the U.S. Constitution, an imposition of its colonial status, the article presents readers with a set of limitations in favor of a vote which includes non-Indigenous settlers.

The editorial presents to readers a convincing case that *The Guam Daily Post* is interested in critically engaging with colonization by feigning genuine debate. When the editors state, "[w]hen in doubt over the 15th Amendment's boundaries, the 9th Circuit stated, 'we err on the side of inclusiveness,'" they limit the boundaries of the playing field, so to speak, to constitutionality—such that any alternative model of law or governance appears impossible or radical, and not a viable part of the discussion. The editors also take an assertive position by closing the article with a call for a settler-inclusive plebiscite stating, "It's one person, one vote – native or not"— a phrase which carries with it a paternalistic tone, not unlike early U.S. colonial propaganda cartoons which often depicted Uncle Sam hovering over an infantilized brown figure meant to depict the island it sought to colonize as backward and in desperate need of tutelage. Paternalism continues to be a discreet undertone of American administration and policy in the Pacific, particularly of Guåhan, perceptible through the unchecked power of its military to build up bases and tear down CHamoru ancestral sites and places without discretion. *The Guam Daily Post*, and other mainstream news corporations reaffirm and reproduce this structure, enabling the continuity of the status quo.

The outcome of the Davis case is yet another deferment of justice for the CHamoru people, and signals what Aguon calls a *failure* of U.S. justices "to reach for international law" in order to remedy transgressions of America (2014, p. 283). Aguon further claims it is a "chilling conceptual inability in the American legal imagination to see the world in any light other than what the establishment has shone" (2014, p. 283). Yet, given the tendency of settler

common sense and (more broadly) dominant power structures to reproduce themselves, perhaps what *Davis v. Guam* demonstrates is not so much a "failure" or an "inability" of U.S. law to resolve its injustices against Indigenous peoples. It is rather a demonstration of the *ability* of settler colonialism to reassert itself with efficiency in its attempts to realize the elimination of the CHamoru people.

3.2.13 Conclusion

I have sought to illustrate how settler colonial ideologies, or *common sense*, operate in an extant colonial mainstream mediascape through modes of dissimulation and legitimation in order to reinscribe the dynamics of power and oppression inherent to Guåhan's relationship with the United States. In a journal such as *Rhetoric, Politics, and Culture*, the argument I am making might easily be taken for granted, as the United States has been deploying settler colonial ideology in Guåhan since 1898. However, as long as Indigenous peoples exist and resist, the settler colonial/militarist projects of elimination, "are not, and cannot ever be, complete" (Arvin, 2019, p. 16). Through an orientation of ideological critique using settler colonial theory, we can more deliberately confront mainstream news media's role in reproducing settler colonial power in/on Pacific islands. By revealing the concealed relations of domination in these discourses, we can *unsettle* the normalized logics of setter colonial/militarist oppression.

CHamoru activists in Guåhan have been doing this unsettling, using livestreamed teach-ins, podcasts, and general assemblies to inform local and diasporic audiences about political status and Indigenous rights issues to counter extant colonial mainstream news media discourses. Further, groups like I Hagan Famalao'an Guåhan, Prutehi Litekyan, and Independent Guåhan have used their online presence to build borderless, translocal solidarities with other communities resisting militarization and colonization, and a number of group members have appeared on various livestreams hosted by Indigenous groups in the continental U.S. and Puerto Rico. CHamoru decolonization activists embody and exercise models of sovereignty which challenge settler colonial understandings of Pacific islands and

Pacific Islanders as isolated, conquerable, and easily contained while subverting Guåhan's unincorporated territory status.

CHamoru resistance mediated across digital spaces illustrate how struggles informed by Indigenous frameworks can not only "help foster solidarity throughout Oceania," but across global spaces for decolonization and demilitarization. In March, eight groups signed onto a statement calling for the governor to reject the navy's proposal to quarantine USS TR sailors in local hotels pleading "for a change in antiquated colonial policies that hinder our safety" (Kaur, March 30). Two months later, in the wake of the *Davis* appeal decision, an even larger collective of activists, community organizations, and cultural groups joined together to call on the governor and the island's (non-voting) delegate to Congress to reaffirm their commitment to pursuing self-determination (Fanohge Coalition, 2020).

In the time of COVID-19, CHamoru decolonization activism also embodies conceptions of Indigenous reciprocity and mutual aid, with groups like I Hagan Famalao'an Guåhan and Para Todus Hit using their platforms to distribute essential items (diapers, baby formula, toiletries, etc.) to people in need,[16] and provided assistance to women and children in the community through the development of a scholarship program, a laptop lending program, and the distribution of more than 2,500 face masks, hundreds of home-garden kits, and åmot CHamoru[17] kits to help treat COVID-19 symptoms.[18] The accessibility of CHamoru resistance groups provides an opportunity for new levels of solidarity building with activists in the States, where the issue of our political status does not commonly factor into the equation of decolonial/antiracist/anticapitalist politics in the continental United States. If *another world is possible* then, to get there, struggles for abolition and racial justice, must also call for an

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[16] See Para Todus Hit, Instagram post, December 2, 2020, accessed December 6, 2020, https://www.instagram.com/p/CIQZxJ-F8wF/?igshid=1h0r9xxd1m4q1.
17 See CHamoru plant-based medicine
[18] See Staff Reports, "Local organization to distribute face masks, home-garden kits and medicine kits," *Pacific Daily News*, May 18, 2020, accessed December 5, 2020, https://www.guampdn.com/story/news/local/2020/05/18/local-group-distribute-face-masks-home-garden-kits-medicine-kits/5210530002/?fbclid=IwAR1jcSCIb089rjb-oHwyyiLar9pp1n07AWYfcFmVG8FY4lpBUjbGIYaJnzg.

end to U.S. global imperialism, and the demilitarization and decolonization of U.S. territories. The formation of these translocal solidarities will require an earnest effort to listen and relate to Indigenous peoples in the Pacific and Caribbean, and is, as Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson argues, the key to ensuring "*Indigenous* futures in the present" (Chapter 1).

Chapter 4: Saying the Quiet Parts Out Loud: Guåhan, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, and the Role of Journalism in Reproducing Colonization in the Time of COVID-19

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes news discourses surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt (USS TR) in March. Specifically, I examine the use of erasure, isolation, ambiguity, the dehumanizing of counterhegemonic actors, and "One Guam" rhetoric to manufacture consent of a proposition by U.S. Navy Captain Brett Crozier to quarantine exposed and potentially exposed sailors on Guåhan. Although not explicitly stated in the published version of this chapter, the attributes examined are indicative of the operation of ideological modes of reification and fragmentation.

Thompson defines reification as the presentation of the state of affairs "as if it were permanent" (1990, p. 65). That is, "[p]rocesses are portrayed as things or as events of a quasi-natural kind, in such a way that their social and historical character is eclipsed" and involves "the elimination or obfuscation of the social and historical character of social-historical phenomena" (Thompson, 1990, p. 65). As illustrated in this chapter, reification is present in the USS TR discourse through methods which obfuscate the nature of the relationship between the government of Guam and the U.S. military and by appeals to "support the troops" which did not accurately convey the implications of introducing potentially infected crew members into the island.

Fragmentation operates through the distinction of "individuals and groups that might be capable of mounting an effective challenge to dominant groups, or by orientating forces of potential opposition towards a target which is projected as evil, harmful or threatening" (Thompson, 1990, p. 65). This mode is present in this chapter through the dehumanizing of counterhegemonic actors by commentators in news discourses.

Beyond the presence of ideological modes of operation, this chapter also presents an analysis of the discursive implications on national news media of the global trend of newsroom consolidation and, simultaneously, the workflow inundation of journalists during the pandemic. This had the effect of jointly reproducing Indigenous erasure and colonization, as the CHamoru struggle for decolonization and demilitarization were largely absent from national coverage of the event. Simultaneously, this chapter locates local news media corporations as extant colonial artifacts which reaffirm existing colonial power structures while obfuscating the island's status as a colony, and identifies Guåhan as a juncture for the dismantling of global white supremacy, imperialism, and capitalism.

4.2 Saying the Quiet Parts Out Loud: Guåhan, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, and the Role of Journalism in Reproducing Colonization in the Time of COVID-19

4.2.1 Introduction

On June 4, 2020, the U.S. Navy announced its leadership was looking for "safe haven" locations around the world where crews could stop for leisure time without the threat of contracting and spreading COVID-19 aboard their vessels. Vice Adm. Phillip Sawyer, the officer in charge of the navy's COVID-19 response, stated to media the purpose of these safe haven spots was "so that we can pull in and get [rest and relaxation] for the crew, a chance to relax a little bit—get some burgers, swim in the water, that type of thing" (Harkins, 2020, June 4). In the same news article, another official, Navy Surgeon General Rear Adm. Bruce Gillingham explained these locations were "areas under our control [where we have] the ability to create a safe haven." Beyond noting that Guåhan (Guam)[19] and Okinawa (two colonies hypermilitarized by the United States) are the only two locations directly implicated in the article, underlying Gillingham's admission is the assumption that there are places under the control of the U.S. Navy, as an extension of the United States. This is ostensibly

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[19] "Guåhan" is used in preference to "Guam" in this thesis to protest the legacies of colonial naming and terminology by both Spanish and American colonizers.

true of Guåhan, an unincorporated territory of the United States lacking both full constitutional rights and political sovereignty.

Like the frankness of Sawyer and Gillingham, the coronavirus pandemic has laid bare the United States' many hypocrisies and contradictions. At the time I am writing this, more than 1.9 million people in the United States have tested positive for COVID-19 and more than 111,000 have died from the infectious disease, though these numbers are likely underreported (Katz et al., 2020, April 28). Under the weight of the pandemic and mounting social tensions, such as the killing of George Floyd in May by Minnesota police, which sparked nationwide uprisings, the façade of American primacy crumbled. The master's house was on fire. The only thing remaining intact, it seems, is the U.S. colonial project in the Pacific, aided by American news media and its role in reproducing militarization and colonization in places like Guåhan. At no point was this demonstrated better than the COVID-19 outbreak aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt (USS TR), which became a discursive event in national news after its captain leaked a four-page letter to U.S. Navy administrators to *The San Francisco Chronicle* on March 31, pleading with navy administrators to allow his crew to dock in Guåhan to avoid further spreading the disease amongst the crew.

Overnight, Guåhan became the site of a rapidly unfolding drama as the ship's captain, Brett Crozier, pleaded with navy officials to allow his sailors to disembark on the island to avoid further spreading the virus among its 4,000 personnel. This chapter takes place amongst the backdrop of the pandemic and the discursive event of the outbreak aboard the USS TR. Using critical discourse analysis, I examine national and local news media's complicity in the continued colonization and militarization of Guåhan. These methods include the centering of U.S. military narratives, erasure, isolation, ambiguity, dehumanizing of counterhegemonic actors, and One Guam rhetoric. Missing from national coverage were the Indigenous people of Guåhan, and their ongoing struggle to demilitarize and decolonize from the United States. Simultaneously, local news media in Guåhan, which to date has 449 confirmed COVID-19

cases, used the event to continue its endorsement of the U.S. military's presence on the island while downplaying opposition to Crozier's request by Indigenous community organizers, further obfuscating the island's status as a colony.

4.2.2 ~~Guam, U.S.A.~~ Guåhan: An ~~Unincorporated Territory~~ American colony in the Pacific

Guåhan is often defined in national news coverage in terms of its strategic importance to American military planners. It has been called the "tip of America's spear," "America's permanent aircraft carrier," "America's unsinkable aircraft carrier," and "Fortress Guam" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 127). Further, Pacific Islands and Pacific Islanders are often seen "as subjects on which American, Asian, and European hegemonies are enacted," if included at all in various discourses (Na'puti, 2020, p. 96). However, we are often absent from discussions altogether, "while ongoing imperialism, militarism, and colonialism are disappeared" (Na'puti, 2020, p. 96). These titles, as well as the language used to speak about Guåhan, are reproduced by journalists covering issues relating to militarization in the region and American conflict with North Korea and China. However, lesser reported on is the island's status as an "unincorporated territory" of the United States, that is, a colony. Paradoxically, however, "the island is propagandized both internally and externally as being on the front lines of democracy, liberty, and freedom" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 127).

Guåhan was claimed by the United States after the Spanish-American War. As an "unincorporated territory," the island sits in a "liminal space, betwixt and between, somehow outside the normal order of sovereignty or integration" (Stade, 1998, p. 47). Literally, its status means it is neither part of the United States, nor is it politically sovereign. It is a possession onto which Congress has determined that only selected parts of the U.S. Constitution apply ("Definitions of Insular Area Political Organizations"). Through the Organic Act of Guam of 1950, the island was granted limited self-governance. Ultimately, however, Guåhan and other colonies of the United States have no legal authority that is not derived

from Congress.[20] Political ambiguity is part of what makes Guåhan strategic militarily, as it is:

> not a foreign nation, and therefore, does not have the ability to limit the activities of the U.S. military in its borders [and so] the U.S. military can exploit the environment on Guam in ways it might not be able to do elsewhere, for those who call it home have no say in what the military may or may not do. (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, 132-133)

While the consequences of this on the CHamoru people are manifested in countless ways, both politically and personally, a recent (and ongoing) example is the U.S. military's desecration of recently discovered ancestral remains and artifacts across the island's Northern Plateau during the development of a new Marine Corps base and Live Fire Training Range for the Department of Defense's military buildup—the shift of forces from Okinawa to Guåhan.

The buildup continues unabated, despite a series of protests and outreach campaigns by community organizations such as Independent Guåhan, Prutehi Litekyan, and I Hagan Famalåo'an Guåhan; as well as official statements by local senators decrying the inadvertent discovery of more than forty-three historically and culturally significant sites (Kaur, 2020, July 13). This is due in great part to the fact that there is no legal mechanism for the people of Guåhan to meaningfully engage with the buildup. Thus, to the military, the expressed consent of the people of Guåhan is unrequired. Despite these injustices, generations of local resistance to militarization and colonization persist, and are increasingly digitized (Cruz, 2020). This has been especially true during the pandemic, as Independent Guåhan has shifted more of its actions onto social media platforms and digital conferencing technologies such as Zoom.

4.2.3 News Reliance on Establishment Sources, News Inundation, and the Implications on National Coverage of Guåhan

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[20] See US Supreme Court, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico v. Sanchez et al. 9 June 2016.

Compared to communities across the continental United States, Guåhan is a relatively small reader base for news corporations, and does not normally see reporters from national news corporations, with the exception being *Gannett*, the mass media holding company that owns news offices across the United States and the United Kingdom. *Gannett*, which owns *USA Today*, also owns the island's most established daily news publication, The *Pacific Daily News* (PDN), which has served as a site through which dominant American ideologies were reinforced (Dalisay, 2009, p. 254). Despite *USA Today's* long-standing ties to the island, its coverage of the USS TR event is consistent with other mainstream news sources discussed in this chapter in its dismissal of island residents and centering of navy narratives. The absence of CHamoru perspectives during events like the USS TR outbreak is thus not simply attributable to the lack of national news presence on Guåhan. Rather, it is one of a series of "consequences of colonialism and its erasure of blackness and indigeneity as phenomena that profoundly impacts discursive constructions and material conditions of the Pacific" (Na'puti, 2020, p. 100). It is both cause and effect of the U.S. military's prominence in national discourse.

That Capt. Crozier leaked his letter to *The San Francisco Chronicle* and not, say, PDN is telling of the implications of Guåhan's colonization on the dynamics of news media discourses surrounding the island. His actions imply that he perceived the outcome of reaching out to a national news outlet to be of greater moral and political significance, compared to news outlets in Guåhan, and also reflects the perceived legitimacy of the Department of Defense to news reporters assigned to military affairs coverage. At times throughout Guåhan's post-World War II history, the reach of national news media to a continental public and elected body has helped foster political change on the island, such as the national coverage of the Guam Congress Walkout of 1949, which in part was orchestrated by journalists to appeal to a mass audience (Hattori, 1995, p. 21).

Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's Propaganda Model (PM) addresses this reliance of journalists on establishment experts, as well as other market forces, on the performance

of mass media in favor of elite interests (Klaehn, 2002, p. 148). The other "filters" of the PM that are directly relevant to this chapter are advertising as the primary source of income of the mass media and otherness as an ideology that mobilizes a populace against an enemy (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). It is the PM's attention to the function of capitalism in reproducing hegemony that makes it unique among a larger body of media analysis that seeks to explain mass media's role in reproducing existing power relations (Gans, 2004; Gitlin, 1980; Richardson, 2007; Sobieraj, 2011; Therborn, 1999; Thompson, 1990; Titscher et al., 2000).

The news industry has been facing a slow decline, evidenced both by a fall in newspaper circulation and news staffing (MacLeod, 2019, p. 7). The coronavirus pandemic has only further burdened editorial offices still clinging to the dominant news model of relying primarily on advertising revenue, forcing journalists to produce more content while lacking the time and resources to produce investigative news articles. Journalists found themselves inundated with a constant stream of events and information that needed reporting, further increasing reliance on preapproved, establishment narratives.

Crozier's access to *The San Francisco Chronicle* is exemplary of this symbiotic relation between media and elites because the discursive event was fed into the national news media machine by an establishment figure, requiring editorial staff to spend no extra effort further investigating the issue, fact checking, or seeking alternative perspectives. Simultaneously, Crozier successfully drew the attention of a national audience to pressure U.S. Navy administrators into allowing his sailors to enter the civilian community in Guåhan. Both of these worked in tandem to form a news discourse that perpetuated the normalization of U.S. military presence in the Pacific while erasing the CHamoru people and the ongoing struggle for self-determination.

Further illustrating this point is the comparatively limited appeal of the people of Guåhan to national news media, which takes interest in the island primarily when there is an issue of

geopolitical importance, in which case the event and people are treated as a spectacle of the national gaze for American audiences that are perpetually unaware that the United States is a colonizing power with imperial endeavors around the globe.

While news outlets in the United States continued to track the progression of the virus's spread onboard the USS TR months after the initial coverage, virtually no national reports discussed the infrastructural challenges of the island in coping with the pandemic, or the fact that CARES Act relief to Guåhan and other possessions of the United States were stalled weeks longer than in the continental United States, leaving a large segment of the island's population whose livelihoods were affected by the shutdown vulnerable to evictions and hunger (Pacific Daily News, 2020a).

Both the U.S. Navy's reach and national news media's reliance on establishment sources lead to an exclusion of discourses from Guåhan that deviate from mainstream narratives portraying the island as anything other than a U.S. military stronghold (America's so-called permanent aircraft carrier), or America's activities in the Pacific as charitable and for the greater good. These are the familiar stories Americans long to hear during the present omni-crisis. Meanwhile, colonization and militarization persist in Guåhan, undeterred by the economic collapse and unreported by mainstream U.S. news outlets.

4.2.4 Mainstream News Media as an Extant Colonial Artifact

Internally, the task of maintaining the colonial dynamics of power and the manufacturing of consent among the island's population is performed by an extant colonial mainstream mediascape rooted in American occupation. The island's most read newspaper, PDN, was originally the post-World War II military periodical, The Navy News, before it was bought by Gannett decades later, and was a means of keeping sailors informed of affairs in the continental United States and within the American cultural periphery while stationed in Guåhan (Stade, 1998, 146). Throughout this time, the practice of preferentially hiring off-island (most often white male) journalists to write locally became a fixture of the local news

industry, and with it the import of white male, Americanist perspectives that influenced the way CHamoru[21] have looked at events on their island, and how they have looked at themselves (Cruz, 2020). Historically, this has meant the news perception that the government of Guam is inefficient, corrupt, and, most importantly, incapable of managing itself without the United States—a perception that is reinforced by the pandemic, as the island is severely underfunded by the federal government and has just one public hospital to serve a population of approximately 162,000, many of whom live below the federal poverty line.[22]

4.2.5 War and Support the Troops Rhetoric

Both national and local news discourses regarding the military's activities in Guåhan (such as whether it is just or democratic that they continue to occupy one-third of the island's land mass and operate without the consent of the government of Guam) are guided by what Roger Stahl (2009) refers to as "support-the-troops rhetoric," which "works as a regulatory mechanism for disciplining the civic sphere itself—that is, it functions to subvert citizen deliberation" (p. 534). This rhetorical strategy serves as both a deflection of the nature of the conflict military personnel are engaged in, as well as a dissociation that "conditions the image of the proper wartime citizen" (Stahl, 2009, p. 535). Soldiers, therefore, need saving; and an opposition to war and the military is seen as an attack on the soldier's body (Stahl, 2009, p. 535).

Similarly, USS TR coverage was layered by the pervasive use of wartime rhetoric, such as when New York Governor Andrew Cuomo declared, "[T]his is a war, we have to treat it like a

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[21] "CHamoru" is the more orthographically correct spelling of "Chamorro." While the government of Guam recently standardizedthe former, its use among the larger population of Indigenous peopleof Guåhan is still expanding. The use of "CHamoru" is also not a standard for peoples in the Commonwealth of the Northern MarianaIslands. It is, however, used broadly among contemporary activists and cultural practitioners in Guåhan. My preference for, and self-identification as,"CHamoru" is thus an indication of my positionality as an anticolonial CHamoru activist-scholar.
[22] Unlike the continental United States, data regarding poverty in Guåhan is not recorded regularly, with the most recent data being the 2010 census. There are, however, other indicators of poverty, such as enrollment in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and housing assistance programs such as Section 8 (Leon-Guerrero, 2019). Further, during the course of the pandemic, about 35,000 residents on Guåhan were displaced (Gilbert, 2020, July 23).

war" (Walters, 2020). Doctors and healthcare administrators have also likened the virus to World War II, warning the public that "the enemy is invisible" (Sablan, 2020, April 3). Wartime rhetoric not only obscures what it is people need to do to prevent the spread of COVID-19 but also leads to "the closing down of information and the production of propaganda" (Andersen, 2020). Ironically, while politicians and other public commentators espoused the use of wartime rhetoric, Capt. Brett Crozier, the commanding officer of the USS TR, directly opposed the use of such terminology stating, "[W]e are not at war. Soldiers do not need to die" (Gafni & Garofoli, 2020, March 31). Elements of both rhetorical devices were present in national and local USS TR coverage.

4.2.6 Absence and Ambiguities: Guåhan's Erasure in National Media

Contradicting Crozier's observation, the captain's letter reflects both rhetorical strategies and is observable when he succinctly states, "If we do not act now, we are failing to properly take care of our most trusted asset—our Sailors" (Gafni & Garofoli, 2020, March 31). Crozier's letter shaped the narrative of national media, including that of progressive liberal outlets such as Democracy Now!,[23] which were enthralled by the heroic plea of a navy captain to save his crew. What is not factored into national news coverage, however, is the implication of Crozier's request on the people of Guåhan, who were at risk of large-scale contamination from the ship's crew. Also excluded are the contexts of colonization, such as the CHamoru people's lack of sovereignty, their dispossession of ancestral lands due to militarization, and the inability of the local governing body to constrain military activities on the island.

Rather, national coverage of the event followed a consistent narrative: (1) Captain Crozier "sacrifices career" by making plea to U.S. Navy administrative officials (2) to save sailors from dying aboard the ship; (3) the outbreak aboard the aircraft carrier is time sensitive, and any delay will inevitably lead to deaths; and (4) Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly issues

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[23] See Democracy Now! (2020, April 2). Coronavirus-Stricken U.S. Aircraft Carrier Evacuated in Guam. *Democracy Now!* https://www.democracynow.org/2020/4/2/headlines/coronavirus_stricken_us_aircraft_carrier_evacuated_in_guam.

official response as to why sailors have not been off-boarded. The erasure of local voices implies that Guåhan is merely a backdrop to the United States' military endeavors in the Pacific, making Crozier's request to bring infected sailors to Guåhan simply "a necessary risk," or rather, "a political solution but it is the right thing to do (Gafni & Garofoli, 2020, March 31).

Herman and Chomsky argue news media are able to conceal ideology through the "illusion of genuine debate" (2002, p. 298). News media set the parameters for discussion by conveying to audiences what exists (and what does not exist); what is good, right, and just (and its opposites); and what is possible and impossible (Therborn, 1999, p. 18). The mainstream news narrative regarding the USS TR positioned Acting Navy Secretary Modly as the competing logic to Crozier. Modly, however, does not oppose Crozier's request due to a moral consideration of the people of Guåhan. In fact, he affirms Crozier's logic, and the proposition is made incontestable in stating, "We don't disagree with the (captain) on that ship and we're doing it in a very methodical way," and "[w]e're very engaged in this, we're very concerned about it and we're taking all the appropriate steps." There is a duality in these military narratives that, through ambiguous language, seem to be both benign and insidious.

This ambiguity, characterized in part by the pervasive use of object and demonstrative pronouns like "it" and "this" to refer to the proposal to quarantine sick and/or exposed sailors on Guåhan, is observable in another instance in *The San Francisco Chronicle* article: "'This is like the test case,' said Cancian, a senior adviser with the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington, D.C."

This statement by Cancian belies the obscenity of the proposal. Stated more explicitly, "this" really means "Introducing infected sailors to Guam is like the test case," where the people of Guåhan are implicated in the testing as de facto test subjects. Taken into context with the U.S. military's weapons testing in the Pacific, this is not a stretch of imagination. Between

1940 and 1960, about 67,000 people on Guåhan were exposed to radiation from U.S.

nuclear testing in the Pacific, not only during the detonations from the Bikini Atoll tests but

also because of the island's use as a hub for U.S. Navy ships returning from the Marshall

Islands, where they were decontaminated, directly exposing the people of Guåhan to

radiation from the ships involved in the tests (National Research Council of the National

Academies, 2005). The use of ambiguous language thus conceals the atrocities of U.S.

colonialism.

4.2.7 Manufactured Isolation

When considering the context of colonization, it is more apparent that the language used by

journalists to talk about Guåhan are linked to various colonial tropes. *The Washington Post's*

use of the word "isolation," for instance, lends itself to the colonial imagery of a fictionalized

tropical oasis:

> In a March 30 letter first made public by *The San Francisco Chronicle*, Navy
> Capt. Brett Crozier, commanding officer of the USS Theodore Roosevelt,
> asked that 90 percent of the ship's crew of more than 4,000 sailors be moved
> into isolation on Guam, where the ship has been located since a spate of novel
> coronavirus infections emerged on board. (Ryan et al., 2020)

In this excerpt, Guåhan becomes synonymous with "isolation," a term that, due to the

pandemic, has new implicit associations. Isolation has medical connotations (persons can

be isolated from others, infections can be isolated within the human body, etc.). It is also a

term commonly used in psychology and mental health (emotional and social isolation).

During the pandemic, however, entire populations across the continental United States and

the Pacific have gone into government mandated isolation in their homes to prevent the

spread of COVID-19 and, in an unprecedented way, lockdown has impacted people's literal

perceptions and associations with the word "isolation."

Where power is concerned in the colonial context, however, it is worth asking, "Who does

the isolating?" Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey (2013) asserts the isolation of Pacific Islands is a

condition reproduced by colonial powers such as the United States made possible through

the "erasure of the technologies that enable mobility," yet made accessible to the colonial gaze through media that reinforce this myth of isolation (p. 174). Isolation is a manufactured condition of colonization, by colonial powers. Recalling Na'puti's assertion that colonized peoples and places are subjects onto which actions hegemonies are enacted, Guåhan is likewise mentioned in *The Washington Post* as a place where actions will happen at the direction of the navy, as in the following: "The ship … pulled into port late last week in Guam," or "'We've been working … to move those sailors off the ship, and to get them into accommodations in Guam,' Modly said" (Ryan et al., 2020).

Modly's statement is indicative of the asymmetrical power relations between the navy and the government of Guam, which are reflected in the frequent, sporadic, and expanding military exercises and weapons testing in the Mariana Islands. During the midst of the pandemic, for instance, the navy issued a press release stating live-fire trainings would occur at multiple locations around the island (Press Release, 2020). This asymmetry is also evident in the navy's sonar testing, which has led to whale strandings on both Guåhan and Saipan, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (Kaur, 2020, February 21). These actions are projected to be expanded under the military's ongoing plan to turn the entire Marianas archipelago into what is effectively the largest military training area in the world, the Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) Study Area (Office of Vice Speaker Therese M. Terlaje, 2017).

4.2.8 Manufacturing Consent: Examining Local USS TR News Coverage

While the in-fighting between two navy officials captivated national interests, the focus of coverage on Guåhan of the USS TR was whether the crew should be turned away to prevent a spike in cases or allow them to quarantine on island. A further question posed was whether they should be quarantined on existing federal facilities, or in local hotels, and what risks it would pose for the people of the Guåhan. Additionally, the conversation was nuanced by CHamoru decolonization and demilitarization activism.

Coverage of the USS TR outbreak began after the first four sailors who tested positive were

evacuated from the aircraft carrier to Naval Hospital Guam on March 25. At a daily briefing

held the following day, the governor of Guam, Lou Leon Guerrero, deferred questions

regarding the developments aboard the aircraft carrier to Joint Region Marianas

Commander Rear Admiral John Menoni, whom she stated had been "very transparent with

me" (Stole Weiss, 2020). This statement is indicative of the flow of communication between

the two officials being asymmetrical. Transparency is what we ask of elected officials and

others in positions of power entrusted with public trust. Transparency assumes that a party

is in a position to conceal information from another, such as when the Department of

Defense issued an order to halt the reporting of COVID-19 cases in March as infections on

military bases were increasing (Dickstein, 2020).

The following day, twenty-three new USS TR COVID-19 cases were reported, as well as

new details about how the navy planned to manage the isolation of the ship's crew. As Gov.

Leon Guerrero stated, "I am assured by the admiral that no sailors will be out of the base.

They won't even go to the base—they are just quarantined in the pier area. They are testing

their sailors" (Governor Lou Leon Guerrero, 2020). At this point, the formation of pro-

American ideology around the discursive event took shape, with *The Guam Daily Post*

publishing a March 28, 2020 article titled, "Governor: 23 aircraft carrier sailors test positive;

Navy assures sailors will remain pier-side." The article, meant to ease local fears, makes it a

point to further state that "[t]here are sailors on the aircraft carrier who are from Guam" (Daily

Post Staff, 2020, March 28).

This reframing of the USS TR outbreak as one that implicates persons "who are from Guam"

is meant to implore empathy among readers who would otherwise view the proposition as a

direct threat to their health and safety. The author then follows with a direct quote from Leon

Guerrero stating:

> They are doing their contact tracing with their sailors they are identifying those
> positive there, isolating them there, quarantining them and so the admiral is

doing everything to again protect not just his military population and his military people but also ours. (Daily Post Staff, 2020, March 28)

Both *The Guam Daily Post* and Leon Guerrero seek the assurance of local readers that the navy is reliable, trustworthy, and transparent in a bid for acceptance and consent among the people of the existing power structure. This is also the intent of the government of Guam's "One Guam" partnership with the U.S. military (Pacific News Center, 2020). This rhetoric often appears during flashpoints in decolonization politics, such as the North Korea missile threats in 2017, or the desecration of a sacred site in 2018 during land clearings for the planned live-fire training range at Litekyan (Babuata, 2018).

One Guam rhetoric was also deployed during the pandemic by the governor in response to growing concerns about the quarantining of USS TR sailors stating, "The virus does not discriminate and it cannot be stopped by borders or a fence. We are all at risk. Defeating it demands that we are truly one Guam" (Limtiaco, 2020, March 31). The aforementioned statement was included in a PDN article, in which the author similarly asserts, "Guam must act as one—civilian and military—to overcome the coronavirus pandemic" (Limtiaco, 2020, March 31). One Guam rhetoric, as deployed during the pandemic, concealed the inequitable regard for civilian and military lives, one example being the government's decision to use the University of Guam's gymnasium as a mass quarantine site, while the USS TR sailors were given spaces at local hotels in the island's tourism district (Gilbert, 2020, February 29).

Another major local news outlet, *KUAM*, similarly employed One Guam rhetoric, while dismissing opposition to the proposal, during an interview with Kristina Gschwend, a mother of a sailor assigned to the aircraft carrier. The author states, "A local mother worries for her son who is a sailor on the USS TR and she says hateful comments about the ship have hit close to home for her" (Barnett, 2020, March 27). Gschwend states:

> "One stupid idiot said they 'Hope they die'. That's my son that you just wished that on! And it hurts. I never knew our people to be so ugly. Sorry … that really got to me. Remember that they are children of this island on that ship. And be mindful of your words, because they're hurtful. Keep them in your prayers," she pleaded. (Barnett, 2020, March 27)

In addition to dehumanizing opposition to the proposal, Gschwend parrots the rhetoric of pro-America statements by stating, "How can you be so hateful? They protect us. They're protecting us" (Barnett, 2020, March 27). The mother's comments reinforce Leon Guerrero's support of the quarantining of USS TR sailors on Guam, while reframing the issue as a humanitarian act, while opposing views are homogenously considered stupid, hateful, and ugly, with no distinction between the commenters Gschwend is directly speaking about and the community members who wrote to the governor in opposition to the quarantining of the sailors on Guåhan, as yet another means of local news media's othering of decolonization and demilitarization activist voices.

The Guam Daily Post on April 2 published a column by white settler, Lee P. Webber, a military veteran who retired on Guåhan after working as the publisher of PDN throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. Webber's column, aptly titled, "It's our turn to help the sailors who have sworn to give their lives to protect us," presupposes that the sailors' (and by extension the United States') purpose in maintaining its presence in the Pacific is, in fact, to ensure the safety of the people of Guåhan—as opposed to the adverse conclusion that they are doing so to protect a capitalist supply chain from Asia to the continental United States, and to threaten Asian military powers such as China and North Korea through aggressive forward positioning of bases, nuclear-powered submarines, aircraft carriers, and so forth throughout the Pacific (Davis, 2020, Location no. 1401).

Webber refers to the sailors almost exclusively as "young men and women" and writes of the sacrifices made to "protect us and our nation from all perils" (Webber, 2020, April 2). He states:

> Navy sail the seas, normally live in very small quarters and work shifts around the clock to ensure the carrier is ready to fight and protect us should the need arise. Now it is our turn to support them by helping them with a place to live while being tested for COVID-19 during the time their ship is made ready to safely accept their return and set sail again. (Webber, 2020, April 2)

The second half of this excerpt from Webber positions the proposal to quarantine the sailors on-island as an indebtedness of the people of Guåhan to the U.S. Navy, which came at the

cost of the community's safety, especially manåmko (the elderly), as well as the large proportion of residents who are immunocompromised due to diabetes, cancer, and other preexisting health issues common among Pacific Islanders faced with poverty and with proximities to colonialism.[24] Webber's rationale is tied to a decades-long history of CHamoru servitude following the American recapture of Guåhan from the Imperial Japanese Army in 1944.

This discourse frames the United States as a benevolent liberator, and CHamoru as the indentured, "proud to serve," recruits who find success in the armed forces as soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen. Today, the island is recognized as having one of the highest levels of military recruitment per capita (Letman, 2016, August 29). Dalisay (2014) expresses this sense of indebtedness as colonial debt, "an acceptance of colonization manifested through a sense of obligation toward colonizers" and is associated both with pro-U.S. military/pro-buildup ideologies and less resistance to militarization (p. 11).

Webber's column further parallels Gschwend's in its dehumanizing of dissenters, and to a greater degree CHamoru decolonization and demilitarization activists. For instance, he states, "There will likely be those narrow-minded people who voice their self-serving concerns about why Guam should have to deal with this," and "remember, as we have been taught, be wary of those who peddle hate, discord and ridicule. They do not have you or our island's best interests at heart" (Webber, 2020, April 2).

Unlike Gschwend, who points her criticisms at commenters on social media, Webber's attacks are made vague in that he refers to them only as "those narrow-minded people" (Webbe, 2020, April 2). Taken into context with his media history and his public position against CHamoru sovereignty and for increased militarization, it is difficult not to assume that

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[24] A recent study indicates that approximately 44.1 percent of adults on Guåhan suffer from multiple chronic conditions, such as high cholesterol and diabetes (Newman et al., 2020).

his comments do not extend more broadly to CHamoru decolonization and demilitarization activists beyond the USS TR outbreak.

A review of the coverage from that week reveals the agenda of local mainstream media to normalize the proposition to quarantine USS TR sailors and manufacture consent, while dismissing opposition. The same day Webber published his column, *The Guam Daily Post* published an editorial titled, "Helping warship's sailors was the right call for Guam," arguing the proposition could be a leverage point for the island when seeking better relations with the military in the future (Daily Post Staff, 2020, April 2). However, the narrative reveals that the fact that the government of Guam has no leveraging capability when it comes to its relationship with the military in the author's use of "hope," as in the following excerpts:

> We hope the military leadership at the Guam level, at the Pacific Fleet in Honolulu and the main decision-makers at the Pentagon will see and remember the kindness Guam has shown. We hope the military will reciprocate our community's gesture with transparency, candor and respect for local rules, traditions and sensitivities. (Daily Post Staff, 2020, April 2)

Through this, *The Guam Daily Post* (which is consistently promilitary, pro-status quo in its reporting) displays a cognizance, if not reluctantly, of the subordination of the island's people to the military. Their support, and the governor's for that matter, is incidental and only serves to pacify dissenting residents scared of the potential for an outbreak arising from contact with the cases from the aircraft carrier. While the article recognizes that the proposition is, in fact, a "risk and a sacrifice," indentured service is latent in the text through its endorsement of Leon Guerrero, whom the author states "felt it is Guam's obligation to also provide a place for the warship's crew to wait out the fourteen-day quarantine in a humane facility" (Daily Post Staff, 2020, April 2).

Not all local elected leaders shared the enthusiasm of Leon Guerrero, or *The Guam Daily Post* for that matter. Senator Sabina Perez, called out the governor's support for quarantining the sailors on-island, drawing attention to the disparity between the vastly resourced U.S. military and the overstretched and overburdened government of Guam, as well as the risk of exposing low-income hotel workers to potentially infected sailors. As it

became clear that the U.S. military no longer intended to quarantine its sailors on base,

Perez drew attention to the fact that an option not being discussed was the military utilizing

the thousands of acres it currently occupies as a site for isolation that would have genuinely

benefited both the USS TR crew and the people of Guåhan:

> "I feel like that need to exhaust their options, which I feel they haven't. What have they done to do that? Really, the safety of our community should come first," said Senator Perez on today's episode of Containing COVID.
>
> She added, "They should continue to quarantine but in spaces on the base. As you know there are many, many facilities that are vacant and they have space, many acres— over 38,000 acres to construct these temporary things that could provide a sufficient quarantine facility."
>
> Senator Perez in a letter to Governor Lou Leon Guerrero said, "Our military is well resourced and able to house these young sailors on base without compounding the problem by exposing vulnerable service workers and the public." (Matanane, S. S., 2020, April 2)

Perez's alternative proposition is not discussed in other media coverage regarding the issue.

Further, that she is mentioned in this article alongside "community activist groups" places

her commentary at the fringe of the discussion, in line with person's who have been

characterized as stupid, hateful, ugly, and narrow-minded. Despite Perez's plea to the

governor, along with those of the numerous community leaders, Leon Guerrero did not walk

back her support for the quarantining of sailors and other potentially exposed military

personnel off-base, with national security taking precedence over community health and

safety.

More progressive local coverage of the USS TR event, by PDN reporter Anumita Kaur, is

largely shaped by the discourse of the dissenting community groups as a means of relating

oppositional viewpoints:

> Guam's political status has limited the local government's ability to effectively negotiate with the Department of Defense, but the governor shouldn't simply accept this, according to the groups. "Times like this call for a change in antiquated colonial policies that hinder our safety. It is absolutely acceptable for you as our head of state to demand that the U.S. Navy not only be transparent with you, but also include you in major decisions that will impact our island regardless of our political status," groups stated. (2020, March 30)

Due to standard editorial practices, however, Kaur's article is compromised by the inclusion of the navy's narrative of the event and Leon Guerrero's support, illustrating the point that, even when journalists are sympathetic to counternarratives, their coverage of events are often impacted by mainstream news media's reliance on establishment sources.

4.2.9 Progressive Coverage of USS TR

Leon Guerrero affirmed her prioritization of national security in this statement to The Diplomat: "These are sailors who run the USS TR. They are operating a very significant, strategic, critical asset for national security and defense in this part of the world…. If I believed these sailors would minimize or compromise the safety of our people, I would have never agreed to help" (Letman, 2020, April 9). Leon Guerrero's statement was included in a more informative news article that openly discusses Guåhan's colonization, its lack of resources, and pursuit of self-determination, rather than glossing over these contexts. The article, "Guam's Growing Coronavirus Challenge," demonstrates what constructive national reporting could look like for Guåhan, while covering many of the issues raised in this chapter. The headline is followed by superimposed text that reads, "On Guam, an already complex relationship to the U.S. mainland (and military) is complicated by a pandemic" (Letman, 2020, April 9).

Both the headline and the following text express that Guam is distinct from the United States. Guåhan, its governor, and its infrastructur.al and healthcare challenges are the focal points of the article's introductory paragraphs, and the author illustrates an island that is politically ambiguous, overburdened, and underfunded. The author, Jon Letman, uses the rest of the article to highlight interviews with CHamoru men and women who present counterhegemonic perspectives that further illustrate the prevailing inequities of the island's colonial status, such as:

> Desiree Taimanglo Ventura, a member of I Hagan Famalao'ån Guåhan (Daughters of the Women of Guam) says the local government is doing the best it can within the limitations of being a colony. Despite the "One Guam"

approach and talk of partnership with the United States, Taimanglo Ventura says, "We're not partners—we are their colonial subject. We are a possession."

As an example, she points to those with access to on-base resources at the commissary worrying about locals depleting goods.

Taimanglo Ventura says that even though the military has offered its assurance that all necessary precautions are being taken, many are unsure of what to trust. "This is our history. We don't get transparency with the military." (Letman, 2020, April 9)

With the inclusion of CHamoru voices, Letman demonstrates how a journalistic inquiry that includes counterhegemonic, Indigenous perspectives, and situates Guåhan within the social, historical, and political contexts of its unincorporated territory status, can create a news story that is transparent about the island's relation to the United States, and is potentially more informative to a U.S. electorate.

Similarly, an Al Jazeera article by Chris Gelardi employs contextual segments, as well as the positive inclusion of dissenting voices:

As of Thursday, Guam has had 125 confirmed COVID-19 cases, including four deaths.

More than 3,100 sailors have so far moved ashore, confirming for the advocates the power the military has on their island, even in times of crisis.

"It's basically a question of whose health and safety matters more," said Borja-Kicho'cho'. "And it's so frustrating because we already know the answer to that. We know it's not us." (2020)

While these articles are more progressive and critical of U.S. foreign policy and its imperial endeavors, they also sadly confirm my argument in that neither publication is a mainstream news outlet. Rather, they constitute a political view among national and international media that is peripheral to the commonly accepted notion that the island is merely a U.S. military stronghold. Further, among the approximately fourteen news articles written about the USS TR discursive event from March 26 to April 20, they are only two of four articles that attempt to critically engage with Guåhan not merely as a U.S. military stronghold, but as an island colonized by the United States.

4.2.10 Suggestions for Journalists Covering Issues Relating to Guåhan

After the USS TR crew departed Guåhan, the challenges of the pandemic remained and the island now faces yet another spike in cases connected to transient U.S. Air Force personnel who breached their quarantine (Kaur, 2020, August 3). Moreover, in July, at least two articles were published that further reify the island's subordinated status as a military stronghold proclaiming, "China Aims Missiles at Guam: How Should the Pentagon Defend America's Pacific Bomber Base?" (Axe, D., 2020, July 23) and "To Deter War with China, Defend Guam" (Heinrichs, R., 2020, July 11). While the latter uncritically proclaims Guam is part of an idealized American "homeland," the former does away with the people of Guåhan altogether.

In this time of national unrest and global crisis, it is urgent that marginalized groups in the continental United States and colonized peoples in the Pacific foster a translocal solidarity that seeks an end to both global and localized systems of oppression (antiblackness, police brutality, settler colonialism, etc.). Journalists can be catalysts for democratic change in U.S. colonies such as Guåhan, but only if more critical and sincere inquiries into U.S. imperialism become normalized, and not unconventional. A few recommendations can be made from the analyses presented in this chapter. First, articles should include both historical and political context, particularly when discussing militarization. News coverage that excludes these normalize the island's occupation by the United States, and its status as a "major strategic base," rather than situating these as outcomes of an American imperial agenda dating back to 1898.

Second, the narrative of news articles should be constructed from grounded CHamoru perspectives that counter establishment narratives. This can only be done by forming nonhierarchical relations, informed by reciprocity, with CHamoru activists and organizers on the ground working toward decolonization and demilitarization within the community. CHamoru community organizations such as Independent Guåhan, I Hagan Famalåo'an Guåhan, and Prutehi Litekyan have developed an online presence that cultivates both local sovereignty and a borderless, translocal solidarity with other communities resisting

militarization and colonization. These groups are accessible to journalists critically engaging with militarization and colonization.

4.2.11 Conclusion

Looking at news coverage surrounding the USS TR event, it is apparent that discourse in national news media instinctively naturalize the projection of American military power in Asia-Pacific, and the continued colonization of Pacific Islands such as Guåhan to maintain the self-mythologizing of the United States as a bastion of liberty and democracy. Occurring simultaneously in Guåhan is the manufactured consent of a large segment of the population over recurring injustices committed by the U.S. military through the propagation of discourses of servitude, indebtedness, and American benevolence by an extant colonial mediascape. Both mainstream local and national news outlets are critical to the continuity of militarization and colonization in the Marianas by concealing the undemocratic relationship between the U.S. military (as an extension of the United States) and Guåhan, a current colony.

Guåhan is part of the interconnected fabric of oppression that thousands of protesters across the United States are revolting against as I write this. Not only through federal policies like the Pentagon's 1033 program, which funnels military arms and equipment into local and state police departments[25] to be used against Brown, Black, and poor communities, but through the maintenance of a global military and capital order. There are approximately 800 military bases around the world controlled by the United States,[26] which maintain the nation's ability to project military power across the globe and protect the flow of capital and resources into the pockets of elite sectors of society. The latter became blatantly clear when, on April 2, the U.S. Navy revealed it was rapidly sourcing medical supplies and equipment from around the world, only to hand them over to private companies that then

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[25] See H. R. 3230 – National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997.
[26] See Vine, D. (2020). Base nation: How U. S. military bases abroad harm America and the world." The American Empire Project.

auctioned the goods to hospitals in the middle of the crisis. As Rear Adm. John Polowczyk succinctly stated, "I'm not here to disrupt the supply chain" (Palmer, 2020, April 2). He further stated, "We're bringing product in; they're filling orders for hospitals, nursing homes, like normal. I'm putting volume into that system" (Palmer, 2020, April 2).

Polowczyk's admission could not have better summed up the relationship between the U.S. military and its role in ensuring the prevailing inequities of capitalism. Guåhan and other islands in the Pacific occupied and militarized by the United States are integral pieces of this structure. American mainstream news media maintain these power dynamics through discursive biases supporting the U.S. military and its projects of oppression around the globe. Understanding the ways in which media structures reproduce U.S. colonialism is imperative not just for CHamoru activists working to decolonize from the United States, but for community members, political leaders, scholars, and organizers who seek to dismantle the interconnected American projects of White supremacy weighing on Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and around the globe.

Chapter 5: CHamoru Digital Activism and the Anti/Colonial Media Binary in Guåhan

5.1 Introduction

While Chapters 3 and 4 present in-depth analyses of the operation of ideological modes in mainstream news media and the ways in which American colonial hegemony is (re)produced, "CHamoru Digital Activism and the Anti/Colonial Media Binary in Guåhan" presents a discussion of CHamoru activists' opposition to dominant narratives through social media and corporeal protest. This chapter also demonstrates activists' efficacy in subverting hegemony through its digital transoceanic/translocal network of solidarity with other decolonization and demilitarization communities around the world. Further, to better understand this interplay between mainstream news media and CHamoru activist digital media, I position both systems in a binary relationship, the Anti/Colonial Media Binary, acknowledging that both systems are constituted by the other.

The bulk of this discussion centers on the 2017 North Korea Nuclear Missile Threats, in which the island was directly implicated in the saber rattling between the United States and North Korea, bringing national and international reporters to Guåhan to capture the spectacle "on the scene." CHamoru activists' preexisting social media presence, and the networks of solidarity built and maintained with other communities, was integral to the subversion of mainstream media's reaffirmation and normalizing of American global military conquest. The manifestation of this subversion was the People for Peace Rally, which shifted the narrative "from a colonial rhetoric of prayerful, hopeful dependency on U.S. military presence and power to a rhetoric of antimilitarism in Asia-Pacific and global denuclearization (including the United States) which inherently calls to question the reasons why North Korea would threaten Guåhan in the first place" (Cruz 2020, p. 5). The most crucial implication of this chapter is that it sets the groundwork for future and more in-depth

research of translocal Indigenous decolonial activism mediated through the Internet, which has become increasingly relevant in the COVID-19 era.

5.2 CHamoru Digital Activism and the Anti/Colonial Media Binary in Guåhan

Figure 3. A popular Guåhan landmark, the statue of Chief Kepuha in the island's capital, is shackled in red, white, and blue chains as part of the People for Peace Rally in 2017.

5.2.1 Introduction

Guåhan is one of seventeen remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories recognized by the United Nations that have yet to decolonize from its administering power. The island is also one of the most important U.S. bases due to both its geographic location and political ambiguity. In the U.S. national consciousness, Guåhan is referred to as "the tip of America's spear," "Fortress Guam," and even more ominously, in light of Indigenous sovereignty, "America's permanent aircraft carrier" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 135). Stewart Firth (1989) makes a point that "generally, the greater the strategic value of an island territory the less likely that territory has been to proceed to sovereign status" (pp. 75-76) This appears to be the case with Guåhan, as the island is center stage in the United States' realignment of forces in the Asia-Pacific region, which involve large-scale military increases and the transfer of thousands of U.S. Marines from Okinawa to the island—a move which will "overwhelm

Guam's infrastructure, create economic hardship, and cause serious cultural and environmental damage" (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, p. 132).

It must be emphasized that the military realignment is not a project of the people of Guåhan's choosing through a democratic process. Rather, the people's involvement in any semblance of an official process has been limited to a number of public meetings and commenting periods orchestrated by the U.S. Department of Defense over the past decade with no bearing on the United States' plans to press on with the military buildup. As Robert McChesney (2018) states: "Militarism and democracy is a contradiction. This isn't even a controversial point" (p. 24). Despite the antidemocratic, asymmetrical relationship the CHamoru people have with the United States and the military, mainstream media on the island, at best, only further obfuscate the terms of Guåhan's colonization. At worst, they openly support its continued oppression in stark contradiction of news media's self-mythologizing as an apparatus that can create informed democratic change.

Responding to mainstream media's function as a colonial apparatus, CHamoru decolonization activists and influencers have taken to digital media "to cultivate interpersonal networks online and to mobilize those networks to engage in live and mediated collective action" while enabling CHamorus to self-represent their interests, voices, and movement in public spaces while bypassing traditional media channels (Lievrouw, 2011, p. 25; Simpson, 2017, Location no. 3501). In this chapter, I address this site of contention, which I refer to as the anti/colonial media binary, and argue that CHamoru digital activism represents an intervention into an extant colonial media culture that, historically, has operated through print media. Understanding digital activism in Guåhan and other islands plagued by American colonialism and militarization thus requires both a contemporary and historical digital cultural analysis.

5.2.2 Mainstream Media as a Colonial Apparatus

The contemporary mainstream mediascape on Guåhan presents a limited range of perspectives on key issues like decolonization and Indigenous rights. Using quantitative critical discourse analytical methods, Francis Dalisay (2009) concludes that local mainstream media institutions—namely the longest-running and most consumed news source, the *Pacific Daily News* (PDN)—(re)enculturate Guam residents with pro-American ideologies with few exceptions (p. 253). Placed in historical context, this comes as little surprise (Cruz, 2017, pp. 43-44).

The PDN was first published as the Navy News in 1945 as a means of keeping U.S. Navy sailors culturally connected to and informed of affairs in the continental United States. The editorial staff then consisted solely of white men, with news coverage that reflected predominant interests in global and U.S. national affairs and discourse. For most of media's history on the island, the majority of reporters have come from the continental United States to fill editorial vacancies, leading to the filtering of ethnic, cultural, political, social, and historical nuances of the island through white, hetero, and male perspectives, which have become the standard for public discourse on Guåhan (Stade, 1998, pp. 145-158).

In 1978, activist and historian Robert Underwood led a protest against the PDN with the CHamoru rights organization PARA (People's Alliance for Responsive Alternatives) for the paper's refusal to print submissions written in the CHamoru language, calling on the community to burn PDN publications (Monnig, n.d.). Both broadcast radio and television news on Guåhan also share in a tradition of haole-owned media discourse propagated "through their tone of voice, their frequent inferences to 'how things are in the mainland' (that is the United States), and their posture of being knowledgeable about local affairs" in a "systematic campaign against Chamorros" (Stade, 1998, p. 152). Today, mainstream media on the island continues to propagate colonial narratives imbued with white paternalist, pro-American discourses which trivialize the issue of decolonization.

Nascent research on digitally mediated social movements looked unfavorably on digital participation, referring to it as "slacktivism," suggesting that digital participation would have a negative effect on non-digital engagement. However, as Lane and Cin (2017) state, contemporary data indicates the opposite—that there is "a significant positive effect of public sharing on willingness to volunteer" and engage in other prosocial behaviors (p. 1533). Margetts et al. (2016) further assert the value of social media to grassroots movements is its ability to "alter the costs and benefits of political actions, reducing the transaction costs of getting involved," resulting in "micro-donations" of time and money which are cumulatively impactful (p. 193).

5.2.3 Transoceanic Digital Decolonial Solidarity

Evidence of digital media's potential as a liberatory medium in the struggle for decolonization can already be gleaned from contemporary transoceanic Indigenous and/or decolonial movements. Digital media was integral to the #IdleNoMore movement in 2012, allowing activists to "write the movement as it was happening on the ground" against an "extremely racist" Canadian mediascape. Likewise, scholars looking to the ongoing Mauna Kea struggle perceive Indigenous activists engaging in digital media production as communicators themselves whose actions facilitate public participation and mobilization,[27] countering mainstream media's reliance on state and corporate perspectives that reproduce and reinforce anti-sovereignty discourses against Native Hawaiians.[28] Across the transoceanic colonial axis, two other examples follow—in Puerto Rico and at Ihumātao in Aotearoa (New Zealand). Protesters in Puerto Rico used the hashtag #RickyRenunciaYa to pressure the island's governor to resign after a leaked 889-page Telegram chat showed then-Governor Ricky Rosselló and other government officials, among numerous offenses, making

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[27] See Ravazzani, S. & Maier, C. D. (2017). Framing of Issues Across Actors: Exploring Competing Discourses in Digital Arenas. *Journal of Communication Management*, 21(2), 186–200.
[28] See Peryer, M. (2019, July 29). Native Hawaiians on Coverage of Mauna Kea Resistance. *Columbia Journalism Review*. www.cjr.org/opinion/mauna-kea-telescope-protest-hawaii.php.

homophobic slurs and mocking Puerto Ricans who died during Hurricane Maria.[29] Rosselló ultimately resigned. At Ihumātao, an ancestral Māori site where the corporation Fletcher Residential plans to build a 480-unit housing development, nearly one thousand Māori activists and allies are occupying the site in protest to stop the development and return stolen lands using the hashtags #protectIhumātao and #protectIhumatao. Clearly, trends in CHamoru digital activism are consistent with a growing number of transoceanic Indigenous and/or decolonial movements that engage in mediated hegemonic contests against colonial mainstream media.

5.2.4 (Re)reading the August 2017 Missile Crisis

The 9 August 2017 nuclear threat made against Guåhan by North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un presents researchers with an interesting case study of the dynamics of an anti/colonial media binary on Guåhan—both the mainstream media's entrenchment in U.S. colonial order and CHamoru digital media's ability to redefine narratives in public discourse opposing dominant discourses. On the day of the threats, the *Pacific Daily News* published an article headlined, "Trust in God, Military."[30] The PDN makes an obvious but nonetheless interesting comparison between God and the U.S. military, implying that the two entities—an omniscient and timeless metaphysical being and an implement of U.S. aggression that operates globally to protect the country's economic interests, respectively—are equal in power and righteousness. The discussion over decolonization thus is complicated by PDN's assertion that the U.S. military is at once unquestionable and inherently good, exuding the qualities of godliness. While one could argue that the article merely reflects an existing belief in society, under the logic of Critical Discourse Analysis, discursive events are understood to not only be shaped by society but to be active in shaping society as well (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 9).

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[29] See Morales, E. (2019, August 2). It's About More Than Ricky. *Jacobin*, www.jacobinmag.com/2019/08/puerto-rico-socialist-spring-ricardo-rossello.
[30] See Raymundo, S. (2017, August 9). Officials Downplay NoKorea Threat as Residents Hope, Pray. *Pacific Daily News*. www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/08/09/homeland-no-imminent-threat-guam-marianas/551183001/.

In response to the threats, CHamoru activism organizations coordinated the People for Peace Rally, marking a clear turning point for the narratives surrounding the missile threats from a colonial rhetoric of prayerful, hopeful dependency on U.S. military presence and power to a rhetoric of anti- militarism in Asia-Pacific and global denuclearization (including the United States) which inherently calls to question the reasons why North Korea would threaten Guåhan in the first place. Organizers made it a clear point of the rally that "real peace lies with demilitarization on Guam," and "if the U.S. hadn't colonized the island, North Korea wouldn't aim its missiles toward Guam."[31]

5.2.5 The Anti/Colonial Media Binary and Discursive Shifts

This reversal of the missile threat discourse successfully drew the curiosity of the large swath of international news media representatives who flooded into Guåhan to capture the end of the world first-hand. The BBC, for instance, published an article titled "Guam: A conflicted island at the center of a firestorm," which illustrates the island's colonial status by covering the historical land condemnation by the U.S. military and the ongoing threat it poses to the safety and survival of the CHamoru people. [32]

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[31] See Raymundo, S. (2017, August 14). Guam Residents Rally for Peace amid Missile Crisis. *Pacific Daily News*. www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/08/14/guam-residents-rally-peace-amid-north-korean-missile-crisis/563928001/.
[32] See BBC News. (2017, August 17). Guam: A Conflicted Island at the Centre of a Firestorm. *BBC News*. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-40957419.

Figure 4. Rally attendees gather at the close of the event to listen to a speech by Dr. Kenneth Gofigan Kuper.

Hundreds of island residents outside the periphery of decolonization and demilitarization activism attended the People for Peace Rally, from Indigenous cultural practitioners to non-Indigenous academic faculty members, government workers, and a number of local senators which aided to the optics of the rally as a united, mainstream movement against U.S. colonialism, global nuclearization, and the militarization of CHamoru lands. The event was a success partly because of the pre-existing digital media presence and international solidarity work of decolonization and demilitarization groups like Independent Guåhan and Prutehi Litekyan, which already occupied a space in both mainstream media and digital media. Independent Guåhan, in particular, uses social media to enhance its outreach by live-streaming monthly meetings with community members, posting educational material to its Facebook page, and operating a podcast (Fanachu!).

To be clear, I am not arguing that digital activism alone can amass and sustain a large-scale Indigenous and/or decolonial social movement. A number of scholars cited in this chapter also share a skepticism of such techno-optimism on the grounds that it provides a shortcut around establishing Indigenous connectivity and relationalities. A second criticism is that the

Internet, including social media, are part of the fabric of what Shoshana Zuboff calls "surveillance capitalism."[33] As Simpson, Walcott, and Coulthard (2018) state, "The Internet and digital technologies have become a powerful site for reinforcing and amplifying settler colonialism" (p. 79). However, the argument that the utilization of the Internet itself will upend Indigenous and/or decolonial social movements is deterministic and fails to see how Indigenous peoples themselves assert agency over the Internet as a technology for change, so long as such utility is supplementary to, and not the basis of, organizational communication and Indigenous relationality. As T. V. Reed states, "Technologies are always used in particular cultural contexts which reshape them even as they reshape the cultural contexts" (Reed, 2014, p. 11). Therefore, how digital media is used has more bearing on Indigenous and/or decolonial movements than digital media itself.

5.2.6 Conclusion

Guåhan is at the forefront of decolonial struggle against the United States and its plans to stage a buildup of military forces on the island, overwhelming the island's infrastructure, creating economic hardship, and causing serious cultural and environmental damage. Indigenous decolonization and demilitarization activists using digital media are engaged in a hegemonic contest against an extant colonial mainstream mediascape which, far from the mythos of journalism as an entity supports informed democratic change, further obfuscates the terms of Guåhan's colonization. Using the 2017 People for Peace Rally, I have examined the contestation of both media structures through the anti/colonial media binary and argue that digital media presents CHamoru decolonization activists with the ability "to cultivate interpersonal networks online and to mobilize those networks to engage in live and mediated collective action" (Lievrouw, 2011, p. 25) while enabling CHamoru to self-represent their interests, voices, and movement in public spaces while bypassing traditional media channels (Simpson, 2017, Location No. 3501). Thus, as a supplement to grounded political

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[33] Shoshana Zuboff, The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future atthe New Frontier of Power (London: Profile Books, 2019).

struggle, digital media will be integral to the further development of a transoceanic inter-movement solidarity for decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty.

Chapter 6: *In* Discussion *With*

Reflecting on Tuhiwai Smith's (2012) assertion that "research exists within a system of power" (p. 357), I have sought to conduct this project with and among my community in order to decenter Western knowledge. This discussion section thus takes place *in discussion with* the journalists and activists whom I share community. It is important to note that the journalist participants in this thesis chose to keep their identities confidential due to concerns over job security, while the activist participants chose to publish their identities. Specifically, I reflect on a series of conversations with participants in order to address the research questions which initiated this project: RQ1: What effect does the extant colonial mainstream mediascape have on public discourse in Guåhan? RQ2: And, how does CHamoru digital activism affect decolonization politics and discourse offline? Lastly, RQ3: what model does CHamoru digital activism present for a decolonized journalism praxis.

The chapters in this thesis attend to the operation of ideologies that reproduce American settler colonialism and militarization in Guåhan, a current colony at the nexus of the United States' militarization of the Pacific. Using the concept of *modes of operation* to direct analyses to deconstruct news discourses, I have sought to show how mainstream news outlets in Guåhan and the continental United States operate by default as ideological apparatuses of the American settler nation-state. Further, I developed the concepts of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape and the anti/colonial media binary to theorize both a colonizing mediascape and CHamoru counterhegemonic discourses. The interface of this contestation between these two discourses creates translocal solidarities and forms of sovereignty that subvert Guåhan's unincorporated territory status.

This thesis took place during a period of unprecedented global crisis. The analyses in this thesis are a reflection of this, and make the case that, the project of American imperialism continues, unencumbered by social and political unrest in the continental United States, climate change impacts, and the COVID-19 pandemic. This, however, is not a point of pessimism. Rather, in noting that the settler colonial/militarist project of the elimination of the

native can never be complete, this thesis calls for a critical examination of the ideologies and discourses that enable and reproduce settler structures of domination. In orienting an analysis of ideology using settler colonial theory, this thesis makes a deliberate attempt to confront mainstream news media's role in reproducing settler colonial power in/on Pacific islands. In so doing, I have sought to unsettle the normalized logics of setter colonial/militarist oppression.

6.1 Extant Colonial Mainstream Mediascape

While theorists along the spectrum of the left have advanced structural critiques of media which correctly point to its function as an ideological apparatus of state power, such critiques themselves tend to reinscribe settler colonial power since, as Tuck and Yang (2012) point out, there are many portions of radical politics which are incommensurable with decolonization—understood correctly as the repatriation (not merely recognition) of Indigenous lands (p. 28). I have deliberately focused my analysis on news media in order to demonstrate that, under the guise of objectivity and balance, it is an ideological practice that works to advance a settler colonialism/militarism agenda. I also locate the extant colonial mainstream mediascape in Guam in the structure of imperialism and explore its distinctive effects on the discourses of Guåhan, indigeneity, and self-determination.

In Chapter 3, I introduced the concept of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape in order to theorize news media as an assemblage of settler colonial/militarist power in cultural contexts like U.S. territories. Arjun Appadurai (1990) formulated the term "mediascape" to mean the capability to produce and disseminate information, as well as "the images of the world created by these media" (p. 298-299). In Guåhan, the mediascape is comprised of four main companies, as I have already demonstrated, which each share a legacy shaped by post-World War II militarization and displacement, and are inflected very much by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness of white male journalists (Stade, 1998, p. 154).The extant colonial mainstream mediascape also reproduces a settler nexus of attitudes and affects which are intimately linked to the legitimation of settler

colonialism/militarism, with practices such as a military build-up and neo-liberal economic policies that sustain the dispossession of CHamoru in the Marianas. Reflecting on the interlocking agendas of militarization and capitalism in the mediascape, Independent Guåhan organizer Lawrence Lizama stated:

> Definitely, there's—you know, there's gonna [sic] be the political elites, or what's that, social elites that are gonna [sic] want to keep themselves in power. So, of course they run these media companies and want to put out whatever stories that fit their narrative or, will benefit them the most. So, there's definitely a bias, especially when it comes to the buildup because, like, these—groups are so connected to, like, militarization here and they're the ones benefiting off these contracts or whatever, construction, all this stuff. So, it's always just to keep themselves in power, keep themselves—money or whatever they're interested in. Yeah, there's a bias for sure. (personal communication, 2020)

In terms of the PM, Lizama's response touches on the subject of ownership as a filter of truth. Lizama states political and social elites who "run these media companies" put out stories which already fit into a narrative that is beneficial to their interests. As I have shown in Chapter 3, such narratives are part of the self-perpetuating discourse of settler colonialism which normalize conditions of domination. Frequently, the perpetrators of such discourses are, as Lizama asserts, political and social elites who participate in the settler colonial project either blatantly or through the coercive effects of hegemony.[34]

As I have already discussed, at the nexus of these interests are persons like Lee Webber, a white-retired military officer-businessman-former PDN publisher who runs an editorial column in *The Guam Daily Post*. While Webber enjoys a certain amount of social and political capital, he is by no means the only settler preaching *common sense.* Siobhan McManus (personal communication, 2020), a volunteer with Independent Guåhan, expressed her frustration that figures like Webber are given a platform by mainstream news media, "[a]nd I'm, like, [Lee] Webber and, like—like, these people have, like, left these huge

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[34] Tanner Mirrlees (2017) also highlights the longstanding collaborative and conjoined efforts of the Department of Defense and the American entertainment industry in engineering the consent of the public over a militarized status quo (p. 430).

marks on the mediascape and it's annoying because their voices are incessant and outdated and, like, and yet they're still always given a platform" (personal communication, 2020).

McManus observed "huge marks left on the mediascape" by settler commentators working with news companies to present a homogeneous perspective of Guåhan as incapable:

> And so much of it is like… almost all of these articles that are written almost feel like it just feeds everyone who's like, "Oh, yeah, Guam is corrupt. Guam doesn't know how to manage money. We have an immigration crisis. Let's just, like, prey on the average, like, 40-year-old upper-middle class CHamoru's fears of how they're like somehow threatened by anyone who is poor, or by anyone who is not *Chamerican.*" (personal communication, 2020)

In so many words, both Lizama and McManus are articulating a structural analysis of news media that correlates with the concept of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape as an artifact of post-World War II militarization. They are also articulating what is an effect of the rapid post-war shift toward capitalism, the stratification of classes, and economic self-interest created by the opportunities to advance one's class position by complying with militarization. This mediascape is structured in order to normalize colonization through the reproduction of a homogeneous *settler colonial common sense*. Yet, to answer precisely what effect this has on public discourse I must now consider Thompson's conception of ideological modes of operation.

6.2 Revisiting the Application of Ideological Modes of Operation to Settler Colonialism/Militarism

As demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4, the examination of ideological modes of operation alert us to the ways in which meanings are constructed and mobilized in the social world to establish and maintain relations of power (Thompson, 1990, p. 66). Chapters 3 and 4 illustrate that these modes are not definitive and are not always distinct. Rather, they are interlocking rhetorical devices which reinforce and reproduce power. Settler colonialism/militarism is a structure of belief and practice that systematically and routinely exerts "a profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence" (Rowe & Tuck, 2017, p. 5). As I have already discussed, settler power disrupts Indigenous relationships to land, turning

Indigenous land/water/air/subterranean earth into sources of capital. This process requires

the elimination of Indigenous communities through settler laws, policies, and ideologies.

The short answer to the question of effects is perhaps that modes of operation construct

meanings of/about Guåhan which constantly reinscribe its colonization. Yet this alone is not

a sufficient explanation. Observing how discourse and social structures are shaped and

(re)shaped by one another, I will now revisit the case studies in this thesis to better

understand the implications of these modes of operation on Guåhan's public discourse, and

how such modes are integral in turning islands and oceans into "militarized space[s] of

empire" (Na'puti, 2017, p. 106).

6.2.1 Fragmentation and Unification

> *Fragmentation - Relations of domination are maintained by "fragmenting those individuals and groups that might be capable of mounting an effective challenge to dominant groups, or by orientating forces of potential opposition towards a target which is projected as evil, harmful or threatening;*
>
> *Unification - Relations of domination are "established and sustained by constructing, at the symbolic level, a form of unity which embraces individuals in a collective identity, irrespective of the difference and divisions that may separate them;" (Thompson, 1990, pp. 64-65)*

Although not explicitly stated in "Saying the Quiet Parts Out Loud: Guåhan, the USS

Theodore Roosevelt, and the Role of Journalism in Reproducing Colonization in the Time of

COVID-19," the examples I analyzed correlate to Thompson's conception of modes of

operation of ideology and the overarching argument that extant colonial news narratives

reinscribe settler colonialism/militarization. Specifically, I looked at the framing of CHamoru

opposition to the quarantining of COVID-exposed sailors from the USS Theodore Roosevelt

(USS TR) in local hotels. The case study unveils the operation of modes of fragmentation, in

which media "fragment those individuals and groups that might be capable of mounting an

effective challenge to dominant groups, or by orientating forces of potential opposition

towards a target which is projected as evil, harmful or threatening" (Thompson, 1990, p. 65).

As with each of the modes of operation Thompson identified, there is interplay and overlap

between each mode. Fragmentation, for instance, is also seen to correlate with the mode of

unification, which conceals relations of domination through the creation of a collective identity. Both modes appear to co-constitute one another, implying an us/them dichotomization which is similarly observed in the Propaganda Model.

In the first example of fragmentation, I discussed the use of dehumanizing rhetoric against opposition, such as when the news outlet *KUAM* interviewed Kristina Gschwend, a mother of a sailor assigned to the USS TR. The author states, "A local mother worries for her son who is a sailor on the USS TR and she says hateful comments about the ship have hit close to home for her" (Barnett, 2020, March 27). By using the perspective of a distraught mother concerned for the safety of her son, the example coincides with the personalizing and depoliticizing of the USS TR issue in order to more positively portray the Navy's proposal. By fixating on Gschwend's son, the article diverts attention away from the implications of introducing 4,000 sailors who had potentially been infected or exposed to the virus. In the article, Gschwend states:

> "One stupid idiot said they 'Hope they die'. That's my son that you just wished that on! And it hurts. I never knew our people to be so ugly. Sorry … that really got to me. Remember that they are children of this island on that ship. And be mindful of your words, because they're hurtful. Keep them in your prayers," she pleaded. (Barnett, 2020, March 27)

Gschwend also parrots the rhetoric of pro-American settler militarist statements by stating, "How can you be so hateful? They protect us. They're protecting us" (Barnett, 2020, March 27). The outcome is that the article reframes the issue as a humanitarian act, while opposing views are considered *stupid*, *hateful*, and *ugly*. Taken on its own, the article could be perceived as seemingly benign. However, taken into context with the island's political status, we can more clearly see settler colonial/militarist ideology at work. The column by Webber titled, "It's our turn to help the sailors who have sworn to give their lives to protect us," exemplifies this in its depiction of the USS TR sailors as "young men and women," and the sacrifices made to "protect us and our nation from all perils" (Webber, 2020, April 2).

While Gschwend points her criticisms at commenters on social media, Webber's attacks are purposely vague when he states, "There will likely be those narrow-minded people who

voice their self-serving concerns about why Guam should have to deal with this," and "remember, as we have been taught, be wary of those who peddle hate, discord and ridicule. They do not have you or our island's best interests at heart" (Webber, 2020, April 2). Webber's statement is essentially an operation of both unification and fragmentation in that, by using the fictional *our* he portrays his narrative as the commonly accepted narrative of the people, while further marginalizing CHamoru decolonization and demilitarization activists. As I have shown in Chapter 4, these narratives play into the larger structure of settler colonialism by reinscribing the existing relations of power by fragmenting decolonization and demilitarization activist voices.

In terms of the PM, the co-constitutive relation between dissimulation and unification is simply expressed through the fifth filter of truth: an us/them dichotomy used to define enemies of elite interests, and yet this expurgation of dissenting voices is also a function of legitimation. As Chapter 4 outlines, this dichotomization is observed in the use of "One Guam" rhetoric, which conveys the perception that the military and the people of Guåhan are one community, and that the government of Guam and military officials are equal parts of the same bureaucracy—a *partnership*.

Relatedly, unification is expressed through commemoration and processes of (re)enculturation. For instance, each year on July 21, the island celebrates Liberation Day to commemorate the United States' "liberation" of the CHamoru people from the Japanese. In the days leading up to Liberation Day, news companies typically publish a series of feature articles retelling the tale of the horrors of Japanese occupation and the euphoria of the return of American marines and sailors. Events are also held in which man'åmko (elderly) are asked to gather at war memorials to recount and relive their tragedies. The spectacle of Liberation Day reminds the public "they [are] indebted to the United States for liberating Guam and therefore need to be loyal citizens."

The commemoration of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 present another case study in which unification and fragmentation are observed. During the pandemic, the Rotary Club of Northern Guam hosted a "virtual wreath laying" ceremony to commemorate the "attack on our [my emphasis] nation… [and] pay tribute to the people who lost their lives, to honor the survivors, the first responders, and the military who protect us from foreign and domestic threats." The *Pacific Daily News* published an article that day which recounts the experiences of three island residents who were at the World Trade Center at the time of the attack, describing their heroism and sacrifice.

Using phrases like, "nineteen years have passed since terrorists hijacked four planes and claimed the lives of nearly 3,000 victims in the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil" and "though the terrorist attacks scythed through generations of first responders, the loss of comrades rallied a nation together," the author reaffirms an adherence to the belief that the event should be significant to Guåhan, and thus that the people of Guåhan are encompassed in the American cultural and political sphere. *The Guam Daily Post* ran a similar article in which unification operates through vague references to the nation: "We invite the community to take a moment to pause and remember that out of one of the most horrific attacks on the nation, came the outpouring of love and support from emergency managers and volunteers to help those in need. Their efforts and sacrifices will never be forgotten."

Following 9/11, the United States "unleash[ed] two invasions in quick succession, leading to unending occupations and an expanding and never-ending war in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya, unleashing a death spiral across the region" (MacLeod, 2019, p. 72). Guåhan consistently has one of the highest military recruitment rates per capita, and CHamoru recruits (in large numbers) have taken part in these American occupations. This history of military service is another aspect ideological unification, as a process of constant (re)enculturation into American discourse, and is a point which is employed strategically by elites to further perpetuate patriotism and loyalty to the United States. As McManus states:

To me, that feels like the state of CHamoru mainstream media right now. Like, incredibly vapid sometimes and then wildly xenophobic, and then it's the same where like, "Ah, you know 'politricks [sic].'" I'm like, "Really? That's the most nuance you're gonna [sic] give this conversation?" They're like, "yeah, you know, can't trust our government to do anything right, and can't trust anyone and the only thing you can trust is death and taxes and a paycheck. And, you know what? You know that guy, Trump? He's not the best but at least he says things like it is." And I'm like, "do you really believe that? Do you really like see yourself in the same way as you would see, in your mind, some bootstrap American?"

And it's crazy to me how many people identify themselves with that—like they see themselves as part of that class. They don't see themselves as colonized, Indigenous people who are at risk of losing, like, 4,000 years of history. It's like, "No. I'm an American and I have a house and a dog and a big family and we go on vacations, and Trump represents me." And I'm like "are you kidding me?!" It's like those things where, in reality, people believe that almost everyone on Guam is three months closer to homelessness, but they all believe that they're like three months closer to becoming a millionaire. (personal communication, 2020)

As discourse and reality are co-constitutive, McManus' response indicates ideological modes of fragmentation and unification affect CHamoru self-identification and one's affinity to whiteness, so much so that it affects perceptions of their political status and material reality. As Michael Perez (2005) observed, the island's ambiguous political status "laid the foundation for Chamorro ambiguity toward their political and cultural identities" (p. 572). Fragmentation (as well as unification) thus aids the settler colonial/militarist project by disrupting CHamoru relations to land and culture so that decolonization and demilitarization aren't viewed simply as impractical or unrealistic, but as a direct threat to one's way of life, and the One Guam community.

6.2.2 Reification

Reification - Relations of domination are sustained by "representing a transitory, historical state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural, outside of time… portrayed as events of a quasi-natural kind." (Thompson, 1990, p. 65)

The discussion of the USS TR COVID-19 outbreak in Chapter 4 also points to reification as an ideological mode which constructs a perception of a relation of power and subordination as natural or timeless. In a Guåhan context, the implication is a view of American settler colonialism and militarization as a state of affairs without a beginning or, even more ominously, an end. This is especially perceptible in the national news coverage of the event,

which took for a given that Guam was simply an island under the jurisdiction of the U.S. military. In the coverage of the USS TR event, none of the mainstream media outlets question the nature of Guam's relationship to the United States, or what the USS TR was doing there in the first place. Guam is simply and unquestionably a U.S. territory. Modes of reification are of great significance to the settler colonial/militarist project as they help form the logic of settler legal powers, not only through the Insular Cases of 1901, which I mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, but in an international sense as well.

As mentioned previously, Guåhan is categorized by the United Nations as a "non-self-governing territory," or in other words a colony. That the United States and other settler states employ such terms that are riddled with ambiguity as "non-self-governing-territories," or "unincorporated territories" illustrates how, by eliding any sense of wrongdoing, modes of unification may be constituted. As of 2020, the UN was on the brink of its fourth decade of attempting to eradicate colonialism from the world. Each year, representatives from Guåhan travel to New York City or to other UN forums in order to draw attention to their continuing colonial status. I, myself, have traveled to Geneva, Switzerland to intervene at the 11th Session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to call attention to the United States' violations of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). However, modes of reification work to isolate Guåhan within the confines of settler power, and the United States has consistently stated at these forums that it considers Guåhan to be a domestic issue only, "with no international dimensions, and has refused to recognize the United Nations categorization of Guam, thereby insisting that Guam is not a colony" (Bevacqua & Cruz, p. 132).

I have argued in *The Banality of American Empire: The Curious Case of Guam, USA* that through this insistence, we can see how settler ideology operates through policy and sheer logistics within international human rights institutions to foreclose the development of independence for Guåhan:

The Fourth Committee of the UN is the chief body in which political decolonization processes are mediated. The subjugation of the Indigenous peoples of Guam is a matter that falls (or at least should fall) within th purview of both these bodies. However, despite, or perhaps because of, it colonial subjugation to a highly visible and extremely powerful sovereign state, Guam is often overlooked, if mentioned at all.

The 2012 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, for instance, makes no mention of Guam, or of Puerto Rico, and instead focuses explicitly on issues affecting Native American, Alaskan, and Hawaiian communities. Guam's absence from the report is not a matter of ignorance, but rather due to the logistics of size and distance, at least according to Kristen Carpenter, the North American member of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Guam is too small, and too far away, for the UN to consider: in a word, too unimportant. For the Indigenous people of Guam, as well as its sister islands in the rest of the Northern Mariana archipelago, this has meant that human rights violations affecting them are rarely discussed as such, if at all, within the preeminent global forum for decolonization and the preservation of human rights.

Throughout the political process of decolonization, Guam has sent multiple delegations to the United Nations General Assembly to discuss at great length the numerous social, economic, and political issues that are rooted in its colonization. Yet, alongside these interests of the UN, there remains the problem of parity, or a lack thereof, in the case of Guam and the sixteen other so-called non-self-governing territories (NSGTs) inhabited by Indigenous peoples. Self-determination, for instance, is the most fundamental right set forth by the UN in its charter, yet peoples in NSGTs categorically lack such a right. UN human rights bodies are not necessarily unaware of Guam, but they do not prioritize it when the nonviolent political resistance of some one hundred eighty thousand residents is compared to more popular issues, such as the overtly violent and illegal settlements of Palestine, the murder of Indigenous peoples in South America to make way for extractive industries, or the teargassing of Indigenous women and children at the U.S.–Mexico border by U.S. officials.

Lastly, on this point at least, as a matter of practical proximity, there are numerous UN field offices near Guam, particularly in the Philippines, Fiji, and Thailand that could take up the plight of the Indigenous people of Guam. However, as noted earlier, matters concerning U.S. possessions are accepted widely within even such a progressive institution as the UN as merely domestic problems that can be resolved solely by the United States. When pressed on whether there could ever be a field office dedicated to the issues of NSGTs, Carpenter stated that it simply was not a priority of the Office of the High Commissioner. Even though the context was a side event on Indigenous peoples' issues in the United States, this idea appeared to seem too banal, perhaps, even for consideration. (Bevacqua & Cruz, 2020, pp. 131-132)

What this illustrates is that settler colonialism/militarism, in a material sense, is reproduced through ideological modes of operation which form the basis of policy in both national and international dimensions. That there is such a thing as a purely *domestic* issue is, of course, a fabrication. As I have discussed in this thesis, Guåhan is of geopolitical strategic

importance to the United States for the projection of power across the Asia-Pacific. Military personnel from a number of countries allied with the United States regularly train in Guåhan and the greater Marianas archipelago. With telecommunication cables connecting the United States to Japan and Australia, it is part of the digital connective tissue of globalization. CHamoru sovereignty is, if anything, a global issue. Yet reification presents this order as a natural occurrence.

6.2.3 Dissimulation

> *Dissimulation - Relations of domination are "concealed, denied or obscured, or [by] being represented in a way which deflects attention from or glosses over existing relations or processes;" (Thompson, 1990, p. 62)*

As I illustrated in Chapter 3, military activity and development on Guåhan are often framed as overtly positive, with proponents claiming potential economic and security benefits while adverse impacts are downplayed or omitted. In terms of ideology, the duplicity of this strategy constitutes a mode of dissimulation, which reproduces settler colonial/militarist common sense through the concealment of relations of domination. Chapter 3 addresses dissimulation in relation to the Japan-U.S. Defense Meeting, in which media portrayed the countries' military activities as a benevolent cause against a common foe asserting itself in the region. What isn't talked about, however, is the impact of the projected increase in military activity, or even the potential impacts of a regional conflict to the people of Guåhan which faces the risk of "landing of Chinese special operations forces to ballistic missile attacks and cruise missiles from the air" (Mahshie, August 31, 2020). However, military discourses are not the only instances where dissimulation is observable. More frequently, it is observed in day-to-day beat reporting which reenforces the news perception that the government of Guam is inefficient, corrupt, and incapable of managing itself without the United States.

For instance, the public is told that the state of our healthcare and education systems are the result of incompetence, and not the result of unfunded mandates imposed on the island by the federal government, "requiring us to foot the bill and putting us in debt," an executive

official told the UN in 2017 (Blas, 2017). Unfunded mandates are a prime example of both

modes of dissimulation, in particular, as well as discourse's reproduction of relations of

domination in that they make the conditions of settler colonial inferiority a material reality, or

as Van Dijk (1995) states, the social facts confirm the ideology, and are simultaneously

legitimated by it (p. 29).

One such unfunded mandate that heavily impacts the government of Guam is the payment

of annual Earned Income Tax Credits, which is not compensated for by the federal

government. Meanwhile, journalists report on the inefficiency of tax refund issuances as if

they were solely insular matters.[35] Similarly, the island is undercompensated for medical

services administered through the Affordable Care Act and, as such, the public healthcare

system regularly does not have the resources needed to serve island residents who do not

have access to military medical facilities, or who cannot afford to receive treatment off-

island. This, of course, means that all of the attendant issues relating to underserved

communities exist on Guåhan and reinforce the settler colonial ideological perspective that it

must be inferior to, and dependent on, the United States.

Rather than providing clarity on these issues, news media on Guåhan obfuscate such

matters and, at times, even while larger news outlets report on CHamoru sovereignty issues

more equitably. Reflecting on the 2017 North Korean missile threats, Lizama observed what

he called a *disconnect* between local and national news coverage in Guåhan:

> Yeah, I can see how there's a disconnect between international media
> coverage and the way it's being covered locally. I think it was the AJ+ [Al
> Jazeera] video, right after all those North Korea threats. That one was really
> interesting because it covered a lot of perspectives that were otherwise ignored
> at the time. And the way it was covered in AJ+ was really going into the history
> and why we have these threats to begin with because of militarization, um, and
> then when it came to local media it was like, North Korea is just this crazy ass
> country. They're only doing this because their leader's nuts. But we don't
> realize it's because of the presence of the bases here, and because of the
> militarization going on. International media will really tell you, I wouldn't say a

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[35] See John O'Connor. (2020, November 17). More tax refunds awaiting payment compared to last year. *The Guam Daily Post.* https://www.postguam.com/news/local/more-tax-refunds-awaiting-payment-compared-to-last-year/article_b0c9ccdc-24bb-11eb-b46d-8f69800060eb.html

complete story but there's definitely more info [sic] and substance than what's being reported here. I felt like the local media was still pushing that narrative of like, we gotta [sic] stay with the United States cause they're going to protect us—they're going to provide for us from…. And then, like, there's always that, um, when people would say "what are you gonna [sic] do without the U.S., they're just gonna [sic] bomb us!" It's like, they're the reasons why we're getting these threats! (personal communication, 2020)

Lizama's statement reflects the propensity of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape to reassert itself and its operant ideologies even when confronted by alternative news narratives that are situated outside of Guåhan (and can perhaps address issues of militarization or political status more objectively). That is, in spite of more critical inquiries into settler colonialism/militarism by larger news outlets, the extant colonial mainstream mediascape is prone to repeating settler colonial/militarist tropes and engaging in modes of dissimulation which further conceal relations of power, such as through the insistence that the presence of the U.S. military deters aggression when in fact, as Lizama and many other activists have argued, it draws the aggression of Asian countries which view the United States as a threat. Instead, dissimulation fixates on the supposed political and economic advantages of being a U.S. military outpost and in so doing skirts over the multitude of disadvantages, including being made a target for nuclear warfare.

6.2.4 Legitimation

Legitimation - Relations of domination are represented as legitimate, "that is, just and worthy of support;" (Thompson, 1990, p. 61)

Whereas modes of dissimulation obscure relations of domination through deflection away from inherent injustices, legitimation operates by portraying relations of domination as legitimate and positive—for the greater good even. In Chapter 3 I examined modes of legitimation through news coverage of *Davis v. Guam*, in which news companies used the court ruling to diminish CHamoru claims to sovereignty while simultaneously reinforcing the perception of the *Davis* outcome as beneficial, just, and absolute. In terms of settler ideological power, coverage of the *Davis* case reified the power of settler legal frameworks, and the overarching plenary power of the federal government over U.S. territories.

The outcome of the *Davis* case was yet another deferment of justice for the CHamoru people. It was, as Aguon argued a "chilling conceptual inability in the American legal imagination to see the world in any light other than what the establishment has shone" (2014, p. 283) Yet, given the tendency of settler colonial common sense and (more broadly) dominant power structures to reproduce themselves, perhaps what *Davis v. Guam* demonstrates is not so much a "failure" or an "inability" of U.S. law to resolve its injustices against Indigenous peoples, but rather a demonstration of the ability of settler colonialism to successfully reassert itself with efficiency in its attempts to realize the elimination of the CHamoru people.

As with the other modes, legitimation also occurs in more banal ways which nevertheless reassert settler colonial/militarist logic. In an opinion letter, settler Thomas Krise (2020) decries his inability to create a Disney+ account during the pandemic, while tens of thousands of poor and working-class island residents lost their jobs and hundreds died due to COVID-19, as a gross injustice against the people of Guam. Krise was attempting to watch the play *Hamilton*, which centers one of the United States' Founding Fathers and slave owner, Alexander Hamilton. In pronouncing that "[t]he problem is: people from Puerto Rico and the other territories ARE Americans—they are NOT immigrants," Krise uses the article to co-opt the language of CHamoru decolonization activists by acknowledging that the island's current political configuration is unequal, and then calling for Guåhan and the other territories not to be given a new political status, but only to be given "equal citizenship and voting rights for all Americans, no matter where in the country they live." He makes a similar move for co-option in presenting the Black Lives Matter movement as one that "encourages us to think harder about how we treat each other," and not a movement that encourages us to think harder about how *White people* treat Black Americans and other racialized peoples.

Importantly, Krise doesn't say how this will be achieved, or even what will be done about the sticky subject of Indigenous sovereignty. In calling for *all* residents in the territories to be treated equally—as *Americans*—Krise perpetuates the elimination of Indigenous peoples in

Guåhan, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands by asserting that the solution to the problem of U.S. colonialism can be solved by aspiring toward Statehood, so as to be fully integrated into the Union. What's more, Krise presents this aspiration as something that is to be granted to Guåhan by the United States, not as something that will happen as the result of political resistance to the status quo. While Krise would perhaps not consort with someone like Davis (and however well-meaning Krise may be) both settlers share a perspective of the United States' territorial power over Guåhan as legitimate, and a view of the U.S. legal political system and absolute. The only difference is that, while Davis and others in his camp openly object to CHamoru self-determination, Krise and others like him stage a more silent opposition.

Thompson's concept of ideological modes of operation helped reveal the workings of settler colonial/militarist ideology in Guåhan. Returning to RQ1, the effect that the extant colonial mainstream mediascape has on public discourse is that, in presenting a hegemonic interpretation of reality which reproduces relations of domination, public discourse is ultimately constrained to a narrow set of worldviews and information which suspend the possibility of decolonization and demilitarization. Further, in the modes themselves should not be viewed as separate, but rather that they exist co-constitutively with one another. Moreover, in the context of Guåhan, the mode of unification is dominant, and from a political perspective is evident in the ambiguity presented by the island's status as an "unincorporated territory." Thus, Guåhan's political status and the material conditions of the CHamoru people's oppression is reified by the extant colonial mainstream mediascape

6.3 The Effect of CHamoru Digital Activism on Public Discourse

The second research question I sought to answer was dealt with the effects CHamoru activist organizations have on decolonization politics and discourse in the public sphere. Initially, I sought to answer this question using the formulation of a binary, with CHamoru digital activism posing a direct threat to establishment media. The challenge to CHamoru activist media is to change people's perceptions of what decolonization could mean for

Guåhan. As Chapters 3 and 4 illustrate, these misconceptions have been established over decades, and stoked by a settler colonial mediascape. Independent Guåhan core member Keith Susuico creates composite images and other types of artwork for the group's social media. From his home studio, Susuico attested to the influence of media's framing of CHamoru activists, namely the late Angel (Ånghet) Santos, a popular grassroots figure in Guåhan who led highly publicized direct action protests against the military in the 1990s:

> While Angel was still alive—Ånghet was still alive and protesting and jumping the fence and, because of how it was portrayed in the media and, I just thought, "there's this crazy, disrespectful, angry Chamorro. Like, why is he pissed off? We're free and…. You know, I was in the typical Chamorro-American mindset back then. Before—before I woke up. So—but I think the media had a lot to do with how I saw that. How I saw Ånghet, Nasion, and all these guys were doing what was right. Like, standing up for us. But I just—my vision—yeah, my understanding of it was skewed by the media. (personal communication, 2020)

As Susuico stated, it is the media that skewed his perception of CHamoru activism. He further describes a change in his perception and worldview as a *waking up* from a "typical Chamorro-American mindset." It is this experience of internal transformation that informs the purpose of Susuico's artwork and, more broadly, the objective of CHamoru digital media activism—what Susuico refers to as *planting seeds*:

> I really wanna [sic]… change the way people visually see independence. Like, one ad or one mural I wanted to do was just this upward angle from the ground. You see a little bit of grass and you see kids' feet running, playing. And just put something about how, you know, "independence is good," somehow. But people would look at that and if you saw just an image of kids running and playing with a sunset or whatever in the background, what [feelings] would that, like [elicit]? Free, safe, happy… those are the ones that come out right away. Like, people see that and even though they don't agree with it, that image is gonna [sic] be associated with independence in the back of their head somewhere. And hopefully plant a seed or something, you know? (personal communication, 2020)

As can be discerned from Susuico's statement, a primary objective of CHamoru digital media activism is the changing of community perceptions of self-determination. In so doing, it poses a challenge to the hegemony of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape. In Chapter 5, I gave an overview of a concept I referred to as the Anti/Colonial Media Binary. I floated this term around in the beginning stages of my thesis journey as I grappled with theoretical understandings of media (and media environments) as an ideological state

apparatus and the role of counterhegemonic discourses in the public sphere; and further, how to present an understanding of these concepts in a way which captures the nuances and particularities of American settler colonialism/militarism in the Pacific, noting how, as Chakravartty et al. (2018) has argued, *#CommunicationSoWhite*.

The result was a conceptualization of these two forces in the public sphere as diametrically opposed to, and yet constituted by, the other; and I sought to demonstrate this through a case study of the 2017 North Korea missile threats, and the differences in the discourse of both mainstream news media and, conversely, CHamoru digital activists. However, as my thoughts around the subject and the nature of mediated settler colonial power developed, I have come to realize that, although the concept of the anti/colonial media binary identifies CHamoru digital activist discourses as impactful to the public sphere, it is misleading and inaccurate in its depiction of the two parts (local mainstream news media and CHamoru counterhegemonic discourse) as equally empowered to enact material outcomes (colonization or decolonization).

In reality, despite the advantages of social media, CHamoru activists still face significant challenges in their aspirations toward widespread acceptance by Guåhan's public, and news companies still hold a decisive material advantage over CHamoru activist organizations, with funding to propagandize audiences, their embeddedness in elite circles, as Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrate. On the other hand, the conceptualizing of Guåhan's news media environment as a mediascape does not preclude the existence of other forces—other mediascapes—that co-exist or contend with the dominant ideological apparatus. Moreover, moving away from the conception of a binary, and toward mediascapes, was better suited to answering the question of what effect these organizations' mediated activism has on decolonization politics and discourse in the public sphere.

To borrow a term from the French social scientist Daniel Dayan (2013) digital media has offered CHamoru activist organizations a type of *new visibility* that empowers them to

challenge journalists' ability to bestow visibility onto deserving individuals and causes (p. 143). *New visibility* empowers activists to challenge dominant narratives using two tactics: premonstrations, "providing images [activists] hope will be picked up by major media," and remonstrations, "picking up images available on major media and showing them again with a new framing—that often takes the form of a challenge to the existing frame" (Dayan, 2013, p. 143). Both are evident in the Chapter 5, and illustrate how these groups are able to subvert the extant colonial mainstream mediascape and offer counter-discourse.

First, premonestrations are constituted by the staging of protests, press conferences, sit-ins, and other actions taken by CHamoru activist organizations in opposition to settler colonial/militarist policies and actions. The People for Peace Rally, for instance, was coordinated in order to capitalize on the presence of national and international news outlets on the island. The event was held in front of the statue of Chief Kepuha, in the island's capital, on which some activists placed make-shift red, white, and blue shackles as a discordant and uncomfortable statement against the media's positioning of Guåhan as a U.S. territory, forcing journalists to renegotiate how they would discuss the island's political status in their news coverage.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase in political interventions mediated by video conferencing software such as Zoom, as CHamoru activist groups turned to increasingly so toward digital platforms. For instance, groups like I Hagan Famalåo'an Guåhan held a number of digital conferences and livestreamed talks featuring various speakers based locally and internationally. Similarly, Prutehi Litekyan held a press conference on January 21, 2021 for a planned demonstration in protest to the U.S. military pushing forward a proposal to formally establish the surface danger zone for its Live Fire Training Range at Litekyan. In terms of premonstration, these events suggest an aspiration for visibility in mainstream media, as well as an ability to confer visibility onto topics through a decolonial reframing.

CHamoru activist groups are effective at reframing issues that otherwise perpetuate settler colonialism/militarism. The People for Peace Rally was also an instance where the discursive event of the missile threat was recast from a colonial rhetoric of prayerful, hopeful dependency on U.S. military presence and power to a rhetoric of demilitarization in Asia-Pacific and global denuclearization (particularly on the part of the United States). Organizers made it a clear point of the rally to argue that "real peace lies with demilitarization on Guam," and "if the U.S. hadn't colonized the island, North Korea wouldn't aim its missiles toward Guam" (Raymundo, August 14, 2017).

While CHamoru activist discourses regularly reframe settler colonial/militarist narratives, they also contextualize current issues within history to provide the community with deeper, more nuanced understandings of the island's current political state. The is important because, as I have pointed out in my discussion of Thompson's modes of operation, an effective tactic of ideology is the portrayal of relations of power as timeless and natural fixtures of the world around us. Maria Hernandez, a former reporter whose family has ancestral ties to Litekyan, attested to how an understanding of the island's history of occupation by the United States informed her shift toward Indigenous activism and her departure from journalism:

> I was never pro-buildup. I was always questioning. And I wanted to know what was going on and then Our Islands Are Sacred emerged and they were kind of like that other voice. And I've always just kind of been like, one for the underdog. So, I wanted to learn more. So, I think that's when I connected with Lola [Leon Guerrero]. So, around that time I think is when my mind started to open up more from just being at—my family's Ritidian issue and the injustice related to that and how that's an Indigenous land rights issue—turned into a bigger picture sort of thing, where I realized that there's a lot more to the story; to the discussion. So, it just kind of has been an evolution, and as a journalist, if I could go back in time I would wish that I could have the, kind of, more comprehensive perspective that I have now.

> It was a little bit more narrow back then; my views of everything. Just that I wasn't aware of the vast injustices. I was aware of, like, maybe a couple. But I wasn't fully informed about everything. So, that's why I think it's so important to have activist organizations in the community. (personal communication, 2020)

Hernandez indicated that, despite her family's experiences fighting the federal government for ownership of their land, as a journalist she lacked an in-depth understanding of the discourses of decolonization, militarization, and Indigenous sovereignty in relation to Guåhan. She credits this transformation to her exposure to the organization Our Islands Are Sacred, and her conversations with Lola Leon Guerrero, a core member of Independent Guåhan. Hernandez further indicates that, beyond her own experience with transformation, the role of CHamoru activists in the community is to help others achieve a similar *evolution*—an understanding of Guåhan's current issues that is contextualized with history and the bigger picture of U.S. imperialism.

CHamoru digital activism is also empowering, as Chellete Mina San Nicolas stated in an interview. San Nicolas runs the Instagram page *@decolonize_donne* independent of groups like Prutehi Litekyan, I Hagana Famalåo'an Guåhan, and Independent Guåhan. Yet the high school teacher's content often correlates with the discourses of these organizations. "I started it mostly to move my rants public. It's mostly things I think are a problem that people need to say," San Nicolas stated. "And then, on the flip side also, we need to be more empowering of each other. Like, we don't need the white man. Can I say that term? We don't need the white man to tell us, '[O]h, we're great. And you're great because we helped you be great" (personal communication, 2020).

The contents of *@decolonize_donne* vary, but the page grew in popularity after a series of posts that feature historical photos of Micronesian men and women and, in acts of reclamation, various text overlaying the images intended to *decolonize* self-perceptions of being Micronesian, such as this image of a Micronesian woman in a traditional white dress with text reading, "BEING MICRONESIAN IS BEAUTIFUL," or the image of a male dancer framed by green palm fronds that behind the text, "THERE IS NOTHING MICRO ABOUT U.S." Yet Mina's posts, as well as CHamoru digital activist discourses more broadly, are also empowering for their translocality.

Figure 5. An historical photo is overlayed by text which reads, "BEING A MICRONESIAN WOMAN IS BEAUTIFUL."

As I discussed in Chapter 4, settler colonialist/militarist discourses conceive of militarized

islands like Guåhan as isolated and cut off from the rest of the world. Mina's work is

empowering in that it helps form connections and solidarity with other Pacific and/or

colonized islands, as well as empowering viewers to envision Guåhan and the larger

Marianas as part of a larger Pacific region:

> I think it's effective in the sense that previously it was harder. Like, unless we're gonna [sic] all get on our Proas and go, it was harder—which we used to… and that's awesome. And, then, you know, now all these fake borders were created and all these fake countries… they separated our identities. I think it's [digital activism] effective in that it [translocal connection] wouldn't have happened otherwise… prior to something like a shareable Instagram graphic. Because it's these tiny little snaps, right? You see something you can engage [with]…. I've made a few very personal connections with other Micronesian and Polynesian, and a few Melanesian women who have the same views, the same struggles, the same hopes for our Pacific homes. (personal communication, 2020)

What can be gleaned from Mina's statement is that CHamoru activist media not only reframe

and recontextualize discourse but, in effect, they reorient viewers' perceptions of Guåhan

from a singular and isolated U.S. territory to an island that is one of a *sea of islands*. Looking

beyond the Pacific, CHamoru activist media advances a spatial reconfiguration of Guåhan

that is translocal in its shared experiences of imperialism, militarization, nuclearization, and

settler colonialism. This interconnectedness is fostered by digital media and empowers

CHamoru activist organizations to subvert American hegemony. While the dynamics

between CHamoru digital activism and the extant colonial mainstream mediascape cannot

be neatly packaged into a binary model, it is evident that these groups' activism, enabled by

the new visibility created by digital media, subverts settler colonial/militarist hegemony

through spatial and temporal reconfigurations of dominant discourses.

Figure 6. An image of a map of the Marianas Archipelago is overlayed by text reading, "OUR HOME IS NOT YOUR 'STRATEGIC LOCATION.'"

6.4 Towards a Decolonizing Media Framework

My final research question, *what model does CHamoru digital activism present for a*

decolonized journalism institution, supposes that there is not only contestation between two

mediascapes, but that, surprisingly, there is a synthesis between the competing

establishment/colonial and CHamoru decolonial media. It follows, in a sense, a dialectical materialist model where the outcome is a development of the media praxis away from a settler colonial/militarist logic and toward an Indigenous CHamoru logic. In other words, it can be *decolonized*.

I use the term "decolonized" intentionally and not, as Tuck and Yang (2012) have asserted, as a metaphor. Decolonization, particularly in the case of the CHamoru people, is a very material process, and not in anyway ambiguous. Decolonization is the return of land, and sovereignty over land, back to the CHamoru people. It is the closure of military bases, or at the very least, the ability to determine for ourselves whether we want those bases closed or not. A decolonized media praxis, in this sense, is one that is informed by the overarching objective of returning CHamoru land back to CHamoru people.

Through a series of conversations with both CHamoru activists and journalists at the onset of this project, I caught a glimpse of what this decolonized media praxis would look like. I uncovered themes that emerged from these conversations that point to the ways a CHamoru worldview can inform decolonial media praxis, and how this worldview contrasts the settler colonial/militarist logic that dictates the current form and function of discursive news practices. Naturally, there were significant differences in the ways the two groups viewed media praxis and the role of journalism in reproducing relations of domination. However, I found that the two perspectives were not entirely irreconcilable and that, in fact, a decolonized media praxis is tenable following a shift in the discursive practices behind mainstream journalism in Guåhan.

In this subsection, I first identify structural reasons preventing journalists on Guåhan from producing work that is more critical of the island's relations of domination. Secondly, I compare themes emerging from both journalists and CHamoru activists regarding the purpose of journalism and its situatedness in the settler colonial/militarist paradigm. I then identify a CHamoru activist media framework from my discussions with CHamoru journalists

and activist. Lastly, I propose a set of guidelines for a decolonized journalism framework and its implications for the CHamoru sovereignty and demilitarization.

6.4.1 The Reality of Newsmaking: Discursive Pressures Affecting Journalism

Guåhan is among the many news markets that have seen a decline in print news subscriptions as readers shift to social media for their news. This poses a significant challenge for the *Pacific Daily News* and *The Guam Daily Post*, which have been shifting their news coverage to meet the increasing demand for online-first, 24/7 news coverage. However, the weight of this pressure is shouldered by journalists who, in addition to researching and writing their news stories, are expected to shoot and produce their own video to accompany their articles. As one of the journalists in this project indicates, the system of news media is falling apart, and the reality for many journalists in Guåhan is that the current structure functions as a constraint to the production of news. The journalists in this project shared their own experiences with these pressures and how the changing landscape of news media affects their work.

6.4.2 The Insatiable Urge for Clicks

Participant J1, a CHamoru journalist who has been reporting for one of the island's print publications for nearly ten years said the upper-managerial drive for metrics has resulted in stories with less depth that are more "click-baity." Moreover, J1 indicated the stories they are asked to cover are not aligned with their own interests, but are assigned to them to attract readership:

> Media, now, is more—a lot more about numbers and getting people to click on things. It's kind of—it's definitely changed the way we put out stories, which is kind of unfortunate. And it gets upsetting sometimes because, you know, like they make you do stories that you don't really wanna [sic] do because they know it's gonna [sic] get readership. But it's like, I don't really wanna [sic] do that story. But I can't say no cause [sic] they're my boss so it's kind of like a catch 22, I guess. (personal communication, 2020)

Participant J2, who regularly covers the *crimes and courts* beat at a local news company, corroborated J1's assertion stating that the business' push for readership leads to the

perpetuation of existing inequities through the frequent publication of magistrate complaints, in which poor Micronesians are over-represented:

> I think as far as [magistrates] are concerned and that stuff, like, corned beef thefts or drunk drive thru fights…. Like, that gets clicks. I don't necessarily think that we need to be feeding people that information. But I understand the need for the numbers. I understand that it is a business. And so, those clicks are for the good of the business. I don't necessarily know how that is good for the community… but then, there are actual wrongdoings by people in power. And I think reporting on that stuff does serve the community. (personal communication, 2020)

Both J1 and J2 indicated a sense of powerlessness due to concerns about the security of their jobs. While J1 stated a reluctance to speak out against their working conditions because "they're my boss," J2 stated it was a sense of financial precarity which made them feel hesitant about raising their concerns saying, "But, at the same time, I have to live. Like, I have bills, right" (personal communication, 2020). The uneasiness J1 and J2 feel about their job security and financial state can be read as coercive factors contributing to their complicity in what they feel is problematic reporting. Further, the hierarchical structure is one which J1 feels does not facilitate an open dialogue about the direction of their news coverage.

6.4.3 Convergence and the Never-Ending Workday

In addition to the pressure of having to write for metrics, J1 further indicated this pressure also resulted in an expectation to produce more content and in multiple media formats:

> I think that when I first started at the PDN it was writing. I mean, that's what a newspaper is, you write. So, when they started to push more of doing videos and sometimes you have to even take your own photos, it's like, when you're doing a story and you're taking your own photos and your own video and having to write the interviews, it's a lot of work and you're still expected to do, like, three other stories on top of that. It's like, what do you want? It can definitely be draining…. People are just expecting the media to be their own photographers, be their own editor…. So, it's just unfortunate. (personal communication, 2020)

Participant J2 indicated that, in addition to their other tasks, they actually enjoyed working with video, but didn't feel they had enough time to produce it adequately: "If I had all the time in the world, I would make great videos, right? Or package my story for the digital audience

as best I could. But I don't have that at all. Like, I don't have the time" (personal communication, 2020).

6.4.4 The Shrinking Newsroom

According to Participant J3, convergence and the downsizing of newsrooms hasn't just affected individual reporting, but on a larger scale, has reduced the quality of the paper altogether:

> I think it's less so affected our workloads and more so, just affected the quality of the paper. Because at this point, now, there's [sic] beats that are just going unreported on at PDN because it hasn't necessarily been that, they've…. So, ok. You were education and infrastructure, right? No one's [sic] reporting on education at PDN. It isn't assigned to anyone which—that's a huge issue. Education affects a lot of people on-island and, I mean, as far as I understand, there's huge issues with [the] K-through-12 public school system here. Like, kids don't have textbooks, et cetera, et cetera. So, it's less so affected the workload and more so affected quality and what's going unreported, which I think is almost a bigger issue. (personal communication, 2020)

These journalists indicate what appears to be a crisis for investigative journalism on Guåhan. Lacking both resources and time, while forced to yield to a corporate yearning for metrics, journalists on Guåhan are hard-pressed to produce compelling, critical news pieces which benefit the community only to come up short.

The effects of these discursive pressures are such that, as J3 further indicates, "you're so inundated with work, and the system itself is falling apart, that you don't even have the capacity or ability to do that kind of in-depth reporting" (personal communication, 2020):

> I've had an idea for a military enterprise one of the military enterprises for like five months now. And I have just not had the capacity to pursue it and literally, I finally turned in a FOIA [Freedom of Information Act] request for that-for the piece so I could finally start getting the ball rolling on it. But, it's literally taken me almost half of a year to be able to finally get around to it and feel like I have the capacity to do it, you know? And that's like-that's just one-one piece. That is literally one potentially interesting enterprise piece on the military, you know? So, it's like even if you have the folks that are more critical of this power you still might not even have the ability to pursue the stories. (personal communication, 2020)

Thus, the void created by these discursive pressures is either left blank, as J3 observed, or filled with news discourse which cannot shake off its settler colonial/militarist undergirding and only reify the continued dispossession of the CHamoru people of their lands.

6.4.5 What is news for?

We now come to a point of antagonism: what journalism is for vs. what journalism does. This was addressed by each of the journalists to different degrees and identifies philosophical reasons for why journalists do what they do. The subject is an important one when examining the operation of ideology, which filters this discursive practice in subtle ways. As I have already discussed, notions of objectivity and the journalistic reflex to cover both sides, work in favor of settler colonial/militarist power, and yet it is a philosophical component of the profession. As Participant J1 states:

> I think news; it's to inform people. I think that's the biggest thing is to inform people [about] what's going on. I think that's the most important part of news. But, I think it also… I don't know, I think… it just also helps people, kind of, I guess, open their perspectives, their minds to different viewpoints cause [sic] when we do stories, we try to get both sides, as they say, or try to get, for example, the military buildup, we do try to get both pro- and anti-military buildup, so…. I think it just helps people see what other people feel. (personal communication, 2020)

J1 describes journalism as a seemingly apolitical process meant only to inform a community. In noting this, they also assert an equivalence between pro- and anti-military buildup narratives when the two are in no way comparable when considering structural power. Hernandez calls this equivalency into question in recalling her own experience with censorship:

> I would always try to be really objective and not; just with the knowledge over the years, I have this understanding of colonialism and the injustices that surround colonialism. And I think, for that reason I wasn't as well-read or knowledgable as I am today. But, at the time, I was aware of the injustice in kind of a narrow way and I would make sure that I wouldn't glorify anything that…. Like, let's say there was a story about a [navy] ship that came in to dock. I wouldn't talk about the glory of the ship. I would kind of talk about when the sailors leave, would they have any restrictions on what they could do on the island when they leave the ship. So, I'd include stuff like that. And, that one specific story, I remember that being cut out. And then, I remember asking the

question to the media person on the ship. And they were kind of confused as to why I would even ask that. (personal communication, 2020)

As Hernandez states, critical approaches to otherwise pro-military news articles (in this case, a press event held for an incoming navy ship) are often the subject of censorship by both military officials and editors. A reading of both J1's and Hernandez's responses indicate a correlation with structural analyses of news media and ideology such as the PM, but also a settler colonial theoretical approach to ideological critique. In this instance, we see the influence of the military on news discourse veiled by the perception of objectivity.

For Participant J2, the altruistic tropes associated with journalism aren't inherent to the profession. They are, instead, assigned to the profession by reporters themselves as a reason to continue working:

> Like, journalism has to be independent and we're the fourth branch of the government and we hold people accountable—which is all true. But, sometimes it's not. Sometimes people assign that purpose so they can keep doing what they're doing, like, to justify the means to an end. (personal communication, 2020)

At different points in our interview, Participant J2 was very candid about precarity and the economic pressures they face as a journalist. J2 expresses a skepticism about the morality of journalism, which has been complicit in the perpetuation of anti-blackness and racism against migrants from the Federated States of Micronesia. What J2 is asserting is that ideas about the purpose of journalism are ideological in that they, along with the structural powers of domination, render journalists into complicity with the project of meaning production.

I am certainly not calling into question whether journalism informs communities or not. Undoubtedly information is being produced, and this information can be, as J3 asserts in the following excerpt, impactful:

> To inform. And information is power. Like I think it's just the most basic-the most like basic, fundamental principle that drives me to do journalism is that people need to know what's going on in their communities in their larger world. And in knowing what's going on, that is inherently a powerful thing. Cause [sic] once you have that information then you know what you need to be asking for or pushing for; or you know what policies aren't working. Or you know what communities need help. Or you know-like that tumbles into a gazillion [sic]

things. So, I really just think it's that. Information is power and it's our job to be providing accurate, impactful information, you know? (personal communication, 2020)

However, there isn't as much introspection about what audiences are being informed about, and what motives inform this production of meaning. Within Western social and ideological contexts, sets of *news values* dictate news production. For instance, Harcup and O'Neill (2017) assert "news values are less a reflection of what type of information citizens want or need, and more as a reflection of organizational, sociological, and cultural norms combined with economic factors" (p. 1473).

Table 1. News values (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017, p. 1482)

Contemporary News Values	
Exclusivity	Stories generated by, or available first to, the news organisation as a result of interviews, letters, investigations, surveys, polls, and so on.
Bad news	Stories with particularly negative overtones such as death, injury, defeat and loss (of a job, for example).
Conflict	Stories concerning conflict such as controversies, arguments, splits, strikes, fights, insurrections and warfare.
Surprise	Stories that have an element of surprise, contrast and/or the unusual about them.
Audio-visuals	Stories that have arresting photographs, video, audio and/or which can be illustrated with infographics.
Shareability	Stories that are thought likely to generate sharing and comments via Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media.
Entertainment	Soft stories concerning sex, showbusiness, sport, lighter human interest, animals, or offering opportunities for humorous treatment, witty headlines or lists.
Drama	Stories concerning an unfolding drama such as escapes, accidents, searches, sieges, rescues, battles or court cases.
Follow-up	Stories about subjects already in the news.
The power elite	Stories concerning powerful individuals, organisations, institutions or corporations.
Relevance	Stories about groups or nations perceived to be influential with, or culturally or historically familiar to, the audience.
Magnitude	Stories perceived as sufficiently significant in the large numbers of people involved or in potential impact, or involving a degree of extreme behaviour or extreme occurrence.

Celebrity	Stories concerning people who are already famous.
Good news	Stories with particularly positive overtones such as recoveries, breakthroughs, cures, wins and celebrations.
News organization's agenda	Stories that set or fit the news organization's own agenda, whether ideological, commercial or as part of a specific campaign.

News values are "governed by practical considerations, such as the availability of resources and time, and subjective, often unconscious, influences, such as a mix the social, educational ideological and cultural influences on journalists" (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017, pp. 1482-1483). In effect, news values are governed by larger structural and ideological forces, such as settler colonialism and militarization, and are commercially driven and reproduce the priorities of the existing structures of inequality. Thus, journalism on Guåhan, as I have already discussed, is an institution and practice rooted in, and governed by, American settler colonialism/militarization and capitalism. Journalism on Guåhan exists primarily for the reproduction of settler colonial/militarist ideology, despite the self-mythology of journalism as an independent check on power.

6.5 Fanhigaiyan: Toward a CHamoru Decolonial Media Framework

Having analyzed the foregoing, we are now at a point in this conversation where we can explore an Indigenous media framework. This is increasingly critical, as "Indigenous journalists are actively using social media to engage with Indigenous culture while working to improve coverage and representation despite being underrepresented in most mainstream media" (Callison & Young, 2020, p. 160). While, as the previous sections indicate, journalists on Guåhan are subjected to a number of settler colonial/militarist pressures affecting how they report news and what they report on. Ultimately, the ability of news media to function *decolonially* is constrained by these pressures. Some activists, such as McManus, even suspect that a large swath of media, from educational institutions to blockbuster films and news are all, in essence, military propaganda (personal communication, 2020). One of the biggest challenges reporters face is the inundation of varied tasks they are forced to

complete as part of their workflow. In looking for a solution to this predicament, J3 offered

the following:

> I think that also means investing in the reporting that have [sic] to do with Guam's political status. So, that would mean making sure you have the time and investment for reporters to do, like we said, to do the work that is meaningful. So that, they're not just inundated with stuff that doesn't allow them to do this enterprise important work, you know? So that-but that involves like a restructuring of things entirely in newsrooms. But, I think, again, if our jobs are to be holding the powerful accountable and you know that political status is literally a huge issue on Guam. To then make sure that you're investing your reporting there. So, that's also an active decision that has to be made by newsrooms, which isn't happening right now, obviously. (personal communication, 2020)

For J3, the issue isn't simply whether reporters are critical or not. The degree of integrity in

journalistic work is rather a reflection of the extent to which a company invests in the well-

being of their journalists. Thus, J3 asserts that a critical component of the shift toward a

decolonized journalism institution on Guåhan is an investment in journalists reporting on

political status issues and, in fact, a complete restructuring of the newsroom.

Taken a step further, I observed that among some of the journalists in this project, there was

an overriding logic which influenced their work, one that is shaped by CHamoru worldviews.

Participant J1 stated, for instance, that an intergenerational connection to his ancestors, and

a responsibility to make his writing relevant and comprehensible to his grandparents largely

influences how they approach writing:

> If I do stories that talk about Guam issues, I try to think about how can I write this to, I don't know, I guess to explain it but, you know, I think about my grandma. I think about my grandpa. Like, how can I write this so they understand, cause [sic] sometimes some older people-like, for example, decolonization. I like to think about-sometimes older people tend to think, "Oh, why would you-why would we wanna [sic] do that?" And, I try to think, as a younger indigenous person, through my stories, "Hey, this is possible," I don't know. I'm not really sure how to explain it but, it's kind of like that. Like, I think of how can I explain this to like the older generation, that is also CHamoru because sometimes they might not have the same viewpoints, and I try to like show them…. I don't know, it just helps me kind of like think about my ancestors, or my elders. (personal communication, 2020)

In seeking to define an alternative model of journalism on Guåhan, I am asking how

CHamoru worldviews, which inform J1, can decolonize the creation and dissemination of

meaning. What would J1's reporting look like, if it were not constrained by a settler colonial/militarist power in the newsroom? What informs this radical restructuring identified as a necessity by J3?

For CHamoru media activists, such as Siobhan McManus, the Internet is a place for weaving, and enables stories, relationalities, and sovereignties to be woven in a way which transcends spatial and temporal boundaries:

> And, I think about how like… the internet has kind of like given us this extra space-this like free extra organizing space. And, this like tool to still be critiquing mainstream media and combatting it on like a budget [chuckling]. Like I really think about that. Like most-most… organizations, like even before they have like office space, I really think about it's like people meeting in houses or like in coffee shops or hanging out. But, all the while having these conversations and like planning these things online. And, yeah. Like that's where I was radicalized and that's where I still like participate in the conversation. And, that's where I hear about things like-like Independent Guåhan teach-ins and all of that. And, I feel like if that-if Pasifika Twitter and like Chamoru Twitter and Micronesian kids online talking about what's happening in their communities, if that didn't exist like… where else would you hear about it? (personal communication, 2020)

In my conversations with CHamoru media activists, I found a common set of principles through which they operate in the creation of counter-discourses. I call this framework Fanhigaiyan,[36] which loosely translates to a place or time for weaving coconut leaves. It can also mean an object which weaves, and thus Fanhigaiyan as a concept illustrates how CHamoru media activists not only create and spread information, but also build relationalities amongst each other and with their audiences in translocal solidarity.

To give a general overview, the Fanhigaiyan framework is constituted by four principles: Nina'lå'la' (media as resurgence), Machalapon (transgenerationality), Ge'halom (the centrality of historical context), Manhåle' (CHamoru media activism is grounded praxis). As Table 2 illustrates, these principles present an oppositional approach to Western journalism frameworks:

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[36] I owe this term to my mañe'lu (relatives) Dr. Michael Lujan Bevacqua and Jesse Chargualaf.

Table 2. Principles of the Fanhigaiyan Framework in Comparison to Settler Colonial/Militarist News Media

	The Fanhigaiyan Framework	Settler Colonial/Militarist News Media
Nina'lå'la'	Media should be empowering; securing of CHamoru sovereign futures	Media reproduces relations of domination; cuts off CHamoru sovereignty and claims to land
Machalapon	CHamoru concepts of reciprocity and relationality to past and future generations a guiding principle for media producers.	Journalism as a "fourth branch of government;" journalists primarily accountable to democracy.
Ge'halom	Present events understood as continuities of past struggles and are central to narratives, not peripheral.	Historical context typically used as peripheral to main story, if included at all, thus presenting a limited view of current events.
Man'håle'	CHamoru media activists are in/among the community, and their production of media content is made accountable to the community due to relationality.	The role of "journalist" is that of a wage laborer, and the sense of responsibility to the community is limited to the extent of their employment in the capitalist media.

As the Fanhigaiyan functions in opposition to settler news media, it also means that journalists who work for mainstream news media and choose to operate under this CHamoru framework could face potentially career terminating consequences. The Fanhigaiyan is thus a reminder that a radical shift in news discourse is not entirely dependent on an ideological shift among individual journalists, but a change to the overarching institutional and structural paradigms as well.

6.5.1 Nina'lå'la': Media as a Resurgent Praxis

One of the most critical differences between the extant colonial mainstream mediascape and CHamoru activist media, is the role of the latter in empowering CHamoru and non-White communities to pursue self-determination. Both activists and journalists in the project identified some news practices, such as the persistent and frequent publication of petty crimes stories where Pacific Islanders are overrepresented, as problematic, and not in the interest of the community. However, whereas J1 and J2 admitted to feelings of insecurity around their capacities to change this due to hierarchical constraints, CHamoru media activists use the flexibility of their platforms to uplift their audiences.

Lizama, the producer of *Fanachu!*, characterized CHamoru activist media as one that

"empowers others so that we can really believe in ourselves" (personal communication,

2020):

> I think that, for sure, we try to get people to really engage with history and see, like, how—see the reasons why things are the way, now, when compared to mainstream media it's really, you know, you just have to be grateful for this. You have to be—or that they're giving us all this stuff. And with IG's rhetoric it's, I think it's good because—yeah it makes people think critically about these issues, about the history. It also, you know, gets you kinda [sic] riled up. For me, I feel like, it inspires me to want to do more for, like, my people. It makes me want to empower others so that we can really believe in ourselves. Like, not continue this path of feeling inferior, and like we need to be, you know, always someone's welcome mat, pretty much. Especially with the whole, like, inafa'maolek tourism, right? No longer being someone's tuntågo [subordinate], right? (personal communication, 2020)

In being an empowering and resurgent force, one that counters discourses of indebtedness

which I discussed in Chapter 4, CHamoru activist media is an artifact of embodied

decoloniality. It is one which, as Susuico states, "allows people to envision a different

possibility, you know, one that's outside of the popular narrative" (personal communication,

2020).

Rather than inundating the public sphere with news discourses which project

colonized/racialized negative self-images onto viewers who are predominantly non-White,

CHamoru activist media illustrates to its audience paths toward decolonization by presenting

solutions to current issues:

> That's what I've been thinking of. If you were to eliminate that concern, especially with food. If you were to start developing an agricultural industry, or community gardens where people could just go pick whatever food they need and it's free and it's a collective effort to maintain that garden or whatever crop you're growing, not only are you eliminating that concern for food. But you're also building that sense of community and it's going back to our traditions of inafa'maolek and chenchule where—reciprocity. So, I feel, once you eliminate that concern, I think it could change journalism and, like, people really be saying 'we can't be independent or decolonize because where are you gonna [sic] get your food?' when your food is just down the road, and you have that connection to the land to so you're also starting to understand the value in protecting the land. So, I think the most important thing is, we have to be able to present alternatives to what is currently happening. (Lizama, personal communication, 2020)

Read in context with J3's statements, Lizama is indicating that the level of this radical restructuring is inherently societal. That is, on a broad level, the material conditions of the people of Guam must be radically changed in order to affect news media. He offers, as an example, the issue of food security and sovereignty as an outcome of collectivist practice grounded in CHamoru values. CHamoru activist media is CHamoru resurgence specifically because its practitioners, such as Lizama, are doing the work of building sovereignty and cultural revitalization; and in effect changing the material conditions of the CHamoru people in real-time alongside their media activism.

6.5.2 Machalapon:[37] Transgenerationality as Integral to the Discursive Process

CHamoru media activism is also distinct in that it is explicitly informed by a sense of responsibility to both honor past generations, and to leave behind a better world for future generations. This value exists in CHamoru culture as inafa'maolek which, in essence, means to make things good/right. It is not so much that we are affixed to the present looking backwards or forwards in time. Rather, it is an understanding that who we are and what we do, now, is interconnected to the lives of our ancestors and descendants. Inafa'maolek is typically understood in a human context, but it is also something occurs between humans and the land, ocean, and other non-human entities.

The media activism of Independent Guåhan exemplifies this transgenerational discourse. At every general assembly meeting, they honor a maga'taotao, an esteemed person. The maga'taotao is typically someone from a previous generation who did something to advance the issue of CHamoru self-determination and political status. At the same time, as Susuico stated, their iconography includes illustrations and photographs of children who are sometimes holding protest signs, or at other times are simply carefree. It is as if to say, that by embodying and enacting sovereignty, "we can go forward, into our past."

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[37] I want to thank my Nåna, Maria Quichocho Tenorio Lujan, for the use of this term.

As Lizama states, this transgenerational orientation isn't only present in CHamoru activist

texts but, much like Participant J1, informs the conceptualization of CHamoru media activist

praxis:

> Yeah, I mean, for me I feel the work I do is more—it's for the community. It's so that we're coming together as a nation. You know, it's not… I mean, it'll be for my benefit but I'm not doing it for me personally. I always have my family in mind, and future generations and those that have come before me. All the struggles they've gone through. Like, that is what always guides me to want to improve on our situation. It's definitely, like, I feel it's more equal between us as members and, um, we understand how we're all doing this for each other. It's not for personal gain, really. So, like that's what really guides me and the work we do, is that we're doing this for others, not just for ourselves. (personal communication, 2020)

As Lizama indicates, the sense of transgenerational reciprocity is what guides his work.

Lizama indicates that his sense of reciprocity similarly extends to others in the present. It is a

communal praxis. To think of this in terms of journalism, this sense of reciprocity and

transgenerationality determines what and how stories are covered, with the objectives being:

(1) coming together as a nation; and (2) to improve on our situation.

For San Nicolas, transgenerationality is takes the form of Instagram posts featuring historical

photos of Micronesian men and women, with text affirmations superimposed over the

original images in order to empower her audience by reminding them of their precolonial

past:

> The oppressor is not gonna [sic] give us any leeway. Sometimes we have to like tear shit down… for it to break free. So, that's kind of what-that's where I went with that. And so, I framed it as like-my posts are the-they've evolved into the affirmations and then-but also, they're short visuals-visual graphics that I want people to also remember. Cause [sic] a lot of my-the people that have-especially recently, that have been following me are like non-CHamoru Micronesians and I know, you know that's another thing that I think the colonizers taught us… was that in-you know, all our cultures fought like-the ocean unites us not divides. And then, it wasn't until colonization that like now we have like ugly things like colorism. You know, internalized racism which I think is like a big problem here on Guam. And you know, it's slowly starting to become more of a problem the longer the NMI is a territory. So, I do also wanna-I did also wanna address that but I wanted to do it in a way that's like remembering to be like more empowering and affirming of our identities as navigators. (personal communication, 2020)

In both examples we see an active and explicit regard for ancestors and descendants, which shape CHamoru media activism, as opposed to the extant colonial mainstream mediascape's hyperfixation on the present. Transgenerationality is a media agenda to establish CHamoru nationhood, and it is a reminder that another world is possible beyond the settler colonial/militarist present.

Figure 7. An historical photo of Micronesian navigators is overlayed by text reading, "THERE IS NOTHING MICRO ABOUT MASTERING THE MIGHTY PACIFIC."

6.5.3 Ge'halom: The Centrality of Historical Context

In terms of temporality, CHamoru activist discourse does not capitulate to the framing of current issues as the constant unfolding of aberrations, such as is found with *breaking news*. Rather, CHamoru activist discourse largely situates the present within the longer arc of the settler colonial and imperialist projects of the United States and their competing/contingent powers. They are also situated by the even longer arc of CHamoru sovereignty, and that although we are colonized in the present moment, this was not always so, and it will not always be. Within the extant colonial mainstream mediascape, however, historical and

political contexts are often omitted from the discussion of current issues, as McManus

observes:

> But, it almost feels like-it's like local news is important but it also feels like the only time our local news and mainstream media grapples with like these larger conversations is when there's an event happening. And it's not like we have an authoritative journal that's commenting on these events with some kind of historical and cultural criticism, you know? Or contextualizing them into this larger conversation. (personal communication, 2020)

By omitting historical context from news discourse, the larger conversation of decolonization

is not had, as McManus stated, unless it is prompted by an event, such as a protest or a

public hearing discussing controversial military actions. The subject of decolonization is thus

neatly packaged into manner that cuts off the possibility of a fuller understanding of the

implications of settler colonialism/militarization in the public sphere. CHamoru media

activism, by contrast, constantly reckons with the material reality of settler

colonialism/militarization, as McManus further states:

> For me, the urgency of indigenous media is like-I don't think that like it should revolve all around the military but for some-but for me it just feels like that's like the manifestation of empire that we have, and it's the largest global power. Like, you think of 700-billion-dollars-worth of American money and power, and how being the tip of an American spear defines so much of our material realities. That like any serious conversation about media, education, decolonization, and like indigenous sovereignty can't like-it can't get around that obstacle because it defines so much of our reality here. It's like, oh my gosh. And it's just annoying when you realize that like all major mainstream media corporations are directly owned by people who benefit from the buildup. (personal communication, 2020)

Looking at the issue of poverty and homelessness, she further raised concerns about how

this omission of context enables a framing of current issues as phenomena which are

distinct from the project of settler colonialism/militarization. As I have already discussed

regarding Stade, this reifies projections of American primacy and indebtedness:

> And it's really easy like on average day, if you were to pick up any newspaper, it's really easy to think that like nothing happens on Guam except for like petty crimes and poverty. But there's no-like to me it's like nobody seems to be wanting to like push the media to talk about where this poverty is coming from. Like, a small example is like I remember when GVB-like a quote from a person from GVB who remained anonymous in that article. But it was like-it made the front page of *PDN* and it was something about how like they're pissed about how-basically homeless people are ruining the perception of like Guam. And, I

> just remember being like, I can… I couldn't fathom how how cruel like the quote they chose to use was. And how like whoever was at *PDN* just like snapped a picture of a homeless person and thought that it was ethical to like put on the front page. And, I just remember being like, "Dude, our mainstream media here is a fucking joke." Like, I just remember being like-there's no-like what is the thought process when you guys get there? Is it like, "Let's just like… turn out articles on whatevers [sic] happening without any like thought of how this fits into like a larger community narrative." Cause-and I-I just remember being like, "Wow, okay so, sorry for being poor." This is just ad space and a place for companies to talk about what's happening to them. It doesn't really represent a large—it doesn't represent any of us. (personal communication, 2020)

The omission of historical context also contributes to news media's lack of understanding of, and disconnection from, the community. Adversely, it also contributes to, as McManus states, a sense that news media by and large does not represent the CHamoru and Micronesian communities. By contrast, CHamoru media activism seeks to ground itself in the community and with the land.

6.5.4 Manhåle': CHamoru Media Activism as Grounded Praxis

Among the attributes which distinguish CHamoru media activism from mainstream news media is the situatedness of the activists/journalists themselves as community members/laborers. The issue goes to the very core of the implications of an Indigenous worldview that is diametrically opposed to the dominant neoliberal sociopolitical framework where, as San Nicolas states, one observes the land as a relative, or ancestor; and the other views it, and everything else, as a resource to be exploited:

> It [pre-colonial CHamoru society] was all about the continuous knowledge of the; like, "Okay, this is not just for us. Our land is our ancestor, therefore…" or, you know, "it's for somebody else." Whereas, like Western values says [sic], "No, no, no. Land is something to have. It's not something that you live with, it's something you live on." (personal communication, 2020)

Acknowledging the land as an ancestor reorients the way information is shared in society, and decenters the individualist mode of journalism as an individual pursuit for money, toward a collectivist mode that encourages people to be among the land and the people.

To this point, McManus reaffirms the primacy of CHamoru storytelling, and CHamoru collectivist social norms and praxis which, in various ways, subvert capitalist frameworks:

Like I don't give a fuck. [chuckling] Look at the way we spend our money, like chenchule'. We've created socialist systems and collectivist systems that predate American, Western ideas of like, "Get your own." You know? "Get yours," and "Life is a ladder." And, like "You should be glad that the military is here because it's gonna affect your individual paycheck." Like, to me, I'm like, we've never thought in this way. Like we've never consumed stories in this way. Stories were all-the oral tradition of stories of the community, by the community. You know, we're not all like fucking individual like anti-heroes on our own quest to "Get ours." Like that's so not Micronesian. What are you talking about, of course my grandma can still tell me what to do. You know, like, of course I'm still beholden to like all of these like cultural protocols because like I'm not American. It's nice for you. You can totally do that but that like is not my reality. So, to me, to have a media that gears-that tells stories in such like-this hyper-fractured individualist way-like, it doesn't reflect how we actually feel things as a community. (personal communication, 2020)

In McManus' reflection, there is the assertion that media can and should reflect how the community feels, collectively. As I have already discussed, however, CHamoru activists do not currently feel represented in the extant colonial mainstream mediascape, in which the interests of elite classes are overrepresented.

The *Fanachu! Podcast* demonstrates how groundedness operates in the function of their podcast by actively seeking out and including CHamoru community members in the show. Lizama uses the example of Ned Pablo, an outspoken yet controversial figure in politics over the past six years, and the federal ban on the practice of cockfighting, which has cultural precedence in CHamoru society:

I mean, it's bringing up those stories and voices that otherwise wouldn't be heard. Because, local media doesn't want to put those stories out. Like, with Fanachu! We had like maybe two shows with Ned Pablo? I don't know any news outlet that would want to have a full segment with Ned Pablo [laughing]. So, these people, even though they could be pretty radical, they're still perspectives in the community that need to be heard. There's that, and even the issue with the cockfighting ban. That was a crazy episode because we never had that many people—and watch an episode. That, to me, showed a real concern in the community that still hasn't really been talked about in mainstream media. Like, they're talking about the cockfighting ban, but they're not bringing in these concerned community members that want to talk about these issues and why they feel it's messed up to them. (personal communication, 2020)

CHamoru media activism is thus an inclusive practice, where meaning is created by the community, as opposed to the journalist. It is a practice which necessitates and fosters relationality as a means of creating resurgence. It is also not explicitly a digital practice.

As Susuico illustrates, CHamoru media activism also brings people into community with/on

the land through a series of outreach events that are partially facilitated by social media:

> It was these other things where we're trying to promote culture and stewar-island, cultural steward-not only cultural stewardship but environmental stewardship by going to these hikes to cultural sites and cleaning up… there. You know, like… It was a way, I don't know, to me-I don't know if this is actually even the right way to say it but it's like-like a more positive activism. Like instead of going out and protesting and saying, "No, this and that," which is still good and still something we need to do, right? Taking people hiking to cultural sites is, hopefully, helping them reconnect with the land. And, like in that way-the land, the culture, the history-and in that way, they'll be more willing to stand up and fight for what is ours, you know? Protect what we have. (personal communication, 2020)

The extant colonial mainstream media, by contrast, does not rebuild CHamoru people's

connection to CHamoru lands. Rather, as a settler colonial/militarist apparatus, it's function

is to perpetuate the dispossession of the CHamoru people of their lands. Through

mainstream news media, persons can read about land dispossession, but without feeling

and sensing the land, are being withheld significant contextual understanding of what is at

stake with continued occupation and militarization of the island.

As Herman and Chomsky (2002) argue through the PM, hegemony permeates into the

process of recruitment for journalists, who are educated by institutions which perpetuate a

particular view of the world. These prospective journalists are then filtered through a

selective hiring process by editorial managers who have a specific set of criteria for the

types of persons they will allow into the newsroom.

In contrast, CHamoru media activism is an open and fluid process which allows individuals

with varying skillsets to participate or, as the Marxist axiom asserts, *each according to his*

ability. In a similar way, Susuico reflected on his participation as being "a natural fit"

(personal communication, 2020):

> Since my personal artwork is kind of-it's in my activism, man. Like I don't-my artwork is always-without even thinking about it-it's always gonna be either cultural and/or political. So, it's a way for me to-to express-articulate my thoughts, right? Like visually, anyway. I find it easier for me to speak visually, than I do like-to go and actually articulate my thoughts verbally. But, yeah. To do work for IG is kind of like fulfilling my purpose in what I think I should be

doing with what I am able to do. You know, whatever talents I have, right? It's just-it seems like a natural place cause [sic] that's what my work is about anyway. A lot of it is resistance. So, it's a natural fit to be in IG. (personal communication, 2020)

As Susuico stated, his activism with Independent Guåhan, allows him to contribute to the work of the organization through visual media. At the same time, he describes the work as fulfilling, rather than coerced. This is illustrative of the difference between a media practice that occurs under a capitalist managerial hierarchy and the threat of poverty, and a CHamoru activist practice that occurs collectively where relations are not facilitated by capital, but through the land.
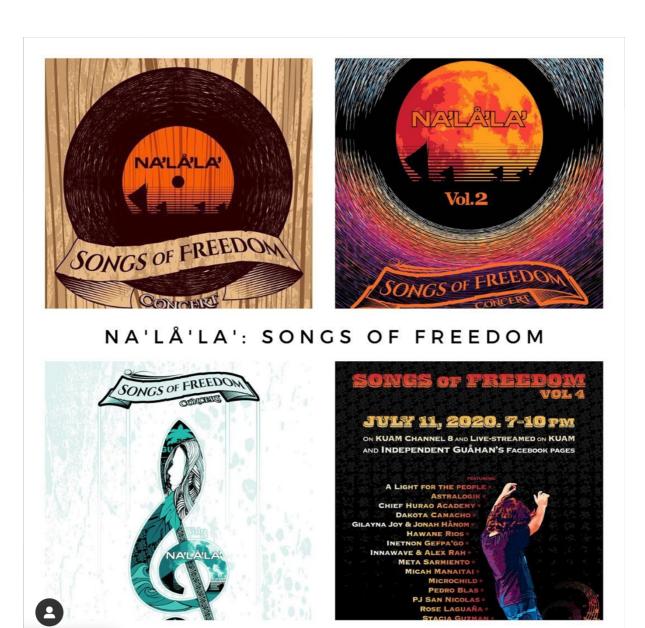
Figure 8. A photo of four Na'lå'la' Concert posters designed by Susuico.

As McManus asserts in the following excerpt, it is the continuity of intricate systems which facilitate relationalities occurring within a CHamoru media activist framework. In the larger island community, these intricate systems also enable a subversion of settler colonial/militarist institutions:

> I almost feel like we do best when we're like CHamorus reflecting on what it's like to be like a CHamoru in CHamoru land. You know? And, for me, Western institutions of like education and freedom and democracy and all of the ways it has been imported here… And, like they're helpful to an extent but I feel like they always-there are always limits in what they can do because eventually like they don't… they don't-they don't operate the way that like our families operate, do you know what I mean? It's-sorry, I'm having a hard time articulate this but

it actually like-I think about it all the time. Guam is like this microcosm that's still small enough and there's enough like collectivists living here where like people who have like, via like authority and power on Guam-it is wealthy people. It is rich people. It is mainstream media. But, then there's this third element that, to me, doesn't-didn't exist when I was in Seattle. And, it's like CHamoru and Micronesians have their own intricate systems and it's like family. And, like our social systems have just as much authority in like changing perception and influencing people as much as like the paper. You know what I'm saying? Like I think of like Palauan aunties who sit around and like circulate things like… themselves. [laughing] Like-like the media-like you know, they'll read something in the paper or they'll like spread chain letters through like Whatsapp group chats. And I think about this like it's really interesting to me how like… you could probably do a whole section on like Whatsapp. But, there's this other way of like communicating with our communities and like getting to the people who-who actually like need to hear the things that are happening in our community that like not even-not even like the mainstream media is ever going to like accomplish. You know? Cause [sic] like you can only like-in my mind, they can only like publish so many articles and-and broadcast so many like things about what's happening here… because like… media is ubiquitous on Guam but we also like spend so much time, I don't know, just like in each other's houses and at funerals and like at weddings. Like I feel like there's-there's this other like interconnected place on Guam that like almost exists outside all of those institutions. Outside of American, western institutions of like career, and media, and education. Like those things all like interrupt our lives but I also feel like, I don't know…. It would be really nice [laughing] if mainstream media like leveraged its power but I also don't feel like a movement is cont-like a successful movement is contingent on that happening first, do you know what I'm saying? Like I think it can be like a simultaneous thing like I think there are many ways to organize without-like it's a bigger obstacle but I feel like these are all things that have to happen simultaneously. Decolonizing like wealth, and education, and media all has to happen simultaneously… because like you can't really… A successful movement, to me, can't be contingent on like any one of those institutions cause [sic] at the end of the day they weren't built for us. You know what I'm saying? Like the way that media is run and the way that new cycles are run like I just-they're not built for even the pace of our society. I've always-maybe not always felt that but I truly feel that way now [chuckling]. Like yeah. It's weird to be like-to get older and be more and more aware of how like colonized your space is, because it feels equivalent to dysphoria. (personal communication, 2020)

The way this implicates CHamoru activist media is that these intricate systems reorient the nature of media content from being an apparatus which "disrupts our lives." McManus describes this disruption as "equivalent to dysphoria." In contrast, CHamoru groundedness empowers "CHamoru reflecting on what it's like to be like a CHamoru *in* CHamoru land," and it is this reflexivity which will inherently call into question existing relations of domination.

The Fanhigaiyan media framework provides a way of understanding how CHamoru people navigate the mediated world: how they contend with an oppressive media institution(s), and

how they enact agency over digital media in their ongoing resistance against settler colonialism/militarization. The framework itself is *unsettling* in that it calls into question the institution and practice of journalism, and locates it within the assemblage of American settler colonial/militarist power. Moreover, Fanhigaiyan points to an alternative method of *doing* media in a way which is commensurable with CHamoru sovereignty, demilitarization, and antiracist work. Fanhigaiyan is CHamoru resurgence, it is transgenerational continuity of CHamoru resistance, it is a way of understanding the present with the past and future, it is empowerment, and it is groundedness. The Fanhigaiyan model is a rejection of the imperialist gaze over Pacific Islands and Pacific Islanders as passive and conquerable, as San Nicolas states in closing, "There's, what? Like a couple hundred thousand CHamoru people in this whole vast globe, you know? I'm gonna [sic] scream and someone's gonna [sic] hear it" (personal communication, 2020).

Chapter 7: Limitations, Future Studies, and Conclusion

As Chakravartty et al. (2018) argue, the field of Communication Studies is still predominately white, and thus Indigenous knowledge is largely ignored and devalued. This thesis is a deliberate attempt to decenter and *unsettle* white claims to the production of knowledge, and place Indigenous knowledge and perspectives at the center of this analysis. This thesis has sought to connect ideological criticism with settler colonial theory and Indigenous perspectives on media and communication in the context of Guåhan. I have examined the ways in which journalism as an institution and practice is complicit with the project of American settler colonialism/militarization. By using the concept of ideological modes of operation, I have shown how, at different points during the COVID-19 pandemic, international, national, and local news companies in Guåhan reify the United States' occupation and militarization of Pacific Islands, and reaffirm the settler colonial dispossession of the CHamoru people from their lands. By introducing the concept of the extant colonial mainstream mediascape, I have also sought to show careful attention to the ways settler colonial/militarist discourses find expression through mediated discourses within a larger media infrastructure. I have further advanced the Fanhigaiyan framework to better understand how CHamoru worldviews offer an alternative model for media and meaning production that is commensurable with the project of CHamoru decolonization and demilitarization.

Table 3. Summary of thesis findings

Research Question	Chapter	Findings
RQ1: What influence does extant colonial mainstream media have on public discourse in Guåhan?	**Chapter 3:** "*News Media Complicity in the Reproduction of Settler Colonial Ideology in Guåhan*" **Chapter 4:** "*Saying the Quiet Parts Out Loud: Guåhan, the USS Theodore Roosevelt, and*	• Mainstream news outlets in Guåhan and the continental United States constitute an extant colonial mainstream mediascape. • Settler colonial/militarist ideological modes of operation construct meanings of/about Guåhan which constantly reinscribe its colonization onto the land and its people.

	the Role of Journalism in Reproducing Colonization in the Time of COVID-19"	• Modes of operation often overlap to work, as a whole, to conceal settler colonialism/militarization, such as through jointly creating a fictional collective identity (One Guam), and the naturalizing of relations of domination. • The material conditions of settler colonialism/militarization, are reproduced through ideological modes of operation, which form the basis of policy in local, national, and international dimensions.
RQ2: How does CHamoru digital media activism affect decolonization politics and discourse offline?	**Chapter 5:** *"CHamoru Digital Activism and the Anti/Colonial Media Binary in Guåhan"*	CHamoru digital media activism supplements grounded political struggle and offers a means to develop and maintain translocal solidarity for decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty activists in Guåhan to affect discursive and political change.
RQ3: What model does CHamoru digital media activism present for decolonial journalism?	**Chapter 6:** *In* Discussion *With*	CHamoru media activist frameworks, such as Fanhigaiyan, offer an alternative method of *doing* media in a way which is commensurable with CHamoru sovereignty, demilitarization, and antiracist work.

News media continues to play a critical role in the production of meaning in Guåhan and in discourses about Guåhan. The case studies in this thesis illustrate the various ways the dispossession of CHamoru land occurs through the dissimulation of the negative implications of U.S. militarization, the legitimation and reification of U.S. geopolitical interests, and the fragmentation of voices of CHamoru resistance. These case studies offer valuable insights into the function and characteristics of settler colonial/militarist ideology, the way media discourses reproduce settler meanings, and the ways this structure as it exists in Guåhan is enmeshed in global relations of domination. In a similar way, the consideration of CHamoru counter-discourses and worldviews highlights how Indigenous resistance in the Mariana Islands maintains translocal solidarities with communities that are comparably affected by American settler militarism, settler colonialism, or both.

There are five specific limitations of this thesis. First, the timeframe of this thesis was relatively condensed, having occurred between 2019 and 2021. This meant that the data collection period was brief and may have led to a narrow range of participants. On the other

hand, these participants are key figures in journalism and activism in Guåhan today and are, to an extent, figures of authority on these subject matters. Second, this period was punctuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly altered the social, political, and cultural contexts of Guåhan and my participants. As this thesis is formatted under Thesis Format Two, this led to a third implication: calls for submission to academic journals became explicitly focused on the pandemic, and thus the manuscripts in Chapters 3 and 4 were drafted to better suit this developing research interest. A fourth limitation of this thesis is my limited engagement with Indigenous feminist (IF) theory, despite the inclusion of a number of CHamoru women participants. This resulted in limited consideration of the ways in which settler-colonial states are constituted by "the dispossession of Indigenous women and the re-ordering of Indigenous relationships/kinships to get access to lands" (Anderson, 2021, p. 40). The fifth limitation of this thesis is the predominance of text over other media forms in the discursive analyses. A more refined iteration of this thesis would interrogate the prevalence of settler colonial ideologies in audiovisual media.

To improve upon this thesis, future versions of this research project would take place over a longer timeframe in order to collect a wider set of responses from participants, and to analyze a more varied selection of textual and audiovisual media. A future study might also include a survey of local readership in Guåhan. I would also more deliberately consider IF into the theoretical approach to inquiries into settler colonial ideology in mainstream news media. What is clear from this thesis, however, is the need for future research to seriously consider Indigenous research, and Indigenous researchers, in order to *unsettle* structures of violence against Indigenous peoples. Along these lines, researchers must examine the ways Indigenous media frameworks, such as Fanhigaiyan, can mount a more significant challenge to media institutions which uphold settler colonial/militarist and imperialist relations of domination, and can further aid in liberation from white supremacist, heteropatriarchal relations of domination. This work must be done by Indigenous researchers, among Indigenous peoples, on Indigenous lands.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

10 September 2019

Project Title

An(i)ti: An examination of decolonization discourse, politics and remediation in Guåhan

An Invitation

Håfa Adai yan Tēna koe! You have been invited as a potential participant in an interview portion of my research project exploring media bias, indigenous issues, and decolonization in Guåhan. Specifically, you are being invited to share your perceptions of various mainstream media institutions on Guåhan, which could be your employer. You are also invited to share your perceptions and understanding of CHamoru digital activism and social media. I, Manuel Lujan Cruz, am a PhD Candidate at Auckland University of Technology with an indigenous CHamoru media background. The outcomes of this research project will contribute to the ethnographic dimension of my doctoral thesis, a chief requirement for completion of the Doctor of Philosophy programme. I do not foresee any conflict of interest arising from your participation in this research project, and whether you choose to participate or not will neither advantage or disadvantage you in the future. However, should you feel at risk of potential future disadvantages, your identity will be kept confidential and will not be included in the final research outcome.

What is the purpose of this research?

I am conducting a series of interviews with indigenous community members and activists, as well as mainstream news media participants regarding watershed moments in recent decolonization politics on Guåhan (2017-2020). I will be assessing perceptions of discourses of indigeneity, militarization, US colonialism, decolonization, and the island's political status quo. Data collected in this research will supplement textual analyses performed on mainstream news texts and politics; and digital texts published between 2017-2020.

The outcome of this research project is the collection of qualitative data which reveal indigenous perceptions of mainstream media on Guåhan and mainstream media participants' creative processes in the publication of news contents that support US colonialism on the island. This research follows the assertion by critical discourse analysts such as Machin and Mayr (2012) that supplementing critical discourse analysis (CDA) with ethnographic components is an important contribution to the field of CDA in that it adds further complexity to an otherwise textual analysis (p. 217). This research also supports the digital ethnographic component of the thesis, which will include observations of and interviews with indigenous rights activists about their digital media engagement in the pursuit of CHamoru sovereignty "to get below the surface of everyday life and explore what people actually do and feel in situ" (Pink et al., 2016, pp. 30, 46).

The outcome of this research project will contribute to the ethnographic element of my doctoral thesis and potentially future publications.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

A Consent Form is attached to this Information Sheet to document your voluntary participation in this research project.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

Your involvement in this research project primarily involves a face-to-face interview intended to gauge your perspectives on, but not exclusively limited to, mainstream media's legitimacy in Guåhan, structural racism, decolonization, and indigenous rights. Your feedback will only be used for the stated thesis and potential future publications relevant to the topic of decolonization in Guåhan. This interview will be recorded on audio and later transcribed.

What are the benefits?

This research is intended to be mutually beneficial to both myself and participants. I hope to work with you through the research process to uncover your insights on the issues discussed. In keeping with both CHamoru and Māori conceptions of reciprocity, the information from this research and the thesis will be shared openly with indigenous communities through educational seminars and capacity building workshops.

This research will personally and more directly benefit me through the award of a PhD. However, the research outcomes will also benefit participants and the broader CHamoru community in the form of openly available data and the potential for capacity building workshops and seminars.

What are the risks?

The primary researcher does not anticipate an extraordinary level of emotional discomfort to participants in relation to the research process. Participants in this research project who are currently employed by a Guåhan-based media company may feel uncomfortable about discussing issues concerning their employer. However, in addition to opting to keep one's identity confidential, participants will also be empowered to voluntarily end their participation at any point in the process.

How will my privacy be protected?

If you feel that your participation in this research project may pose a risk to your current employment or social stability, you may opt to have your identity withheld from the final research outcome. Under confidentiality, your name will not be used, and your feedback will be contextualized under a generalized descriptor ("a reporter with…"; "a member of…"; etc.).

If this is not the case, your name will be included in the final research outcome. All participants will have the opportunity to review and approve their transcribed interview before submission.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

Your participation will be no longer than two hours in one session.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You have up to one month from receipt of this Information Sheet to consider this invitation.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Professor David Robie, PhD, *david.robie@aut.ac.nz* , +64 9 921 9999 ext 7834.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , +64 9 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Manuel Lujan Cruz, *sfn0812@autuni.ac.nz* , +64 9 128 2781

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Professor David Robie, PhD, *david.robie@aut.ac.nz* , +64 9 921 9999 ext 9250

Appendix 2: Consent Form

Consent Form

Project title: **An(i)ti: An examination of decolonization discourse, politics and remediation in Guåhan**

Project Supervisor: **David Robie**

Researcher: **Manuel Lujan Cruz**

○ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 19 August 2019.

○ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

○ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

○ Yes / ○ No   I consent to having my identity included in the final research outcome(s).

○ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

○ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

○ I agree to take part in this research.

○ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes○   No○

Participant's signature: ……

Participant's name: ……

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

………..

………..

………..

………..

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 12 September 2019 AUTEC Reference number 19/311.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix 3: Observation Participant Information Sheet

Observation Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

10 September 2019

Project Title

An(i)ti: An examination of decolonization discourse, politics and remediation in Guåhan

An Invitation

Håfa Adai yan Tēna koe! You have been invited as a potential participant in the observation portion of my research project exploring media bias, indigenous issues, and decolonization in Guåhan. Specifically, you are being invited to share your perceptions of various mainstream media institutions on Guåhan, which could be your employer. You are also invited to share your perceptions and understanding of CHamoru digital activism and social media. I, Manuel Lujan Cruz, am a PhD Candidate at Auckland University of Technology with an Indigenous CHamoru media background. The outcomes of this research project will contribute to the ethnographic dimension of my doctoral thesis, a chief requirement for completion of the Doctor of Philosophy programme. I do not foresee any conflict of interest arising from your participation in this research project, and whether you choose to participate or not will neither advantage or disadvantage you in the future. However, should you feel at risk of potential future disadvantages, your identity will be kept confidential and will not be included in the final research outcome.

What is the purpose of this research?

I am conducting observations and post-observation interviews with indigenous digital media activists during the production of digital content relevant to decolonization politics. Data collected in this research will supplement textual analyses performed on mainstream news media texts and politics; and digital texts published between 2017-2020.

The outcome of this research project is the collection of qualitative data which reveal indigenous perceptions of mainstream media on Guåhan and mainstream media participants' creative processes in the publication of news contents that support US colonialism on the island. This research follows the assertion by critical discourse analysts such as Machin and Mayr (2012) that supplementing critical discourse analysis (CDA) with ethnographic components is an important contribution to the field of CDA in that it adds further complexity to an otherwise textual analysis (p. 217). This research also supports the digital ethnographic component of the thesis, which will include observations of and interviews with indigenous rights activists about their digital media engagement in the pursuit of CHamoru sovereignty "to get below the surface of everyday life and explore what people actually do and feel in situ" (Pink et al., 2016, pp. 30, 46).

The outcome of this research project will contribute to the ethnographic element of my doctoral thesis and potentially future publications.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

A Consent Form is attached to this Information Sheet to document your voluntary participation in this research project.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

Your involvement in this research project primarily involves a participant observation during the course of your production of digital content, and a post-observation interview to reflect on the relevant activity. This interview will be recorded on audio and later transcribed. My goal is to examine your digital media usage patterns, authorial intent, and the extent to which these are influenced by mainstream media discourses regarding decolonization politics. This will also be an opportunity for us to collectively reflect on decolonization and other social issues in

Guåhan. Your feedback will only be used for the stated thesis and potential future publications relevant to the topic of decolonization in Guåhan.

What are the benefits?

This research is intended to be mutually beneficial to both myself and participants. I hope to work with you through the research process to uncover your insights on the issues discussed. In keeping with CHamoru conceptions of reciprocity, the information from this research and the thesis will be shared openly with indigenous communities through educational seminars and capacity building workshops.

This research will personally and more directly benefit me through the award of a PhD. However, the research outcomes will also benefit participants and the broader CHamoru community in the form of openly available data and the potential for capacity building workshops and seminars.

How will my privacy be protected?

If you feel that your participation in this research project may pose a risk to your current employment or social stability, you may opt to have your identity withheld from the final research outcome. Under confidentiality, your name will not be used, and your feedback will be contextualized under a generalized descriptor ("a reporter with..."; "a member of..."; etc.).

If this is not the case, your name will be included in the final research outcome. All participants will have the opportunity to review and approve their transcribed interview before submission.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

Your participation will be no longer than two hours in one session.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You have up to one month from receipt of this Information Sheet to consider this invitation.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Professor David Robie, PhD, *david.robie@aut.ac.nz* , +64 9 921 9999 ext 7834.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , +64 9 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Manuel Lujan Cruz, *sfn0812@autuni.ac.nz* , +64 9 128 2781

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Professor David Robie, PhD, *david.robie@aut.ac.nz* , +64 9 921 9999 ext 9250

Appendix 4: Consent Form for Observation

Consent Form for Observation

Project title: **An(i)ti: An examination of decolonization discourse, politics and remediation in Guåhan**

Project Supervisor: ***David Robie***

Researcher: **Manuel Lujan Cruz**

○   I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 10 September 2019.

○   I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

○   I understand that I will undergo an ethnographic observation during the production of digital content relevant to this research topic and that notes will be taken throughout this time. I also understand that this session will be audio-taped and transcribed.

○   I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

○ Yes / ○ No   I consent to having my identity included in the final research outcome(s).

○   I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

○   I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

○   I agree to take part in this research.

○   I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes○   No○

Participant's signature: ……………………………………………………………………………………………

Participant's name: ……………………………………………………………………………………………

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 12 September 2019 AUTEC Reference number 19/311.