

SISTERS IN SPIRIT



GRANDMOTHER MOON

You know all women from birth to death

We seek your knowledge

We seek your strength

Some are STARS up there with you

Some are STARS on Mother Earth

Grandmother, lighten our path in the dark

Creator, keep our sisters safe from harm

Maa duu? Mussi cho

-Kukdookaa

ABOUT

Funded by Status of Women Canada (SWC), Sisters In Spirit (SIS) was a research, education and policy initiative driven and led by Indigenous women. The primary goal was to conduct research and raise awareness of the alarming high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada. The first phase of the SIS initiative, which began in 2005, conducted ongoing research that gathered statistical information on violence against Indigenous women. The research team had developed a sophisticated database that included more than 200 variables. SIS research proved that initially there were more than 582 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in this country. They continue to update their database as well as regularly track new cases. With this information, SIS investigated the root causes of violence against Indigenous mothers, daughters, sisters, aunties and grandmothers.

The SIS team worked closely with families to ensure that their experiences as well as recommendations were well documented and, above all else, focused on restoring the memory of their loved one. The scope and breath of this work has been published along with heartfelt life stories of the women in the Native Women's Association of Canada's (NWAC) "Voices of Our Sisters in Spirit: A Report to Families and Communities" 2nd edition (March 2009). SIS shared NWAC's objective to educate and ensure effective access to justice for families of missing Indigenous women through awareness of police training and resources to deal with reports of all missing Indigenous women without discrimination.

RESOURCES

- [Faceless Dolls Project Each Statistic Tells A Story](#)
- [2013 Paper Doll Template Blue Dress \(girl\)](#)
- [2013 Paper Doll Template Blue Dress \(woman\)](#)
- [2013 Paper Doll Template Green Dress \(woman\)](#)
- [2013 Paper Doll Template Pink Dress \(girl\)](#)
- [2013 Paper Doll Template Purple Dress \(woman\)](#)
- [2013 Paper Doll Template Yellow Dress \(woman\)](#)
- [2009 Voices of Our SIS A Report to Families and Communities](#)
- <http://www.cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/>
- <http://www.thereddressproject.org/>

MAKE THIS OCTOBER 4th A MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

October 4th is a day where NWAC honour the lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). The violence experienced by Indigenous women and girls in Canada is a national tragedy. We must take the time to give thanks to the families who are our reason for demanding continued action.

Family members, Indigenous community members, and concerned citizens gather for a vigil every October 4th to honour the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Vigils take place in many communities across Canada as well as internationally. These gatherings serve to raise awareness and to provide support to families who have lost a loved one.

A vigil can take many forms, from a moment of silence to a rally, to a community feast. All that is important is that you take some time on or around October 4th to mark the day.

NWAC firmly believe that the October 4th Sisters In Spirit Vigils are a movement for social change. The number of SIS Vigils has grown significantly since 2006.

THE REDRESS PROJECT

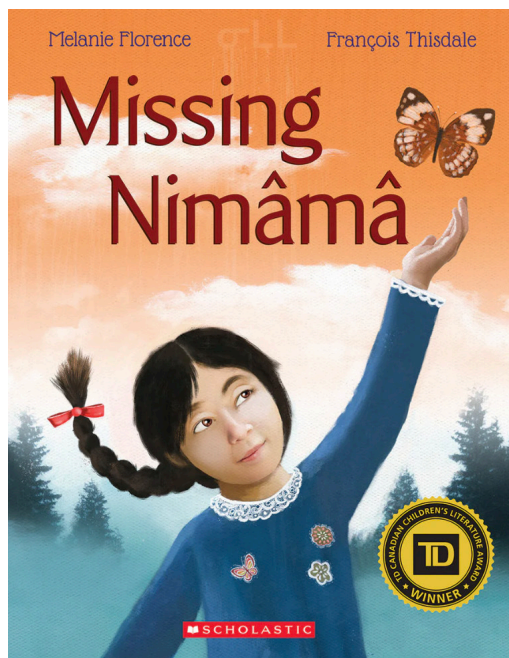
The REDress Project, focuses around the issue of missing or murdered Indigenous women across Canada. It was an installation art project based on an aesthetic response to this critical national issue. The project collected 600 red dresses by community donation that will be installed in public spaces throughout Winnipeg and across Canada as a visual reminder of the staggering number of women who are no longer with us. Through the installation artist Jaime Black hoped to draw attention to the gendered and racialized nature of violent crimes against Indigenous women and to evoke a presence through the marking of absence.



By Jaime Black | redressproject.org

LITERATURE

Many of the books listed can be found at goodminds.com



Missing Nimama

Author: Melanie Florence

Grade Level: 4 - 8

Nation: Cree

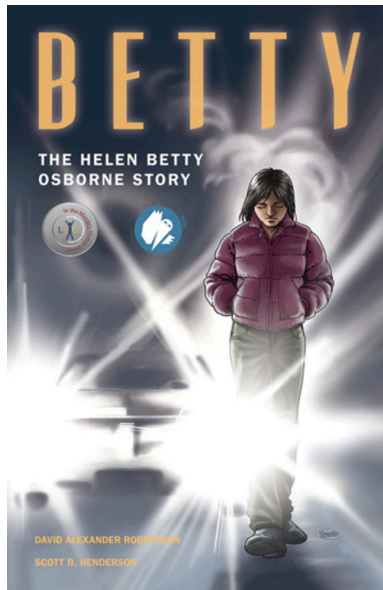
Number of Pages: 32

Copyright Year: 2015

Missing Nimâmâ, written by Melanie Florence and illustrated by François Thisdale, won the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award

The 2016 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award was given to author Melanie Florence and illustrator François Thisdale, who will share the \$30,000 prize, for their picture book *Missing Nimâmâ*. *Missing Nimâmâ*, written by Melanie Florence and illustrated by François Thisdale, won the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award. *Missing Nimama* is the first picture book written by Cree/Scottish author Melanie Florence. In this moving 32-page picture book from publisher Clockwise Press, the story offers junior and intermediate level readers an introduction to understanding the loss and grief of a child's mother. Kateri is a young girl who lives with her grandmother because her mother is lost as Nohkum (grandmother in Cree).

The picture book opens with the loving voice of a mother as she watches her daughter sleep and dream. As the brief free verse in italics ends, the tone of the voice changes as it says, leaning against a mother, her nimama (mother) that she will lose all over again when she wakes. The reader now knows the mother is no longer present in her daughter's life. On the following pages the voices switch from young child asking her Nohkum questions about her lost mother. The other voice on the page is the mother who remains a spiritual-like presence throughout the story. It is Nohkum who braids the young child's hair, and it is Nohkum who takes her granddaughter to school. In fact Nohkum is present for all Kateri's life events including a first dance, first date, a wedding, and new life. The dream-like illustrations capture loving images of Kateri's life with her grandmother along with the ethereal moments when her mother's presence is felt. Told with gentle free verse this picture book reaches a remarkable achievement by presenting an age-appropriate introduction to the missing and murdered Indigenous women. The book can also serve to tell a story about the loss of a parent. High recommended. At the back of the book there are two pages of factual details about the issue of missing Indigenous women and what the country and individuals can contribute.



Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story

By David Alexander Robertson and Scott B. Henderson

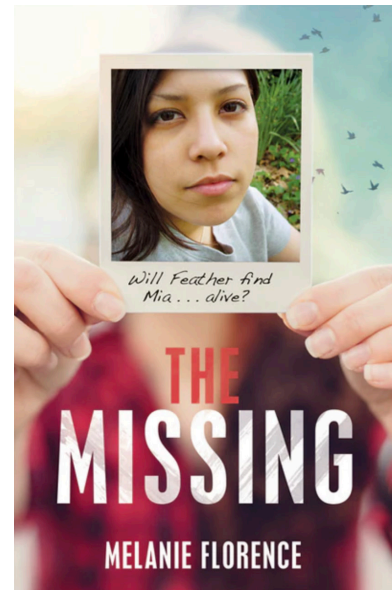
Is Portage and Main's revised edition of The Life of Helen Betty Osborne: A Graphic Novel.



Witness, I Am

By Gregory Scofield Henderson

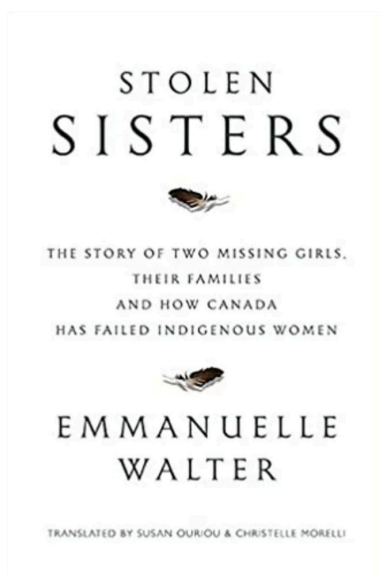
From one of Canada's most recognized poets, Witness, I Am delves into the critical issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women through the retelling of an atayohkewin, a Cree Sacred Story; build



The Missing

By Melanie Florence

Uses as its background the ongoing circumstance of unsolved cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.



Stolen Sisters: The Story of Two Missing Girls, Their Families and How Canada has Failed Indigenous Women

By Emmanuelle Walter

Is the English language translation of Soeurs Volees: Enquete sur un feminicide au Canada.

Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada

By Meme Lavell-Harvard and Jennifer Brant

Is a collection of 21 essays addressing the hidden crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

