

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

Funded by Status of Women Canada (SWC), Sisters In Spirit was a research, education and policy initiative driven and led by Aboriginal women. The primary goal was to conduct research and raise awareness of the alarming high rates of violence against Aboriginal 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 Aboriginal women. The research team had developed a sophisticated database that included more than 200 variables. SIS research proved that there are more than 582 missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in this country. We continue to update our database as well as track new cases every week. With this information, SIS investigated the root causes of violence against our mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts 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 NWAC's "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 Aboriginal women through awareness of police training and resources to deal with reports of all missing Aboriginal women without discrimination.

RESOURCES

Faceless Dolls Project Each Statistic Tells A Story

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Faceless_Dolls_Project_Each_Statistic_Tells_A_Story.pdf

2013 Paper Doll Template Blue Dress (girl)

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2013_Paper_Doll_Template_Blue_Dress_girl.pdf

2013 Paper Doll Template Blue Dress (woman)

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2013_Paper_Doll_Template_Blue_Dress_woman.pdf

2013 Paper Doll Template Green Dress (woman)

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2013_Paper_Doll_Template_Green_Dress_woman.pdf

2013 Paper Doll Template Pink Dress (girl)

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2013_Paper_Doll_Template_Pink_Dress_girl.pdf

2013 Paper Doll Template Purple Dress (woman)

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2013_Paper_Doll_Template_Purple_Dress_woman.pdf

2013 Paper Doll Template Yellow Dress (woman)

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2013_Paper_Doll_Template_Yellow_Dress_woman.pdf

2009 Voices of Our SIS A Report to Families and Communities

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/NWAC_Voices-of-Our-Sisters-In-Spirit_2nd-Edition_March-2009.pdf

<http://www.cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/>

<http://www.theredressproject.org/>

UNDERSTANDING MMIWG

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) has worked for more than four decades to document the systemic violence impacting Indigenous women, girls, their families, and communities. From 2005 to 2010, NWAC's Sisters In Spirit (SIS) Initiative confirmed 582 cases of missing and/or murdered Indigenous women and girls over a span of twenty years and worked to raise awareness of this human rights issue. After funding for the five year initiative ended, NWAC was forced to find alternative means of continuing this important documentation. From 2010 to 2014, NWAC continued to raise awareness and engage with communities through the culture-based and the creation of a comprehensive Community Resource Guide with the projects Evidence to Action I (2010-2011) and Evidence to Action II (2011-2014). Throughout our work, NWAC believed the violence against Indigenous women to be much more pervasive than publicly available data would indicate. This suspicion was confirmed in 2013, when the RCMP released a report revealing 1,181 cases of missing and/or murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Fact Sheet: Violence Against Aboriginal Women

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Violence_Against_Aboriginal_Women.pdf

Fact Sheet: Root Causes of Violence Against Aboriginal Women

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Violence_Against_Aboriginal_Women.pdf

Fact Sheet: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls

https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Missing_and_Murdered_Aboriginal_Women_and_Girls.pdf

NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MMIWG

In December 2015 the Government of Canada launched the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). As a non-partisan third part observer, NWAC has released report cards evaluating the Inquiry's progress and activities. NWAC has likewise been participating in the Inquiry's National Indigenous Organization (NIO) Advisory Council.

Visit <https://www.nwac.ca/> for more information.

MAKE THIS OCTOBER 4th A MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

October 4th is a day where we 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.

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.

We firmly believe that the October 4th Sisters In Spirit Vigils are a movement for social change. The number of SIS Vigils has grown from 11 in 2006 to an impressive 216 vigils in 2014.

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.

THE REDress PROJECT

The REDress Project, focuses around the issue of missing or murdered Aboriginal women across Canada. It is an installation art project based on an aesthetic response to this critical national issue. The project seeks to collect 600 red dresses by community donation that will later 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

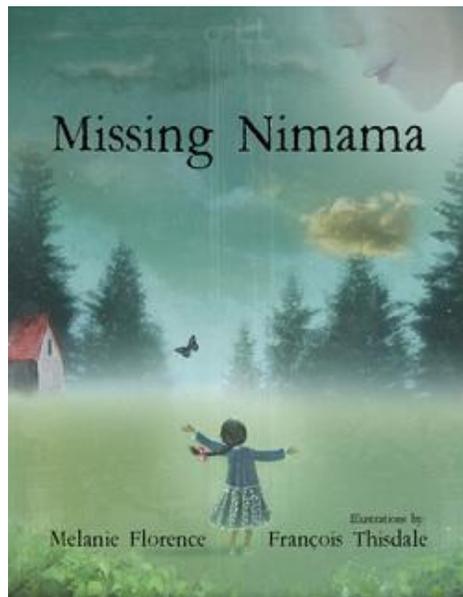
installation I hope to draw attention to the gendered and racialized nature of violent crimes against Aboriginal women and to evoke a presence through the marking of absence.

By Jaime Black | <http://www.redressproject.org/>

LITERATURE

Books available via goodminds.com

Title: Missing Nimama, hardcover ed 2017 FNCR



Authors: [Florence, Melanie](#)

Grade Level: 4 - 8

ISBN: 9780993935145

Nation: [Cree](#)

Number Pages: 32

Copyright Year: 2015

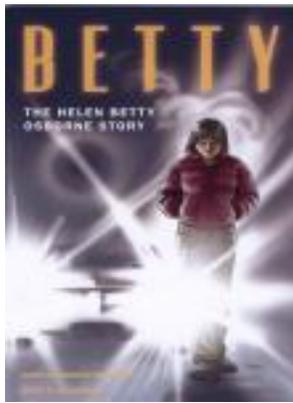
Product Type: Hard Back

Price: \$19.95

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

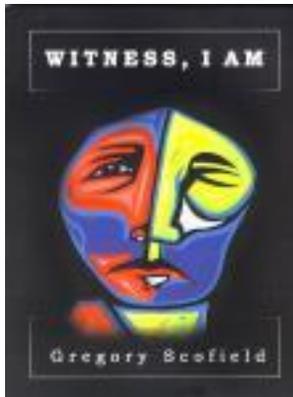
intermediate level readers an introduction to understanding the loss and grief of a child's mother. Kateri is a young girl who lives with her grandmother because her mother is lost as Nohkum (grandmother in Cree). The picture book opens with the loving voice of a mother as she watches her daughter sleep 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. Missing Nimama has been selected in the Young Adult/Adult Category Longlist for First Nation Communities READ 2017. Missing Nimama is in contention to become the First Nation Communities Read community reading selection for 2017-2018.



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.

Sell price: \$16.00



Witness, I Am

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

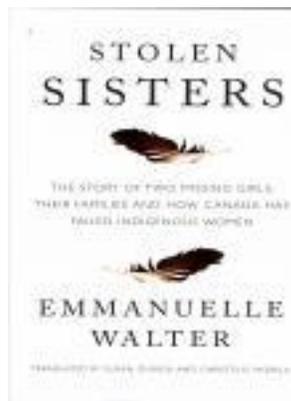
Sell price: \$18.95



**Missing, The, paper ed 2017
FNCR**

The Missing by Melanie Florence uses as its background the ongoing circumstance of unsolved cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, this fictional mystery set in Winnipeg explores

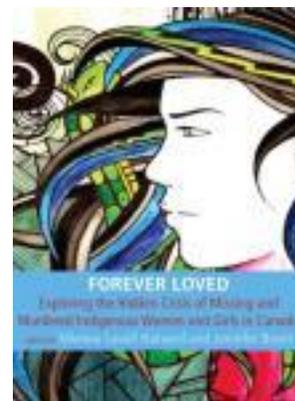
Sell price: \$14.95



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

Stolen Sisters: The Story of Two Missing Girls, Their Families and How Canada has Failed Indigenous Women is the English language translation of Soeurs Volees: Enquete sur un feminicide au Canada.

Sell price: \$26.99



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

Forever Loved: Exposing the Hidden Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada is a collection of 21 essays addressing the hidden crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous w

Sell price: \$34.95