



*MMIW*  
**MISSING AND MURDERED  
INDIGENOUS WOMEN**  
UNDERSTANDING THE CRISIS

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## CONTENT WARNING

THE FOLLOWING GRAPHIC ESSAY CONTAINS REFERENCES TO SEXUAL ASSAULT, RAPE, KIDNAPPING & ABDUCTION, VIOLENCE, PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL ABUSE, VIOLENCE AGAINST TWO-SPIRIT & LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS, POLICE BRUTALITY, RACISM, RACIAL FETISHIZATION, ABORTION, SETTLER-COLONIAL VIOLENCE, INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS, FORCED STERILIZATIONS, INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA, AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS. PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF WHEN ENGAGING WITH THESE DIFFICULT TOPICS.

THE [NATIONAL HOTLINES](#) SECTION AND [RESOURCES PAGES](#) INCLUDE INFORMATION ON ORGANIZATIONS AND CALL CENTERS THAT CAN HELP IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING DISTRESS OR REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE, COUNSELING, OR ADVOCACY.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	<a href="#">1</a>
HISTORIC SOURCES OF INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA .....	<a href="#">3</a>
VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN: STATISTICS .....	<a href="#">6</a>
FEDERAL, TRIBAL, AND STATE JURISDICTIONAL ISSUES .....	<a href="#">7</a>
NATIVE WOMEN IN POP CULTURE AND MEDIA .....	<a href="#">11</a>
ECONOMIC INFLUENCES .....	<a href="#">13</a>
LAW ENFORCEMENT & DATA REPORTING .....	<a href="#">15</a>
VIOLENCE ON THE LAND: EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES .....	<a href="#">17</a>
TAKE ACTION: THE POLITICAL APPROACH .....	<a href="#">19</a>
TAKE ACTION: THE PERSONAL APPROACH .....	<a href="#">20</a>
REMINDER FOR ALLIES .....	<a href="#">21</a>
NATIONAL RESOURCES .....	<a href="#">22</a>
REGIONAL RESOURCES .....	<a href="#">23</a>
NATIONAL HOTLINES .....	<a href="#">24</a>
REMEMBERING VICTIMS: PRAYERS FOR WOMEN .....	<a href="#">25</a>





THE DISAPPEARANCE OF NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN, GIRLS, AND TWO-SPIRIT\* PEOPLE ACROSS TURTLE ISLAND IS A CRISIS LARGELY IGNORED BY THE PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT ALIKE.

IN THE UNITED STATES, NATIVE WOMEN ARE KILLED AND GO MISSING AT **10 TIMES** THE NATIONAL AVERAGE,<sup>1</sup> YET **ONLY 2%** OF THESE CASES RECEIVE FEDERAL ATTENTION.<sup>2</sup>




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\* **TWO-SPIRIT** IS A TERM USED BY MANY MODERN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF NORTH AMERICA TO DESCRIBE A NATIVE PERSON WITH A **VARIANT GENDER IDENTITY** / WHO IS **GENDER NONCONFORMING**. THE TERM SOMETIMES REFERS TO LGBTQ+ PEOPLE IN GENERAL, BUT EVERY TRIBE HAS A UNIQUE UNDERSTANDING OF ITS DEFINITION BASED ON THEIR RESPECTIVE CULTURES.





THIS EPIDEMIC DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE BY AGE OR ABILITY OF A NATIVE WOMAN, BUT ONE COMMON FEATURE IS THE SILENCE FACED BY COMMUNITIES WHO HAVE LOST A SISTER.

**LESS THAN 5%** OF THESE CASES RECEIVE NATIONAL MEDIA ATTENTION.<sup>3</sup>



TO UNDERSTAND THIS CRISIS, WE NEED TO TAKE A LOOK INTO THE PAST.





THE LAST 500 YEARS HAVE BEEN SHAPED BY SETTLER COLONIALISM AND THE LEGACY OF EUROPEAN IMPERIALISM, WITH NON-NATIVES EXERTING VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, OVER-CONSUMING NATURAL RESOURCES, BREAKING PEACE TREATIES, AND OTHERWISE ATTEMPTING TO DISMANTLE AND DESTROY THE NATIONS AND CULTURES THAT ORIGINALLY INHABITED THE AMERICAS.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, THROUGH DIRECT FORCE AND COERCIVE TREATIES, FORCIBLY REMOVED NATIVE AMERICANS FROM THEIR TERRITORIES AND HOMELANDS.<sup>4</sup> GOVERNMENT-SANCTIONED GENOCIDAL ACTS RESULTED IN AN INCALCULABLE LOSS OF LIFE AND CULTURE ACROSS HUNDREDS OF UNIQUE TRIBAL NATIONS. MANY SURVIVORS WERE FORCED TO ASSIMILATE INTO HOSTILE TOWNS AND CITIES. OTHERS WERE SEQUESTERED ONTO RESERVATIONS, SMALL PARCELS OF LAND THAT WERE OFTEN FOREIGN ENVIRONMENTS UNSUITABLE FOR FARMING OR TRADITIONAL LIFEWAYS.







THE U.S. GOVERNMENT USED SEVERAL METHODS TO DOMINATE, SUBJUGATE, AND ERASE NATIVE PEOPLE. GOVERNMENT-RUN INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS WERE DESIGNED TO, IN THE WORDS OF U.S. BRIGADIER GENERAL RICHARD HENRY PRATT, “KILL THE INDIAN... TO SAVE THE MAN” - NATIVE CHILDREN WERE TAKEN FROM THEIR PARENTS AND PLACED INTO RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS TO BE “CIVILIZED” WITH FORCED CULTURAL ASSIMILATION, CHRISTIANIZATION, AND PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE.<sup>5</sup>



Progress from ...

FIRST YEAR IN THIS SCHOOL

Class or grade

Academic

Industrial (Department)

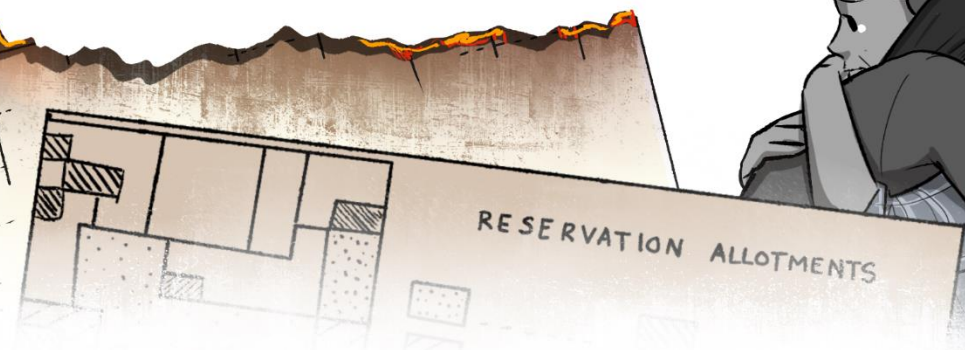
Musical: Band

Vocal

Dep.

Physical

Remark



TRIBAL LANDS WERE BROKEN APART AND TURNED INTO INDIVIDUAL ALLOTMENTS THAT COULD BE SOLD AND TRADED TO WHITES. THE GOVERNMENT ORCHESTRATED FORCED STERILIZATIONS OF NATIVE WOMEN.<sup>6</sup> NATIVE RELIGIONS WERE OUTLAWED AND THEIR PRACTITIONERS SEVERELY PERSECUTED.<sup>7</sup>



WHILE MOST OF THESE POLICIES ARE IN THE PAST, THEIR HARMFUL EFFECTS CONTINUE TO REVERBERATE ACROSS AMERICA TODAY. SEVERED KINSHIP NETWORKS, DISMANTLED TRIBAL INSTITUTIONS, AND THE SYSTEMIC ERASURE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE ALL VERY REAL ISSUES STILL AFFECTING MODERN NATIVE AMERICANS.







DR. MARIA YELLOW HORSE BRAVE HEART CALLS THIS PHENOMENON “**HISTORICAL TRAUMA**,” A TERM THAT DESCRIBES HOW THE EFFECTS OF ADVERSITY CAN BE FELT ACROSS GENERATIONS.<sup>8</sup> DESCENDANTS OF GROUPS EXPOSED TO SUFFERING HAVE HIGHER RATES OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, ESPECIALLY PTSD, DEPRESSION, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE. SCIENTISTS HAVE FOUND CLEAR BIOLOGICAL INDICATORS SUPPORTING THE THEORY THAT TRAUMA IS WOVEN INTO OUR DNA.

THIS COMPLEX EXPERIENCE, WORTHY OF SEPARATE DISCUSSION, CANNOT BE IGNORED AS A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE MMIW CRISIS. HOWEVER, THIS CRISIS OCCURS IN THE SHADOW OF A LARGER ISSUE: **VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN.**





MORE THAN **50%** OF NATIVE WOMEN HAVE EXPERIENCED **SEXUAL VIOLENCE** IN THEIR LIFETIME<sup>9</sup>

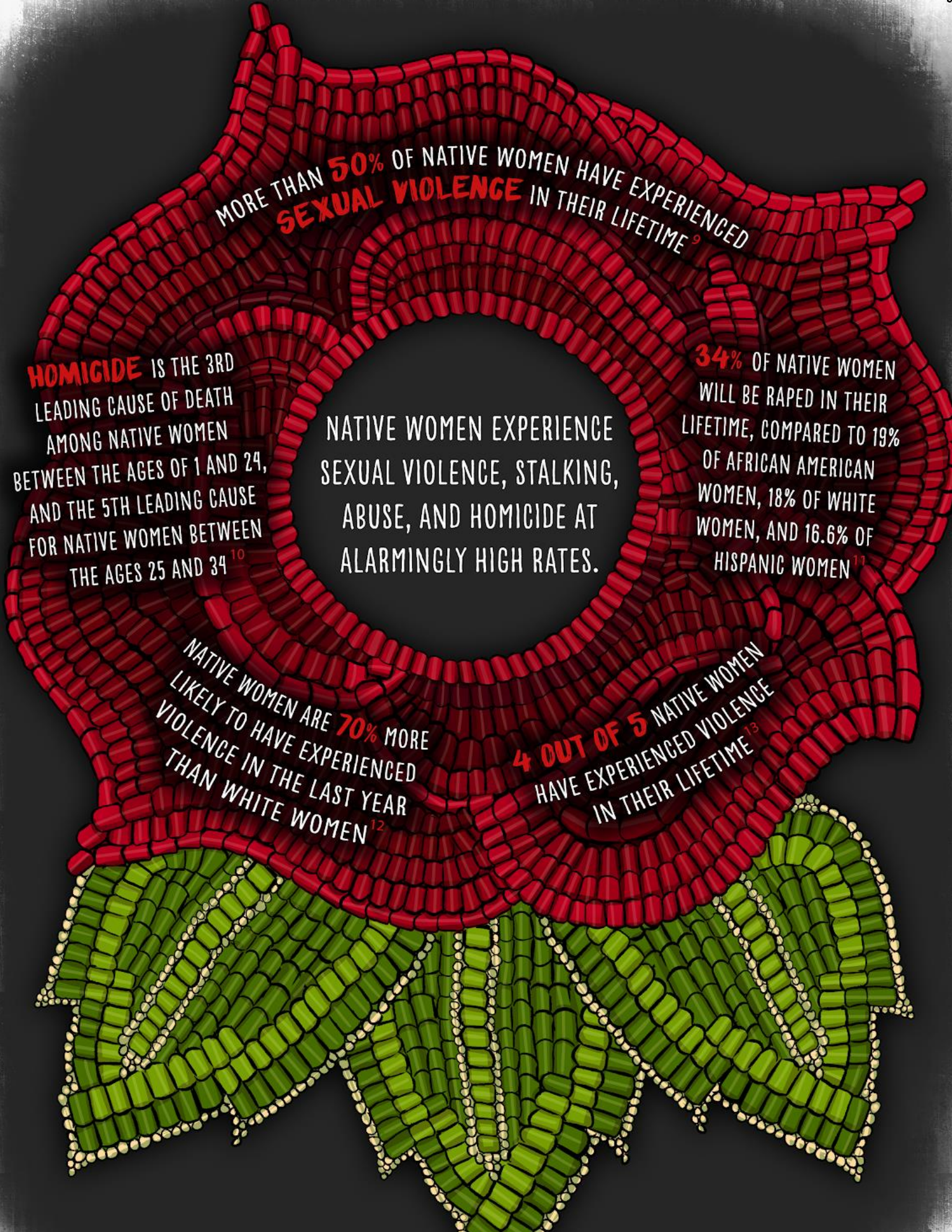
**HOMICIDE** IS THE 3RD LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG NATIVE WOMEN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 1 AND 24, AND THE 5TH LEADING CAUSE FOR NATIVE WOMEN BETWEEN THE AGES 25 AND 34<sup>10</sup>

NATIVE WOMEN EXPERIENCE SEXUAL VIOLENCE, STALKING, ABUSE, AND HOMICIDE AT ALARMINGLY HIGH RATES.

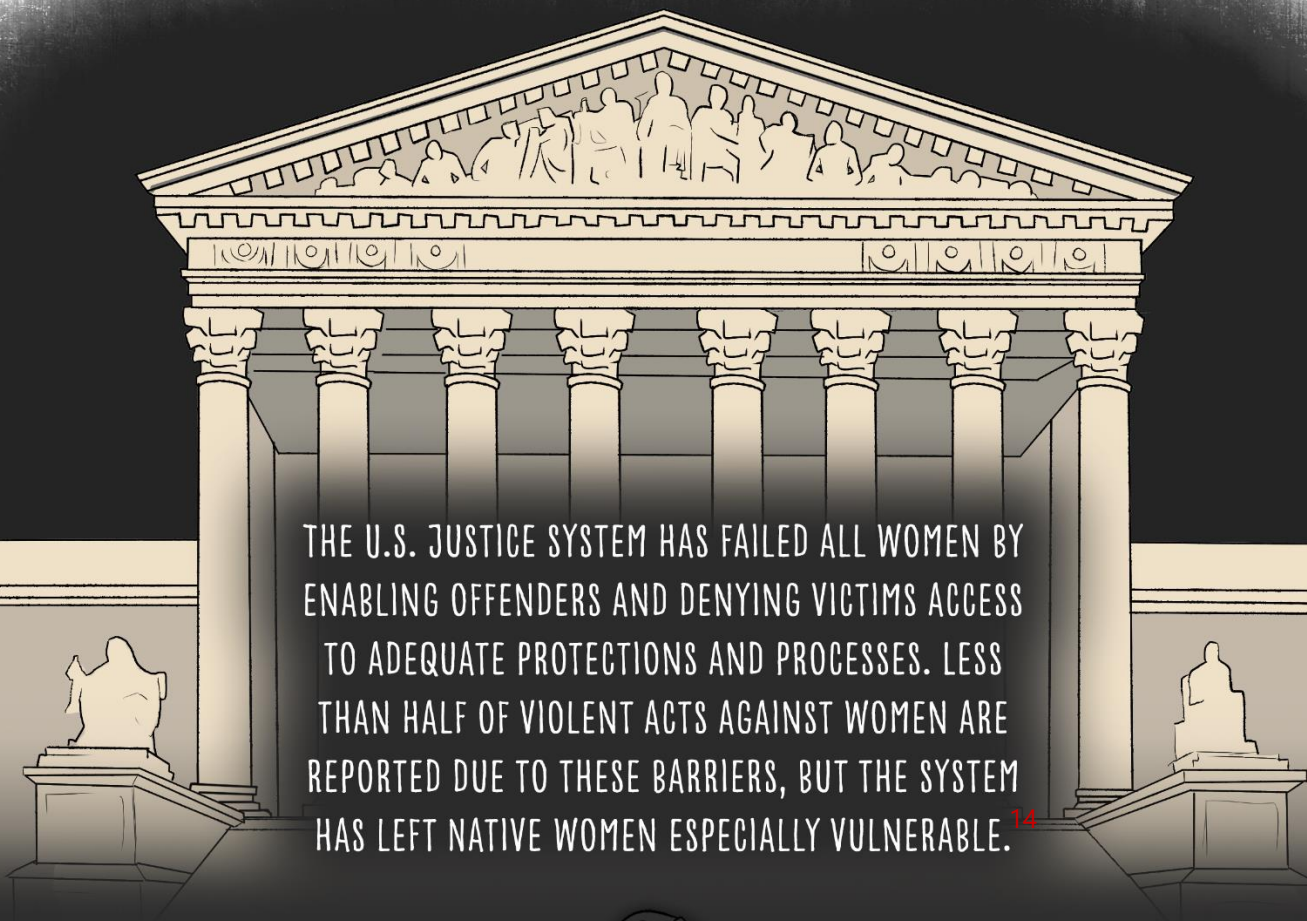
**34%** OF NATIVE WOMEN WILL BE RAPED IN THEIR LIFETIME, COMPARED TO 19% OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN, 18% OF WHITE WOMEN, AND 16.6% OF HISPANIC WOMEN<sup>11</sup>

NATIVE WOMEN ARE **70%** MORE LIKELY TO HAVE EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE IN THE LAST YEAR THAN WHITE WOMEN<sup>12</sup>

**4 OUT OF 5** NATIVE WOMEN HAVE EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE<sup>13</sup> IN THEIR LIFETIME







THE U.S. JUSTICE SYSTEM HAS FAILED ALL WOMEN BY ENABLING OFFENDERS AND DENYING VICTIMS ACCESS TO ADEQUATE PROTECTIONS AND PROCESSES. LESS THAN HALF OF VIOLENT ACTS AGAINST WOMEN ARE REPORTED DUE TO THESE BARRIERS, BUT THE SYSTEM HAS LEFT NATIVE WOMEN ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE.<sup>14</sup>

STATE

FEDERAL

TRIBAL

NATIVE VICTIMS FACE THE COMPLEXITIES OF OVERLAPPING COUNTY, STATE, TRIBAL, AND FEDERAL JURISDICTIONS AND POLICE FORCES.<sup>15</sup>



IT IS DIFFICULT TO PROSECUTE CRIMES COMMITTED IN INDIAN COUNTRY. THROUGH SEVERAL LAWS AND COURT DECISIONS, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS SEVERELY LIMITED THE POWER OF TRIBAL POLICE AND COURT SYSTEMS WHILE ALSO CREATING A MAZE OF CONCURRENT, AND OFTEN COMPETING, JURISDICTIONS

1832

**WORCESTER V. GEORGIA**

CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL RULES THAT TRIBES RETAIN ALL SOVEREIGN RIGHTS NOT SPECIFICALLY CEDED IN A TREATY OR STATUTE. THIS INCLUDES THE RIGHT TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER THROUGH TRIBAL COURT SYSTEMS AND POLICE FORCES.<sup>16</sup>

1953

**PUBLIC LAW 83-280** PASSES

CONGRESS, AUTHORIZING SOME STATES TO PROSECUTE SEVERAL CRIMES ON TRIBAL LANDS.<sup>18</sup>

1978

**OLIPHANT V. SUQUAMISH INDIAN TRIBE**

DECIDED THAT TRIBES CANNOT PROSECUTE NON-NATIVE PEOPLE IN TRIBAL COURT FOR ANY CRIME.<sup>20</sup>

2007 - 2010

CONGRESS HELD 17 HEARINGS TO INVESTIGATE THE RISING LEVELS OF CRIME AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN INDIAN COUNTRY.<sup>22</sup>

1885

**THE MAJOR CRIME ACT**

GAVE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHARED JURISDICTION OVER CERTAIN VIOLENT CRIMES COMMITTED ON TRIBAL LANDS.<sup>17</sup>

1968

**THE INDIAN CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**

WEAKENED TRIBAL COURTS, LIMITING THEM TO GIVING A MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF 1 YEAR IN JAIL AND/OR A \$5,000 FINE, REGARDLESS OF THE SEVERITY OF THE CRIME. WHILE TRIBES STILL HAVE JURISDICTION OVER FELONIES, THERE IS A RELUCTANCE TO PROSECUTE MAJOR CRIMES IN TRIBAL COURTS DUE TO THESE LIMITS.<sup>19</sup>

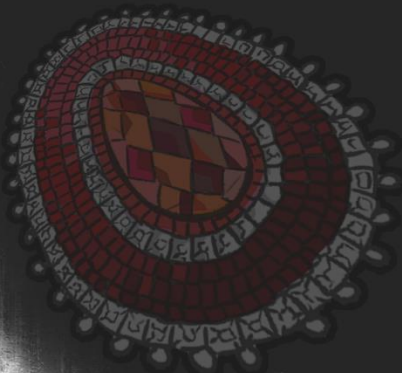
1979 - 2005

VIOLENT CRIMES AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN SKYROCKET. A VAST MAJORITY OF OFFENDERS ARE NON-NATIVE. BETWEEN 1992 AND 1996, THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS FOUND THAT 75% OF CASES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN WERE COMMITTED BY COMPLETE STRANGERS OR MERE ACQUAINTANCES OF THE VICTIM.<sup>21</sup>

2010

**THE TRIBAL LAW AND ORDER ACT**

MARGINALLY EXPANDED TRIBAL COURTS' POWER BY ALLOWING TRIBAL COURTS TO IMPOSE HARSHER SENTENCES AGAINST CRIMINALS. A TRIBE CAN NOW SENTENCE A DEFENDANT FOR UP TO 3 YEARS IN PRISON AND A FINE OF UP TO \$15,000 FOR A SINGLE OFFENSE. ADDITIONALLY, CONSECUTIVE SENTENCES CAN STACK FOR A TOTAL PENALTY NO GREATER THAN 9 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT.<sup>23</sup>







## THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT – TITLE IX (2013)

CREATES “SPECIAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRIMINAL JURISDICTION” ALLOWING TRIBES TO PROSECUTE SOME NON-NATIVES UNDER STRICT CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS JURISDICTION DOES NOT APPLY TO CRIMES AGAINST NATIVE CHILDREN, NOR DOES IT INCLUDE SEXUAL ASSAULT UNLESS THE ASSAULT OCCURS IN THE CONTEXT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR DATING VIOLENCE. VICTIMS MUST PROVE THAT THE DEFENDANT HAD A PRE-EXISTING CONNECTION TO THE TRIBE AND TO THEM. STRANGERS AND ACQUAINTANCES CANNOT BE PROSECUTED.

# CRIMINAL JURISDICTION ON TRIBAL LANDS/RESERVATIONS

	NATIVE STATUS	MAJOR CRIME	ALL OTHER CRIMES
	NATIVE VICTIM  NATIVE PERPETRATOR	FEDERAL & TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS  IF A PUBLIC LAW 280 STATE: STATE & TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS	TRIBAL JURISDICTION  IF A PUBLIC LAW 280 STATE: STATE & TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS
	NON-NATIVE VICTIM  NATIVE PERPETRATOR	FEDERAL & TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS  IF A PUBLIC LAW 280 STATE: STATE & TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS	TRIBAL JURISDICTION  IF A PUBLIC LAW 280 STATE: STATE & TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS
	NATIVE VICTIM  NON-NATIVE PERPETRATOR	FEDERAL JURISDICTION  IF A PUBLIC LAW 280 STATE: STATE JURISDICTION	FEDERAL JURISDICTION  IF A PUBLIC LAW 280 STATE: STATE & TRIBAL JURISDICTIONS
	NON-NATIVE VICTIM  NON-NATIVE PERPETRATOR	STATE JURISDICTION	STATE JURISDICTION

\*UNLESS COVERED BY VAWA 2013 TITLE IX

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FOR THE MAJORITY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT CASES, VICTIMS MUST WORK DIRECTLY WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO PURSUE JUSTICE. HOWEVER, ROUGHLY **65%** OF CASES REPORTED TO U.S. ATTORNEYS ARE REJECTED DUE TO THE DIFFICULTY OF PROSECUTING SEXUAL CRIMES AND FEDERAL PROSECUTERS' INEXPERIENCE IN INDIAN LAW.<sup>25</sup> FBI AGENTS ALSO LACK SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO INVESTIGATE CRIMES OCCURING IN INDIAN COUNTRY.

THE RESULT? NON-NATIVES ARE EMBOLDENED TO VICTIMIZE NATIVE WOMEN AND NATIVE LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS BECAUSE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, CASES ARE LOST IN A QUAGMIRE OF JURISDICTIONAL QUESTIONS, INCOMEPETANCE, AND INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES.

IN **86%** OF RAPE CASES AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN, THE ASSAILANT IS **NON-NATIVE.**<sup>26</sup>

PERSISTENT STEREOTYPES AND A LACK OF DATA HAVE CREATED A FALSE PERCEPTION THAT THIS EPIDEMIC IS LIMITED TO RESERVATION LAND. HOWEVER, A MAJORITY OF NATIVE AMERICANS LIVE IN URBAN AREAS OUTSIDE OF TRIBAL JURISDICTION WHERE THE RATES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARRASSMENT STILL OCCUR AT DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH RATES.<sup>27</sup>



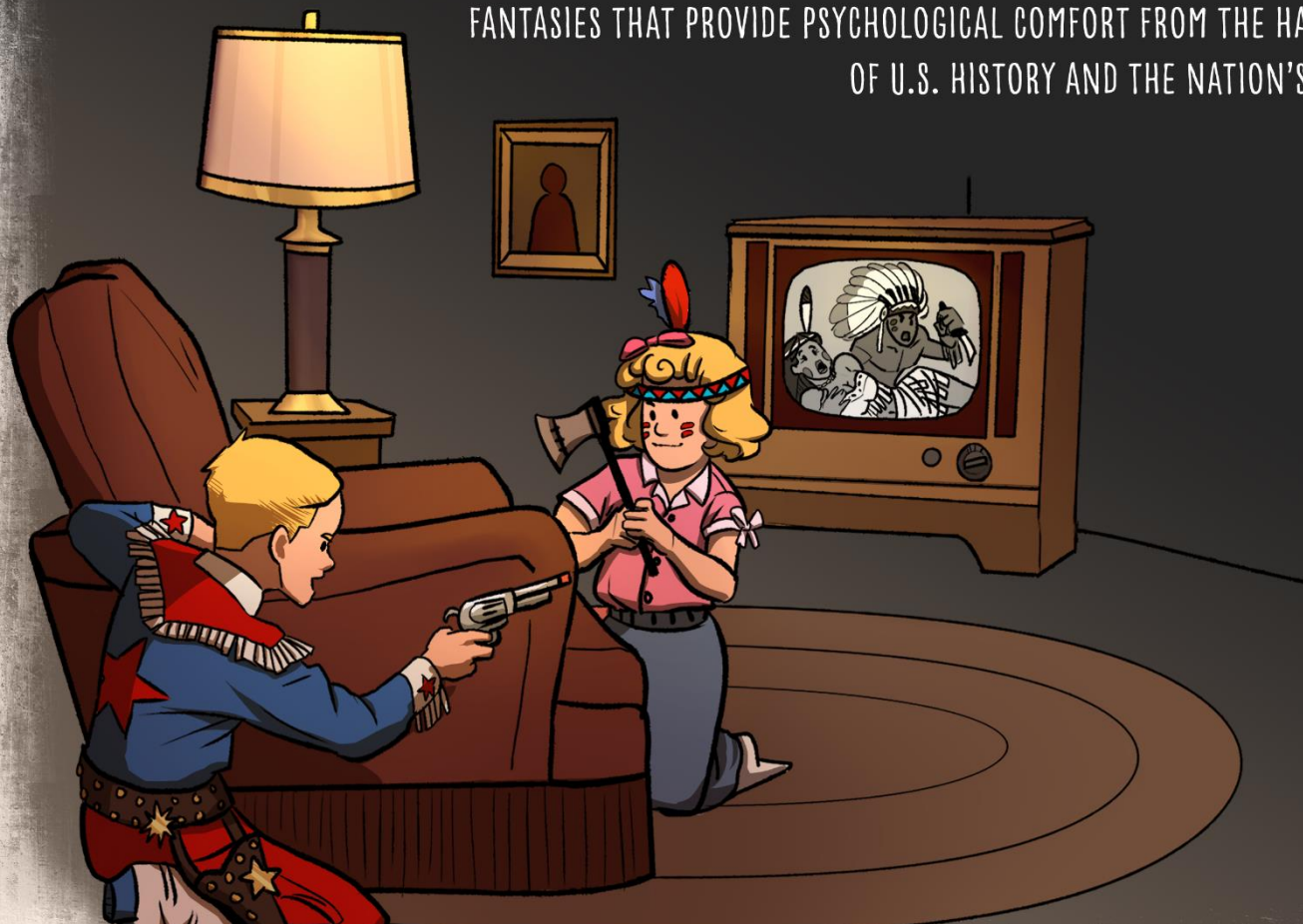
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REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY LIVE, NATIVE WOMEN AND LGBTQ+ NATIVES FACE THE LEGACIES OF SETTLER COLONIALISM AND INSTITUTIONALIZED RACISM.

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MASS MISCONCEPTIONS AND NEGATIVE RHETORIC ABOUT CASINOS, ALCOHOLISM, DRUGS, AND POVERTY DOMINATE MAINSTREAM CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICANS. THE ERASURE OF NATIVE PEOPLES, PERPETUATED BY K-12 EDUCATION, POP CULTURE, AND MEDIA, PRESENTS A MAJOR BARRIER TO ADDRESSING INEQUALITY. A 2016-2018 STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE RECLAIMING NATIVE TRUTH PROJECT FOUND THAT **A MAJORITY OF AMERICANS ADMIT THEY KNOW LITTLE TO NOTHING ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS AND DON'T KNOW HOW MANY "STILL EXIST."**<sup>29</sup>

TOXIC STEREOTYPES AND COLONIAL NARRATIVES DEHUMANIZE AND DEGRADE NATIVE PEOPLE. FROM WHITEWASHED HISTORY BOOKS TO TELEVISION AND FILM, CARICATURES OF "UNCIVILIZED HUNTER-GATHERERS" AND "THE NOBLE SAVAGE" ECHO ACROSS EVERY LEVEL OF AMERICAN SOCIETY.<sup>30</sup> ROMANTICIZED REPRESENTATIONS PAINT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AS NAIVE SOCIETIES UNCORRUPTED BY WHITE CIVILIZATION. MAGICAL MEDICINE MEN, TEEPEES, SPIRIT ANIMALS, AND FAMILY LEGENDS ABOUT A "CHEROKEE PRINCESS" RELATIVE CULMINATE INTO WHITE ESCAPIST FANTASIES THAT PROVIDE PSYCHOLOGICAL COMFORT FROM THE HARSH REALITY OF U.S. HISTORY AND THE NATION'S FOUNDING.<sup>31</sup>





THE “INDIAN PRINCESS” CLICHE IS PERHAPS THE MOST COMMON AND DESTRUCTIVE STEREOTYPE, WIDESPREAD IN MODERN CULTURE DUE TO THE WESTERN GENRE AND DISNEY’S POCAHONTAS. AS ONSCREEN, NATIVE WOMEN IN REAL LIFE ARE SUBJECTED TO OVERT & VIOLENT RACIAL SEXUALIZATION.<sup>32</sup>

THE MYTHICAL “INDIAN PRINCESS” GENERALLY HAS LIGHTER SKIN, MORE EUROPEAN FEATURES, AND REVEALING CLOTHING. SHE IS DEPICTED AS “WILD AND FREE” AND, SIMILAR TO THE “NOBLE SAVAGE” STEREOTYPE, SHE IS NAIVE AND “UNTOUCHED” BY WHITE CIVILIZATION. THUS, SHE BECOMES AN EXOTIC, VIRGINAL, “CONQUERABLE” OBJECT OF WHITE MALE DESIRE.

THE PERPETUATION OF THESE STEREOTYPES CREATES A MORAL DISTANCING. THIS “US” VS. “THEM” MENTALITY ALLOWS FOR THE JUSTIFICATION OF HARM DONE AGAINST THE “OTHERED” GROUP. IN MODERN TIMES,<sup>33</sup> “SEXY INDIAN” HALLOWEEN COSTUMES AND INDIAN-THEMED PARTIES ILLUSTRATE HOW POPULAR AND SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE THESE STEREOTYPES HAVE BECOME. CONSEQUENTLY, NON-NATIVES FEEL EMBOLDENED AND ENTITLED TO NATIVE WOMEN’S BODIES.







## ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY

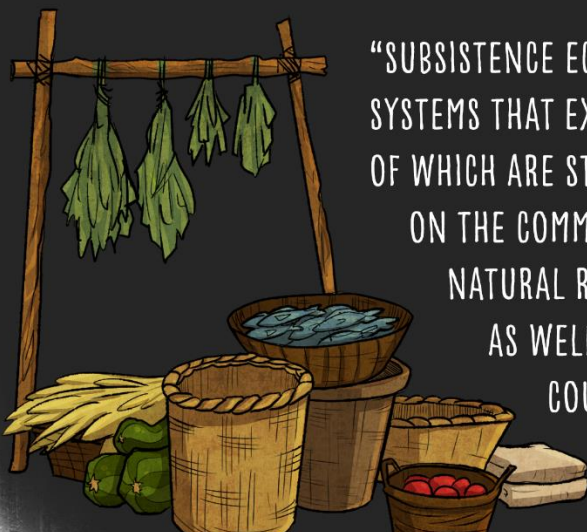
IS ANOTHER FACTOR IN VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN.

ON RESERVATIONS, JOB OPPORTUNITIES ARE OFTEN SCARCE, AND CAREER MOBILITY IS LIMITED.<sup>34</sup> AWAY FROM RESERVATIONS, NATIVE PEOPLE FACE SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AS WELL AS SIGNIFICANT EDUCATIONAL DISPARITIES.

NATIVE STUDENTS FACE THE HIGHEST DROPOUT RATES OF ANY GROUP IN BOTH HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE DUE TO ECONOMIC BURDENS AT HOME, DISCRIMINATION, INADEQUATE SCHOOL FUNDING, AND THE LACK OF CULTURALLY RELEVANT SUPPORT NETWORKS AND CURRICULA.<sup>35</sup> ADDITIONALLY, YOUNG NATIVE WOMEN MUST ALSO NAVIGATE SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE ROLE OF WOMEN AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN A EUROCENTRIC, PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY THAT OFTEN CONFLICTS WITH TRADITIONAL BELIEFS.

DR. RAUNA KUOKKANEN EXPLAINS THAT NATIVE WOMEN HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGED BY THE TRANSITION AWAY FROM SUBSISTENCE ECONOMIES TO A WESTERN, PROFIT-DRIVEN SOCIETY.<sup>36</sup>

“WOMEN’S SUBSISTENCE AND OTHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES HAVE FORMED THE FOUNDATION OF COMMUNITY SUSTENANCE... THE WAR AGAINST SUBSISTENCE REPRESENTS ALSO A WAR AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL AUTONOMY IN SOCIETY.”



“SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY” IS A BROAD TERM REFERRING TO THE RESOURCE-BASED SYSTEMS THAT EXISTED IN MANY NATIVE SOCIETIES BEFORE COLONIZATION, SOME OF WHICH ARE STILL PRACTICED TODAY. TRIBAL ECONOMICS FREQUENTLY FOCUSED ON THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE WITH A SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES WITH FUTURE GENERATIONS IN MIND.<sup>37</sup> THIS MINDSET, AS WELL AS THE ROLE OF NATIVE WOMEN AS EQUALS TO THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS, DID NOT TRANSLATE WELL INTO COLONIAL SOCIETY.

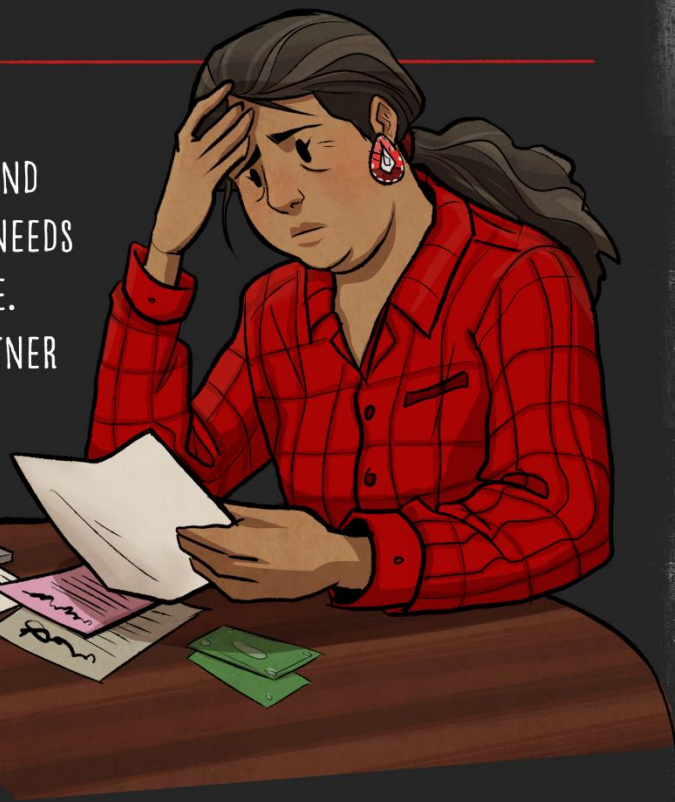


FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES HAVE FACED PRESSURE TO CONFORM TO EUROPEAN GENDER ROLES AND EXPLOITATIVE CAPITALIST SYSTEMS OF PRODUCTION AND PROFIT. THE DISEMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN, COUPLED WITH INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND SYSTEMIC RACISM, HAVE CREATED AN IMPOSSIBLE CYCLE OF POVERTY THAT LEAVES NATIVE WOMEN AND LGBTQ+ NATIVES INCREDIBLY VULNERABLE TO ABUSE, ADDICTION, AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.<sup>38</sup>

UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, MANY NATIVE WOMEN AND LGBTQ+ NATIVES CANNOT MEET THEIR BASIC MATERIAL NEEDS AND MUST PUT THEMSELVES IN HARM'S WAY TO SURVIVE. WHETHER THAT MEANS STAYING WITH AN ABUSIVE PARTNER OR TAKING ISOLATED NIGHT SHIFTS AT WORK, THEY ARE FORCED TO BEAR ADDITIONAL RISK JUST TO GET BY.

#### THE URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE

FOUND THAT THE MAJORITY OF CASES RELATED TO VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN DO NOT INVOLVE SEX WORK, SEX TRAFFICKING, OR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. WHILE THESE ARE SERIOUS ISSUES DESERVING FAR MORE ATTENTION, THIS FINDING DIRECTLY CONTRADICTS MEDIA AND LAW ENFORCEMENT NARRATIVES AROUND THE CRISIS THAT ARE OVERWHELMINGLY BIASED AND VICTIM-BLAMING.



ONLY **1 OUT OF 4**  
CASES APPEAR IN THE MEDIA



**1/3** OF ALL COVERAGE REFERENCES  
DRUGS, ALCOHOL, OR PREVIOUS  
CRIMINAL RECORDS OF THE VICTIM



TRANS WOMEN ARE  
**CONSISTENTLY**  
MIS-GENDERED<sup>39</sup>



DATA ABOUT NATIVE PEOPLES IS OFTEN LACKING DUE TO BIASED DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING, AND INFORMATION REGARDING THIS CRISIS IS ESPECIALLY DEFICIENT. INDIVIDUALS AT THE INTERSECTION OF MULTIPLE ETHNIC OR RACIAL IDENTITIES, SUCH AS AFRO-INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, ARE SIGNIFICANTLY UNDERCOUNTED, AND QUEER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLE SUFFER SIMILAR ERASURE.<sup>40</sup> WITHOUT ACCURATE INFORMATION, POLICYMAKERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS CANNOT MONITOR THESE ISSUES OR COMMUNICATE HOW PERVASIVE THE VIOLENCE IS, RESULTING IN MISINFORMATION AND INCREASED RISK.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES HAVE THEIR OWN DIFFICULTIES WITH DATA AND ACCURATE REPORTING.

WHILE CONDUCTING STUDIES ON THE MMIW CRISIS, THE URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE REPORTED DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING PUBLIC RECORDS AND OTHER INFORMATION FROM AGENCIES.<sup>41</sup> SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS NOTORIOUSLY UNDERREPORTED, BUT THE ISSUE IS MAGNIFIED FOR NATIVE VICTIMS. NATIVES ARE LESS LIKELY TO REPORT INSTANCES OF VIOLENCE TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR MANY REASONS, WITH ONE MAJOR FACTOR BEING THE HISTORIC USE OF POLICE AS A TOOL OF STATE VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE PEOPLES.<sup>42</sup> THE VESTIGES OF INSTITUTIONALIZED, VIOLENT COLONIALISM AND THE ABUSE OF POWER CONTINUE TO GENERATE DISTRUST BETWEEN TRIBAL CITIZENS AND NON-TRIBAL LAW ENFORCEMENT.





IN 2019, NEARLY **5,600 NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS** WERE REPORTED MISSING, THOUGH THE ACTUAL NUMBER IS LIKELY MUCH HIGHER <sup>43</sup>

GAO FOUND THAT FEDERAL ATTORNEYS REFUSED TO PROSECUTE **2/3 OF CASES** RELATED TO SEXUAL ABUSE IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN ONE 4-YEAR PERIOD <sup>44</sup>

THIS CRISIS IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE MISSING & MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS EPIDEMIC BECAUSE OVER **25% OF VICTIMS ARE UNDER 18** <sup>45</sup>

**NEARLY 1/3** OF PERPETRATORS IN MMIW CASES ARE NEVER HELD ACCOUNTABLE <sup>46</sup>


A STUDY BY THE URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE FOUND THAT AMONG MMIW CASES, **25%** OF VICTIMS ARE OFFICIALLY MISSING, **55%** ARE MURDERED, AND **20%** ARE CLASSIFIED AS "UNKNOWN" <sup>47</sup>



A large, grey pipe with a small cross on its side is pouring a thick, red liquid into a stream. The stream is surrounded by a rocky, eroded bank with sparse, dry-looking vegetation. The background shows more of the landscape with trees and a hazy sky.

A 2016 REPORT ENTITLED "VIOLENCE ON THE LAND, VIOLENCE ON OUR BODIES" EXPLORES CONTEMPORARY CASES THAT EXEMPLIFY WHAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE LONG KNOWN - HARM TO THE ENVIRONMENT LEADS TO HARM TO THE PEOPLE.<sup>48</sup>

INDUSTRY CAN CREATE WEALTH AND PROGRESS, BUT INVASIVE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND THE OVERCONSUMPTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IS A CENTURIES-OLD PROBLEM THAT CONTINUES TO DISPROPORTIONATELY HARM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. TREATY RIGHTS, TRIBAL TERRITORY, AND INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS ARE BLATANTLY DISREGARDED.<sup>49</sup> POLLUTION BRINGS LONG-LASTING HEALTH CONSEQUENCES TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE LAND.<sup>50</sup> LESS OBVIOUS BUT JUST AS DAMAGING, THE INFLUX OF TEMPORARY OR OUTSIDE EMPLOYEES ONTO OR NEAR TRIBAL LANDS HAS TIME AND TIME AGAIN LED TO A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN NON-NATIVE CRIME AND VIOLENCE.

A yellow excavator with a long boom is positioned on the left side of the page. A yellow crane with a long boom is positioned in the center. Both are set against a dark red background.

HISTORICALLY AND TODAY, THESE INDUSTRIES ATTRACT WORKERS WITH NO TIES TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES LOOKING TO MAKE "EASY" MONEY. WORKERS SETTLE INTO "MAN CAMPS" THAT CAN DOUBLE AN AREA'S POPULATION OVERNIGHT, STRAINING LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES.<sup>51</sup> CITIES WITH HEAVY FRACKING, MINING, AND OIL REFINERIES, SUCH AS BILLINGS, MT, GALLUP, NM, AND ANCHORAGE, AK, RANK IN THE TOP SIX FOR CITIES FOR THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF MMIW CASES NATIONWIDE - ALONGSIDE SEATTLE & SAN FRANCISCO.<sup>52</sup> NON-NATIVE WORKERS TAKE ON THE PATRIARCHAL, SETTLER-COLONIAL MINDSET AND "OTHER" NATIVE CITIZENS, COMMITTING VIOLENCE AGAINST BOTH NATIVE WOMEN AND "MOTHER EARTH". LEGITIMATE TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY, LAND RIGHTS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ARE CRITICAL TO COMBATTING THESE DISASTROUS POWER DYNAMICS.







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LIKE MANY ISSUES OF OUR TIME - THE CLIMATE CATASTROPHE, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, POLICE BRUTALITY, AND EXPLOITATIVE CAPITALISM, TO NAME A FEW - THE MMIW CRISIS CAN SEEM INTRACTABLE. WITH MANY INTERTWINED PROBLEMS AND OPPRESSIVE SYSTEMS CONTRIBUTING TO THE CRISIS, THERE IS CERTAINLY MUCH WORK TO BE DONE TO ENSURE NATIVE WOMEN ARE PROTECTED IN THE UNITED STATES AND BEYOND. THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE DOING THAT WORK, AND THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES CAN HELP YOU STAY INFORMED AND CREATE LASTING CHANGE BY CONNECTING WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL EFFORTS TO BATTLE THE MMIW CRISIS AND EMPOWER NATIVE PEOPLES.

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THANK YOU FOR LEARNING.



# TAKE ACTION - THE POLITICAL APPROACH

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF YOUR VOTE. YOUR VOICE CAN SHAPE LOCAL POLITICAL AGENDAS AND INFLUENCE POLITICIANS TO PRIORITIZE THIS CRISIS. CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVES, ATTEND TOWN HALLS AND CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS, ORGANIZE PROTESTS, CIRCULATE PETITIONS, AND SCHEDULE MEETINGS. SOCIAL MEDIA IS AN INCREDIBLE TOOL - TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR NETWORK TO AMPLIFY THIS ISSUE. THE FOLLOWING LIST INCLUDES SEVERAL POLITICAL EFFORTS AND GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES THAT YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT.<sup>53</sup>

## SAVANNA'S ACT

NAMED IN HONOR OF SAVANNA LAFONTAINE-GREYWIND, A NATIVE WOMAN KIDNAPPED AND MURDERED IN NORTH DAKOTA IN 2017.

THIS BILL DIRECTS THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO REVIEW, REVISE, AND DEVELOP LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUSTICE PROTOCOLS TO ADDRESS THE MMIW CRISIS AND CLOSE DATA COLLECTION GAPS.<sup>54</sup>

**STATUS:** PASSED U.S. SENATE; STUCK IN THE HOUSE

## NOT INVISIBLE ACT

LED BY FOUR NATIVE AMERICAN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, THIS BILL WOULD ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VIOLENT CRIME COMPRISED OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, TRIBAL LEADERS, FEDERAL PARTNERS, AND SURVIVORS TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE. IT WOULD ALSO INTRODUCE A POSITION IN THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS CHARGED WITH COORDINATING THESE EFFORTS ACROSS AGENCIES.<sup>55</sup>

**STATUS:** HELD IN THE HOUSE

## JUSTICE FOR NATIVE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE ACT

AN AMENDMENT TO THE INDIAN CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1968 THAT WOULD EXTEND TRIBAL JURISDICTION TO CASES INVOLVING SEXUAL VIOLENCE, TRAFFICKING, AND STALKING. THIS BILL IS HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.<sup>56</sup>

**STATUS:** HELD IN HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

## OPERATION LADY JUSTICE

PRESIDENT TRUMP ESTABLISHED THIS TASK FORCE IN 2019 TO ADDRESS THE MMIW CRISIS. WHILE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, MANY NATIVE LEADERS AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE CRITICIZED THE EFFORT, AS THE TASK FORCE DOES NOT INCLUDE THE VOICES OF SURVIVORS OR TRIBAL LEADERS, LACKS TRANSPARENCY, AND DOES NOT EXAMINE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS LIKE LIMITED TRIBAL JURISDICTION AND RESOURCE EXTRACTION.<sup>57</sup>

**STATUS:** FLAWED, UNDERFUNDED, AND FACING SEVERAL COORDINATION AND LOGISTICAL ISSUES.

## STUDYING THE MISSING AND MURDERED INDIAN CRISIS ACT

A BILL DIRECTING THE HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE TO SUBMIT A REPORT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES' RESPONSE TO REPORTS OF MISSING OR MURDERED NATIVE PEOPLES.<sup>58</sup>

**STATUS:** HELD IN SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

## NATIONAL DAY OF AWARENESS FOR MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS

A SENATE RESOLUTION TO FORMALLY DESIGNATE MAY 5TH AS THE NATIONAL DAY OF AWARENESS FOR MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS.<sup>59</sup>

**STATUS:** PASSED IN 2019 WITH UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT



# TAKE ACTION - THE PERSONAL APPROACH

**LEARN** MORE ABOUT TRIBAL, STATE, AND LOCAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT SUPPORT SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT, RAPE, AND VIOLENCE AND/OR WORK TO ADDRESS MMIW CASES

**DONATE** TO CRISIS HOTLINES, WOMEN'S SHELTERS, AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

**PARTICIPATE** IN LOCAL GATHERINGS, PROTESTS, MARCHES, AND VIGILS TO SHOW SOLIDARITY

**VOLUNTEER** WITH LOCAL OR NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**AMPLIFY** NATIVE VOICES AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE MMIW CRISIS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

**TALK** TO FRIENDS, FAMILY, COWORKERS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS ABOUT THE CRISIS, AND HELP DISMANTLE MYTHS, MISCONCEPTIONS, AND STEREOTYPES ABOUT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

**ACKNOWLEDGE** THE LAND YOU RESIDE ON-- WHAT TRIBAL NATIONS ORIGINALLY INHABITED YOUR AREA? ENCOURAGE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESSES TO USE LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENTS<sup>60</sup>





# A REMINDER FOR ALLIES

WHILE NON-NATIVES MAY BE EAGER TO INDEPENDENTLY RAISE AWARENESS AND GET INVOLVED, IT IS CRITICAL THAT ALLIES ACTIVELY COLLABORATE WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ON THIS ISSUE. HISTORICALLY, THE PATERNALISTIC ATTITUDE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, COUPLED WITH WELL-MEANING BUT DAMAGING WHITE SAVIORISM, HAS EFFECTIVELY SILENCED NATIVE VOICES AND PREVENTED REAL PROGRESS. INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES MUST HEAL AND MOVE FORWARD ON THEIR OWN TERMS AND IN WAYS THAT HONOR THEIR INDIVIDUAL HISTORIES AND TRAUMAS. FOR MANY NON-NATIVES, UNLEARNING THE SETTLER-COLONIAL STRUCTURES AND IDEALS THAT SHAPED AMERICAN SOCIETY IS NOT EASY, NOR COMFORTABLE. HOWEVER, TAKING RESPONSIBILITY TO EDUCATE YOURSELF AND YOUR COMMUNITY IS A COURAGEOUS AND NECESSARY STEP IN DISMANTLING SYSTEMIC RACISM, REJECTING BIGOTRY, AND ADDRESSING MODERN INJUSTICES.

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“IF WE CAN CENTER THE VOICES OF NATIVE WOMEN, AND FRANKLY WOMEN OF COLOR GENERALLY— CENTER THEM RATHER THAN MARGINALIZE US— WE CAN START TO CRAFT SOLUTIONS THAT ARE GOING TO HELP EVERYONE.”

DR. SARAH DEER, MUSCOGEE (CREEK)

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#NOMORESTOLENSISTERS, #MMIW, #MMIWG, #MMIW2S, #NOTINVISIBLE, #WHYWEWEARRED, AND OTHER HASHTAGS CAN BE USED TO SHARE MMIW RESOURCES AND THE STORIES OF SURVIVORS, VICTIMS, AND THEIR FAMILIES. ALLIES MUST BE MINDFUL ABOUT ENTERING THESE SPACES, MAKING SURE TO SUPPORT - NOT APPROPRIATE OR HIJACK - SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS ABOUT INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES. LISTEN FIRST, AND APPROACH EVERY CONVERSATION WITH HUMILITY, COMPASSION, AND CURIOSITY.



# NATIONAL RESOURCES

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## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

[WWW.NIWRC.ORG](http://WWW.NIWRC.ORG)

THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER OFFERS FREE, CULTURALLY SPECIFIC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING, POLICY DEVELOPMENT, AND CULTURALLY GROUNDED RESOURCE MATERIALS TO SUPPORT TRIBES, TRIBAL PROGRAMS, AND ADVOCATES IN THEIR RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN, INCLUDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS, STALKING, AND TRAFFICKING.

## STRONGHEARTS NATIVE HELPLINE

[WWW.STRONGHEARTSHELPLINE.ORG](http://WWW.STRONGHEARTSHELPLINE.ORG)

STRONGHEARTS NATIVE HELPLINE [1-844-762-8483](tel:1-844-762-8483) IS A SAFE DOMESTIC, DATING AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE HELPLINE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES, OFFERING CULTURALLY-APPROPRIATE SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY DAILY FROM 7 A.M. TO 10 P.M. CT. ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL. CALLERS REACHING OUT AFTER HOURS MAY CONNECT WITH THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE, A NON-NATIVE BASED 24-7 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE BY SELECTING OPTION ONE. [ONLINE CHAT ADVOCACY IS AVAILABLE](#) VIA THEIR WEBSITE.

## URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE

[WWW.UIHI.ORG](http://WWW.UIHI.ORG)

THE URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE IS DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH OF AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE COMMUNITIES. UIHI CONDUCTS RESEARCH, COLLECTS AND ANALYZES DATA, AND DEVELOPS A WIDE RANGE OF RESOURCES RELATED TO PUBLIC HEALTH TOPICS IN INDIAN COUNTRY AND BEYOND. THE PROJECT "[OUR BODIES, OUR STORIES](#)" IS A SERIES OF REPORTS DETAILING THE SCOPE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN.

## SOVEREIGN BODIES INSTITUTE

[WWW.SOVEREIGN-BODIES.ORG](http://WWW.SOVEREIGN-BODIES.ORG)

SBI PARTNERS WITH TRIBAL NATIONS, INDIGENOUS ORGANIZERS AND SCHOLARS, AND COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS TO TAKE ON A WIDE RANGE OF RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT BUILD CAPACITY TO PROVIDE ENHANCED SERVICES TO SURVIVORS, PROVIDE A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DYNAMICS OF GENDER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, AND EMPOWER COMMUNITIES TO MOBILIZE AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.



# REGIONAL RESOURCES

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## ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

PHONE: (907) 328-3990  
 EMAIL: INFO@AKNWRC.ORG  
 FAIRBANKS, AK

## SOVEREIGN BODIES INSTITUTE

EMAIL: ANNITA@SOVEREIGN-BODIES.ORG  
 EMAIL: MMIWDATABAS@SOVEREIGN-BODIES.ORG  
 WIYOT AND OHLONE TERRITORIES IN N. CALIFORNIA

## MENDING THE SACRED HOOP

PHONE: (888) 305-1650  
 DULUTH, MN

## WHITE EARTH RESERVATION TRIBAL DOVE PROGRAM

PHONE: (218) 983-4656  
 24-HOUR CRISIS LINE: 1-877-830-3683  
 WHITE EARTH, MN

## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

PHONE: (917) 592-1432  
 LAME DEER, MT

## MONTANA NATIVE WOMEN'S COALITION

PHONE: (406) 969-2552  
 BILLINGS, MT

## COALITION TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN

PHONE: (505) 243-9199  
 ALBUQUERQUE, NM

## NATIVE ALLIANCE AGAINST VIOLENCE

PHONE: (405) 801-2277  
 EMAIL: INFO@OKNAAV.ORG  
 NORMAN, OK

## ALLIANCE OF TRIBAL COALITIONS TO END VIOLENCE

PHONE: (888) 577-0940  
 SILVERDALE, WA

## URBAN INDIAN HEALTH INSTITUTE

PHONE: (206) 812-3030  
 EMAIL: INFO@UIHI.ORG  
 SEATTLE, WA

## WOMENSPIRIT COALITION

PHONE: (360) 681-3710  
 SEQUIM, WA

## NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

PHONE: (202) 466-7767  
 WASHINGTON, DC

## INDIAN LAW RESOURCE CENTER

PHONE: (406) 449-2006  
 EMAIL: MT@INDIANLAW.ORG  
 HELENA, MT  
 PHONE: (202) 547-2800  
 EMAIL: DCOFFICE@INDIANLAW.ORG  
 WASHINGTON, DC



# NATIONAL HOTLINES

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## NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

THEHOTLINE.ORG

OPERATING 24/7 THIS CONFIDENTIAL, NO-COST HOTLINE PROVIDES LIFESAVING TOOLS AND IMMEDIATE SUPPORT TO HELP VICTIMS FIND SAFETY AND LIVE LIVES FREE OF ABUSE.

## RAPE, ABUSE, AND INCEST NATIONAL NETWORK (RAINN) - NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

RAINN.ORG

RAINN IS THE NATION'S LARGEST ANTI-SEXUAL VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION, PARTNERING WITH OVER 1,000 LOCAL SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES AND OPERATING THE NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE. CALL 1-800-656-HOPE OR CHAT ONLINE AT ONLINE.RAINN.ORG.

## NATIONAL DEAF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

855-812-1001

THEDEAFHOTLINE.ORG

THE NATIONAL DEAF HOTLINE SUPPORTS SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT WITHIN THE DEAF, DEAFBLIND, DEAFDISABLED, AND HARD-OF-HEARING COMMUNITY.

## NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

1-888-373-7888 / TEXT: 233733

HUMANTRAFFICKINGHOTLINE.ORG

NATIONAL HOTLINE SERVING VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING. TOLL-FREE HOTLINE IS AVAILABLE 24/7 EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR IN OVER 200 LANGUAGES.

## NATIONAL RUNAWAY SAFELINE

1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929)

1800RUNAWAY.ORG

DEDICATED TO KEEPING AMERICA'S RUNAWAY, HOMELESS AND AT-RISK YOUTH SAFE AND OFF THE STREETS. OFFERS SERVICES TO WORK THROUGH PROBLEMS AND FIND HELP FROM SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS.

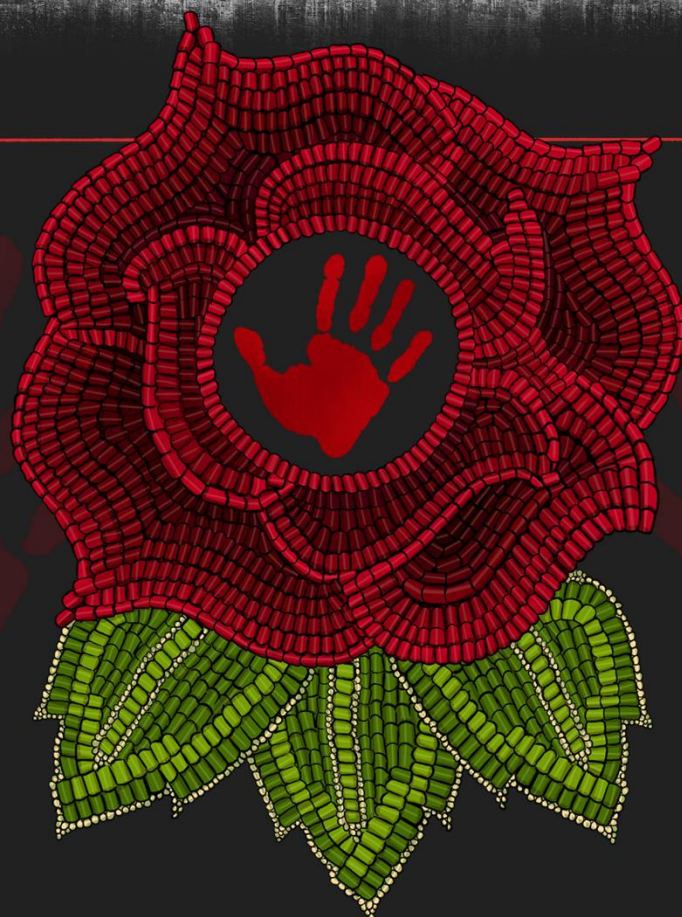
## NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

SUICIDEPREVENTIONLIFELINE.ORG

PROVIDES 24/7, FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS OR EMOTIONAL DISTRESS, PREVENTION AND CRISIS RESOURCES FOR YOU OR YOUR LOVED ONES, AND BEST PRACTICES FOR PROFESSIONALS. ANYONE WISHING TO CONNECT TO THE LIFELINE CAN DO SO BY DIALING 1-800-273-TALK (8255) OR THROUGH THE ONLINE CHAT PAGE.





## PRAYER AT THE FUNERAL OF A WOMAN

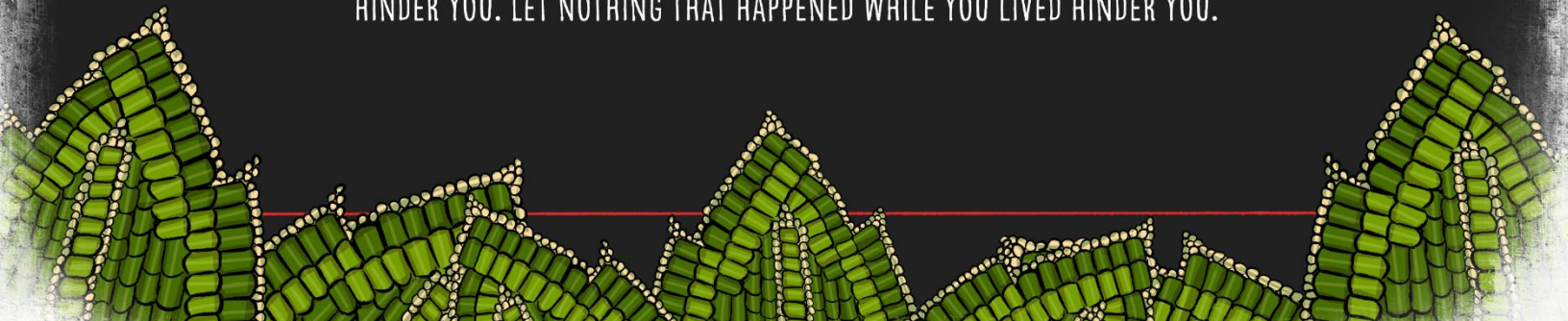
THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE, HAUDENOSAUNEE CONFEDERACY

NOW WE BECOME RECONCILED AS YOU START AWAY. YOU WERE ONCE A WOMAN IN THE FLOWER OF LIFE AND THE BLOOM IS NOW WITHERED AWAY. YOU ONCE HELD A SACRED POSITION AS MOTHER OF THE NATION. LOOKING AFTER YOUR FAMILY WAS A SACRED DUTY AND YOU WERE FAITHFUL. FEASTINGS WERE YOURS AND YOU HAD PLEASANT OCCASIONS.

## PRAYER AT THE FUNERAL OF AN INFANT OR YOUNG WOMAN

THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE, HAUDENOSAUNEE CONFEDERACY

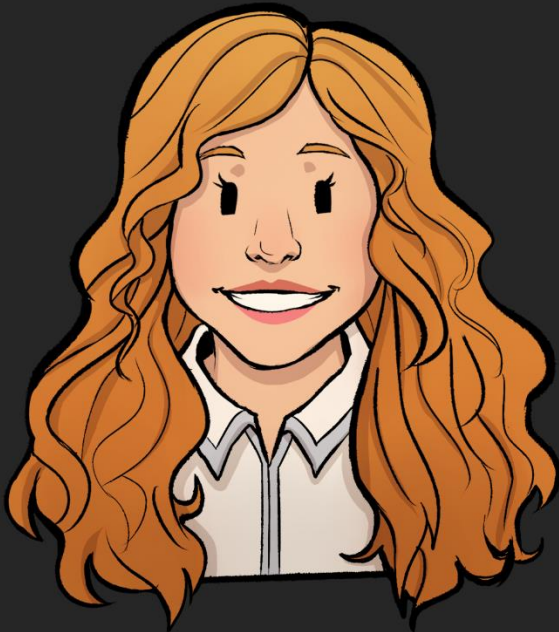
NOW WE BECOME RECONCILED AS YOU START AWAY. YOU WERE A TENDER BUD AND GLADDENED OUR HEARTS FOR ONLY A FEW DAYS. NOW THE BLOOM HAS WITHERED AWAY. LET NONE OF THESE THINGS THAT TRANSPIRED ON EARTH HINDER YOU. LET NOTHING THAT HAPPENED WHILE YOU LIVED HINDER YOU.





# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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## SAMANTHA JOHNSTON

SAMANTHA JOHNSTON IS A GLOBAL THOUGHT MASTER'S STUDENT AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SPECIALIZING IN SOCIALIST ECONOMICS, INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY, AND DISABILITY & LGBTQ+ ADVOCACY. PREVIOUS WORK HIGHLIGHTS ECONOMIC BARRIERS FACED BY NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN TODAY AND THE EVOLVING ETHICS OF WELFARE ECONOMICS. ORIGINALLY FROM MONTANA, THIS QUEER, DISABLED, WHITE WOMAN LOVES SPENDING TIME WITH HER CAT AND BASKING IN SUNSHINE! [@SAMTHEJ](#)



## MACKENZIE NEAL

MACKENZIE NEAL IS AN ENROLLED MEMBER OF THE OGAHPAH (QUAPAW) NATION AND IS ALSO OF SENECA AND CHOCTAW DESCENT. SHE CURRENTLY WORKS TO SUPPORT NATIVE YOUTH PROGRAMS AND TRIBAL POLICY RESEARCH AT THE AT&T CENTER FOR INDIGENOUS POLITICS & POLICY AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY. IN HER FREE TIME, SHE DABBLES IN DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION AND STORYTELLING THAT EXPLORES POLITICS, INDIGENOUS IDENTITY, AND MENTAL HEALTH. [@MACKYNEAL](#)

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE POWELL SCHOLARS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC FOR PROVIDING RESEARCH FUNDING, AND PARTICULARLY TO DR.'S LEHMANN, MEYER, & HERRIN FOR HELPING MAKE THIS RESEARCH A REALITY. THANKS ALSO TO SASHA, MOTO, SAGE, & D.C. FOR SUPPORT.



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THE MISSING & MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN (MMIW) CRISIS REFERS TO THE DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH NUMBER OF NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN & GIRLS THAT GO MISSING OR ARE MURDERED IN NORTH AMERICA. THIS PIECE EXAMINES THE U.S. ORIGINS OF THE CRISIS AND MODERN FORCES PERPETUATING VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE WOMEN AND LGBTQ+ / TWO-SPIRIT NATIVES. FROM TOXIC STEREOTYPES TO OVERLAPPING CRIMINAL JURISDICTIONS, FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE MMIW CRISIS ARE DEEPLY INGRAINED IN MODERN U.S. SOCIETY. WE NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESS THESE SERIOUS ISSUES IN ORDER TO SAVE LIVES AND HELP SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES FIND JUSTICE. THANK YOU FOR LEARNING.

