

Issue of missing and murdered indigenous women



The Native Women's Association in Canada has calculated that about five-hundred aboriginal women have gone missing in Canada over the last 20 years (Kuokken, 2008). Within this paper topics to be discussed include how the abductions and murders in and around North America are affecting the health of these young indigenous females. what places a target on young indigenous females back, how this places a label on indigenous families and communities, what do the indigenous people have to say and what do the police and government have to say on this matter. Is there any action being taken to reduce the numbers of missing and murdered indigenous women in North America, what do we need to do to prevent these terrible situations from occurring, plus how technology can effect the lives of indigenous females.

Women within the ages of twenty-five and forty-four are five times more probable to die from violence than any other women in the world due to violence (Glichrist, 2010). There are many factors as to why these girls are dying. Such as being violently evicted from their homes and being sent out to the streets to freeze to death (Razack, 2014). Drug deals gone bad, sex trafficking, or just cruel racists wanting to feel a sense of power by murdering an indigenous female in cold blood (Kuokkanen, 2008). No case is better than the other. The place where we all call home, here in North America can be a scary location, many people, particularly indigenous women are put in positions where they fear for their life (Glichrist, 2010).

Because Indigenous women experience fear and insecurity, this begins to affect the health of these ladies. Women can be scared to go out in public alone causing them to isolate themselves. Because of isolation and fear the

indigenous female's mental health starts to be affected tremendously. Spending long periods of time alone and in fear can lead to depression. Indigenous women also feel to scared to go to work everyday in fear of co-workers at work or the people along the way to getting to work. This causes the women do not make a sufficient income to live in a safe environment and be able to purchase food with sufficient nutrients. Around four-hundred females have been murdered since 1993. Many of these victims were aboriginal and below the poverty line (Wright, 2001.) Women who are indigenous also experience poverty and homelessness because extreme levels of violence is: formed by the gap between socio and economics, these then turn into consequences of division that the indigenous women have previously experienced, such as the abuse experienced in residential schools, the rights to their land, culture and background, as well as the government and racists looking to erase the cultures and identities of young indigenous females. because of this, many women are faced with dangerous situations making themselves vulnerable. These girls then resort to prostitution and getting themselves in certain situations leaving them homeless due to poverty. (Wright, 2001) Because of racism in north America Indigenous people are at times more excluded from things such as job opportunities, housing, and making as many friends as apposed to white Europeans.

The few women that have returned home after being abducted are returned either abused mentally, physically, or both. Majority of the time the girls have been mentally and physically abused. What has happened to them can not be erased. One may choose to block out certain memories of their

experience from their minds but ultimately the haunting memories will have been impressed within them leaving them with nothing but scars. Because of the physical, mental, and emotional abuse that the indigenous women survivors have been put through, they will need medical attention and counselling support to help the girls cope with what they had been just previously put through. Even though the girls will be needing some assistance the girls do not always know how to find it, so they resort to extremely dangerous situations to help them get through life such as sex for survival. Indigenous women sometimes feel that in order to escape poverty and violence the only option is to get involved in what is called ' survival sex trade on the stroll' (Kuokken, 2008). feel vulnerable and think that it is their only way out of a scary situation, but this is in fact quite the opposite. By performing sex for survival young indigenous women are only putting themselves at a greater risk of violence and abuse. This is because sex trade is all under the table and discrete. Authorities such as the police and government do not monitor such acts closely if at all. Sexual transmitted diseases such as aids can be very easily spread and be given to the indigenous female. Causing the female to become ill, affecting her health in a huge way. By having the police not being a factor in this type of situation this allows males the opportunity to show their version of Authority and dominance by controlling with physical and verbal abuse, creating a high risk of violence for the indigenous females (Kuokkanen, 2008). Placing themselves right back where they started. Alone, scared and hurt.

In the past protests have been made by people all over North America.

People feel that the police are neglecting missing and murdered aboriginal

women cases and not taking them seriously due to racism. They believe that the police and government are writing off these cases as soon as they hear that it was yet another indigenous female. In the United States state agents are not being set in place to help protect these you ladies and are doing no investigations for as to why these cases are occurring. And as a result, indigenous women have lost trust in authorities to support and help them (Kuokkanen, 2008). Although protesting is a good way to start, more needs to be done to change the label of indigenous females and to get the target taken off their backs. During Stephen Harpers time as the prime minister of Canada the government did nothing to help protect these girls and make them feel equal to the rest of Canada. indigenous rights were denied and belittled, and environmental protections were stripped. The Harper government denied the implications of a crisis of violence against indigenous women continually. The government did not fulfill their roll in protecting and helping these women (Saramo, 2016). Because nothing has been done in the past by the government it is especially important that we fight more then ever before to make a difference now and for the future. The number of indigenous women who have been abducted, murdered or both continue to rise rapidly in north America. 34% of indigenous women in the United States of America are raped during their lifetime and that these sexual assaults come with extreme physical abuse (Saramo, 2016). There is no huge division between the United Stated and Canada when it comes to violence, abductions, and murders within the indigenous female community because it is shown that Indigenous women in the United States of America face similar rates of death and people are now starting to join together on both sided of the boarder to honour victims and demand change (Saramo, 2016). As of <https://assignbuster.com/issue-of-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women/>

right now people are gathering to provide support to the indigenous communities visiting both countries and their communities, creating strength between the two countries and coming together to stand up for what is right (Saramo, 2016). new articles have been published to get the word out to people that things need to change. Twelve articles were published covering events, especially memorials, rallies, and vigils, and they provided commentary as well as made sure to get the point across to others that there are structural inequalities (racism) that lead to indigenous females being victimized. Other media discussed how many cases have yet to be solved and that the police and government need to step up to the plate (Gilchrist, 2010). Indigenous women need this support weather they are abducted or not, they are all victims and are potential targets for the next abduction. We hear a lot about people standing up for the Indigenous women, but what are the government and the police doing to help with these cases and this particular situation?

The RCMP have collected DNA samples from people willing to volunteer to help figure out solve cases on violence involving indigenous women. With the sample they are at times able to find suspects. “ following the violent death of eleven-year-old Teresa Robinson, RCMP investigators requested DNA samples from all men living on the remote Garden Hill First Nations reserve in northeastern Manitoba. Officers expect to register about 2, 000 Indigenous men and boys aged fifteen to sixty-six as part of the ongoing Garden Hill investigation. The project is the largest voluntary DNA collection operation in Manitoba and may be the largest voluntary DNA collection project conducted by the RCMP nationwide” (Bailey and Shayan, 2016)

Social media is used by the police so people can contact them and send in tips just like crime stoppers works. Also, social media is a great way for police to communicate with the public on what is happening with there investigations, that way people and police are able to work together to solve cases. Using social media is a way to communicate with everybody as everybody in this day in age uses social media. Therefore, the messages and information can be spread quickly.

technologically powered investigative tools such as the RCMP's #MMIW (Missing And murdered Indigenous Women) campaign which is set in place to reduce the violence and abuse happening amongst indigenous females, will yield results in terms of locating missing females or finally closing cases on unsolved murders. It has become an online point for raising awareness of the crisis, including lots of commentary by the public. these kinds of initiatives could act as a signal to missing Indigenous girls and young women that they are important (Bailey and Shayan, 2016). No legal funding is being provided to the indigenous who are wanting to access lawyers to fight on cases involving loved ones and their abductions as well as murders, and it doesn't seem like funding will be provided for a while if at all. What is completely wrong is that over 24 lawyers were provided to the police fighting cases in court paid for by the tax payers money here in Canada. Citizens of Canada tried so hard to get the provincial government of British Columbia to implement fully and as fast as possible with the 2006 Highway of Tears Symposium action plan which is a protection and support program for indigenous females. After a year of Canadian citizens fighting for the provincial government to hop on board with this plan, the government

refused (Dixon, 2014) because of the government not providing support to indigenous women they begin to feel more vulnerable and alone. Individual cases on missing indigenous women have been thrown out and overlooked many times by federal and provincial governments (Anderson, 2016). For public health professionals, an inquiry set in British Columbia represents a rare opportunity to respond in advance to a predictable mental, emotional and social stressor on a group that has already experienced many generations of trauma. As human beings, people must come together and listen carefully to the many unmet health and social needs of Indigenous peoples, and respond in a collective manner, in partnership with Indigenous individuals and organizations, to the best of our ability (Smylie and Cywink, 2016). Adequate counselling, mental health, trauma recovery, and addictions services for families will be provided with this inquiry. There are several skilled and culturally safe counsellors whose services can be accessed in a timely manner and are covered by provincial or federal health insurance plans. (Smylie and Cywink, 2016).

A girl named Magen is a sister to an indigenous female who went missing and had been murdered in Canada. She thinks that family members are going to feel 55% of inquiry related feelings before the people that will test against the inquiry. The activists fighting for the inquiry hopes that the negative emotions and the reminded haunting memories of the Inquiry will end in an increase in mental health issues such as thought on suicide, depression and addictions with drugs and alcohol. All those factors previously stated are what indigenous sometimes do to self medicate themselves to give them a sense of comfort. The government needs to have

this inquiry set in place to provide addictions supports, counselling and more to help indigenous women recover and cope with the trauma that they have experienced in a healthy and safe way. (Smylie and Cywink, 2016).

Another research study focuses on the role that technology plays in including specific research that documents how communication with digital technologies are used to the trafficking of Indigenous women and girls. Without simplistically blaming technology (Bailey and Shayan, 2016). Technologies, like the internet, can expose Indigenous females to vulnerabilities that effect the dignity and privacy of Indigenous women and girls and their communities, leading to the main cause of missing and murdered indigenous females. (Bailey and Shayan, 2016).

Digital communications technologies make it difficult for females to tell when they are getting themselves into sticky situations and are less probable to be able to protect themselves. 30 Survivors of violence reported being stalked through technology, such as electronic records, web search engines, text messaging, and social media platforms that enhance the abusers' ability to monitor their victims: " SafetyNet Canada has reported that 98 percent of surveyed Canadian anti-violence workers have indicated that they had " supported women and girls who have been threatened and/or intimidated via technology," while 72 percent provided support to women and girls whose online accounts had been hacked. As a result, anti-violence workers have serious concerns around privacy and confidentiality when communicating with women and girls using technology, and 84 percent discuss technology safety plans with women and girls, which might include the way that abusers can misuse technology. While the degree to which Indigenous women and

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girls experience stalking by technological means is not well documented, as discussed in the next section of this article, there is evidence to suggest that those exploited by traffickers may be subject to technological surveillance and monitoring.” (Bailey and Shayan, 2016).

It is recommended that Canada should pay attention and recognize the situation of aboriginal women who take part in prostitution and try to understand and get rid of the trafficking of Aboriginal females. Aboriginal youth are 60 percent of the sexual exploited. messaging on the internet can determine how people view and label things such as sex and violence. In this day in age pornography can increase levels of violence and sexual abuse amongst children. With the internet being present predators can easily access their prey. Due to racism online females self esteem and sense of belonging can be negatively affected making females more vulnerable. (Bailey and Shayan 2016)

As one may be able to tell missing and murdered indigenous females is a huge topic in North America at this present time. Indigenous females are being target and as technology and time evolves the numbers of murdered and missing indigenous female individuals continue to rise, and unsolved cases are beginning to build up. Police believe they are doing the best that they can, however many people disagree. In 2014 a young female was abducted and later found by police. The girl was then released. The police did not take into consideration that this girl was in the foster care system and was alone and scared. She was later found unconscious and taken to the hospital. After being treated she was then sent out on her own again, this time disappearing and never to return (Razack, 2016). The police may be <https://assignbuster.com/issue-of-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women/>

solving cases but more needs to be done. Support needs to be provided to victims and families who have been impacted by traumatizing experiences.

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