



NEW ★ TRIBE

New Tribe Special Edition No. 6



1950s – Today



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UNCOVERING THE SIXTIES SCOOP EPIDEMIC

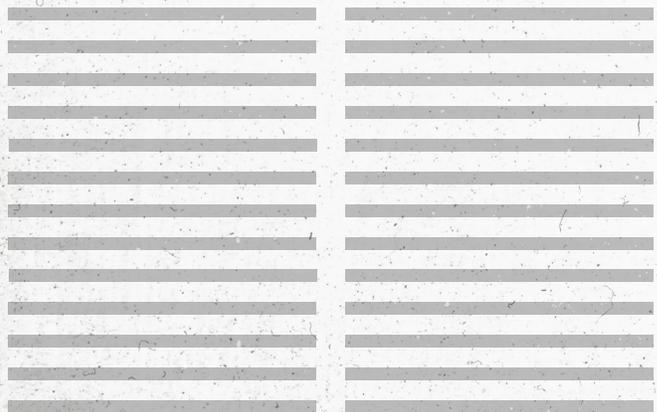


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Elder Wil Campbell, A Sixties Scoop Survivor



New Tribe Magazine is honoured to receive teachings from Elders as we embark on each new issue of the magazine. We would like to thank Elder Wil Campbell for speaking with us as we created the structure of this Sixties Scoop Edition and for sharing his wisdom and his story.

Wil Campbell was born in northern Saskatchewan and grew up in a traditional trapping family who lived in a two roomed log house. The Campbell family's early days are chronicled in the pages of his sister Marie's book *Half Breed* which was originally published in 1973.

Mr. Campbell experienced the traumatic effects of the Sixties Scoop first-hand when he was placed in foster care in 1953, remaining in the system until he was able to literally run away.

Mr. Campbell's tumultuous experiences as a young man finally led him to learn more about his culture. "I had to learn to live and act and learn about what is good behavior and what it's like to belong and what is love," says Mr. Campbell. "Indigenous people are experiential learners, we learn by example," he says.

"Europeans have their own way and they wanted us to be like them, you can't make us the same," says Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell wants those who are currently in foster care to understand that they can be and do whatever they choose, as long as they convince themselves they can do it. "Don't be afraid to live and enjoy life to the fullest, the way we are supposed to," he says.

Mr. Campbell's lived experiences allow him to understand and guide those he works with. He has been involved in cultural leadership both nationally and internationally for many decades. His experience includes being the Sundance Chief for the World Council of Elders and the Pipekeeper for the Healing Our Spirit Worldwide Conference.



Editor's Note

When we started on the research portion of this Special Edition, I randomly reached out through Facebook to Crystal whose name I found through a Sixties Scoop Survivor's page. It wasn't until after a few days of chatting did I come to learn that the Crystal I was speaking to was Christine Cameron, whose quest to find her sister is chronicled in the famous CBC Podcast Finding Cleo, perhaps one of the most poignant exposés on the Sixties Scoop to date.

Connecting to Crystal opened the flood gates on the Sixties Scoop Special Edition and it became difficult to condense such a complex topic into forty pages.

The connection journey continued when we met Flora Johnson, a survivor, artist and now a friend, who graciously shared her story. We also worked with the amazing Sherri Kellock who tells her story through New Tribe's Taylor Van Eyk.

The stories continued when we spoke with Elder Wil Campbell and The Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta President Adam North Peigan, both Sixties Scoop Survivors who are doing incredible work throughout their communities.

So much sadness surrounds the Sixties Scoop epidemic, while at the same time, so much strength is shown by the survivors through their stories and in their everyday lives. In this issue of New Tribe Magazine, we aim to inform those who are unaware of the circumstances surrounding the Sixties Scoop, while we hope to give survivors a stage to tell their stories and share their triumphs.

Stacey Carefoot
Editor, New Tribe Magazine

Special Edition VI The Sixties Scoop

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Alternate Noun Disclaimer

USAY recognizes that this document contains a number of different nouns when referring to the original inhabitants of Canada. While our preferred noun at USAY is Indigenous, USAY recognizes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis as Indigenous People, we also honour and respect the writing and preferences of our contributors therefore have not made adjustments to their choices. We endeavour to not offend any individuals or groups with this decision.

NTM is a publication distributed free throughout the city of Calgary and beyond. NTM's mission is to promote a positive outlook on Indigenous people living in an urban setting by promoting information sharing within the Indigenous and youth communities.

This magazine features topics that may trigger or evoke an emotional response. If you require assistance, please call the Distress Centre at 403-266-4357.

Special Thanks

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and the members of our youth council: Jared Nelson, Morigan Caldwell, Dylan Cherniwchan, Zarek Wright-Winnipeg, Alycia Two Bears, Samantha Robinson

Story Tellers and Contributors:

Will Cambell, Terry Hachey-Collins, Lonnie Dixon, Dawn Fox, Sydney Hamilton, Philip Haynes, Flora Johnson, Sherri Kellock, Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo, Cheyenne McGinnis, Adam North Peigan, Cole Richards, Crystal Semaganis, Olivia Condon Storey, Taylor Van Eyk

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Harold Horsefall Thunder Boy
Photography

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The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the writers and not necessarily those of USAY (the publisher). The publisher accepts no liability or responsibility for plagiarism in the works in this magazine, all writing is presumed to be the original work of the writers.



URBAN SOCIETY FOR
ABORIGINAL YOUTH

The Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) is a not-for-profit charitable organization located in the heart of Calgary. By nurturing self-empowerment and fostering healthy collaboration and communication USAY strives to enrich the lives of all urban Indigenous youth to ensure healthy future generations. USAY provides free services and programs to Calgary's Indigenous youth.



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Oki, my name is Adam North Peigan and I am Blackfoot from the Piikani First Nation in Treaty 7. I am also the President of the Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta (SSISA). SSISA has been incorporated in Alberta for the past four (4) years working with the Governments of Alberta and Canada to bring about reconciliation for all Sixties Scoop Survivors. Although we have achieved much, our greatest accomplishment to date was working collaboratively with the Alberta Government to facilitate a HISTORIC apology from the Premier of Alberta to all Sixties Scoop Survivors on May 28th, 2018.

As an opportunity to educate our youth and non-native brothers and sisters on the legacy and atrocities of Sixties Scoop in Canada, SSISA has travelled all over Alberta with the National Bi-Giwen – Truth Telling From The Sixties Scoop exhibit. It is important that all Canadians understand the impacts of Sixties Scoop in Canada as it is a part of the important history of the Indigenous People on Turtle Island as we address systemic racism towards our people. Through initiatives such as this Special Edition of New Tribe Magazine we can continue to educate and inform. We applaud the Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) for sharing in the responsibility of contributing to your knowledge.

In The Spirit of Reconciliation,
Adam North Peigan
President, SSISA



Greetings from USAY



Colonization is pervasive.

The longstanding history of removing children from their families within the Indigenous community in Canada has had devastating and ongoing impacts. Our community has made heroic efforts in building understanding around Indian Residential Schools and the atrocities that occurred within that system. However, the broader community is still largely unaware that this colonial tool evolved into what is known as the Sixties Scoop.

USAY hopes with this Special Edition that readers learn about the Sixties Scoop and all of its complexities. From the newspaper and television advertisements that marketed Indigenous children to non-Indigenous families to the complicated relationships that came from these foster homes and adoptions and the ways in which survivors have slowly discovered their identity and have begun to find healing.

This issue of New Tribe Magazine features the leaders in the community who are creating awareness, taking action and supporting all of us in moving forward in a good way. The act of exploring survivor

stories, discussing ongoing impacts and acknowledging the support available to move toward healing, are the ways in which we change perspectives and cultivate change.

Without a doubt, this is a heart wrenching issue of New Tribe that discusses the topics of loss, trauma and pain. However, for every moment of hurt, there is double that of resiliency, rediscovering, healing and strength. The courage of those that contributed to these pages is beyond words, and USAY is grateful to them.

USAY invites you to become part of our New Tribe and begin your journey as we honour Sixties Scoop Survivors. For more information on USAY, please visit our website at usay.ca.

Thank you,

LeeAnne Ireland
Executive Director, USAY
Pronouns: She/Her

What U have to SAY

The Sixties Scoop is a forgotten story in Canadian history; unless you know someone directly related to the epidemic, you may not know it even happened. New Tribe wanted to learn what our friends and family know about the Sixties Scoop prior to reading the magazine and compare that to what they will come to learn from this issue. Before reading any further, ask yourself these questions:

What is the Sixties Scoop?

When did the Sixties Scoop take place?

Who led the scoop system?

How many children were impacted?

I know that it ruined a lot of people's lives...it happened a long time ago and children were scooped up in a sense and put into foster homes for adoption. I know it has caused a lot of low self-esteem and confusion, with a loss of identity and culture
- Brooklyn W

The Sixties Scoop was when the Canadian government deemed it necessary to confiscate Indigenous children and place them in segregated residential schools to teach them to "be white." I believe it took place during the 60s but likely went on throughout the 70s. A special department for the government of Canada coordinated it, don't know what it was called. Thousands of children were impacted, I assume, but have no idea at all really.
- Janice K

What is the Sixties Scoop?
Something to do with children, taking them to residential school.
When did the Sixties Scoop take place?
Judging by the name, I'd say close to the 60s, maybe the 50s.
Who led the Sixties Scoop system?
I have no clue, maybe the Canadian government, or American government.
How many children were impacted?
10,500 could be more, could be less.
- Jackson M

What is the Sixties Scoop?
I've never heard of the Sixties Scoop before but judging by the name and following questions its likely to do with child displacement.
When did the Sixties Scoop take place?
It was probably a government program, rather than any individual, and I would guess Canada's government.
Who led the Sixties Scoop system?
I would guess Canada's government.
How many children were impacted?
I'm not sure but would guess +/- 10,000 children.
- Mackenzie M

What is The Sixties Scoop?
When the government basically sold off Indigenous kids.
When did the Sixties Scoop take place?
I assume in the sixties.
Who led the Scoop System?
Unsure.
How many children were impacted?
A guess, 3000.
- Lyvia B

The government decided that Indigenous kids would be better taken care of in the foster homes and adopted out to white people because they thought Indigenous were not capable because of alcoholism and no jobs. Thousands were affected not sure how many thousands. Took place in the 60s.
- Leah M

What is the Sixties Scoop?
The Sixties Scoop was when Indigenous children were taken from their homes. I'm not sure where they were taken.
When did the Sixties Scoop take place?
It took place in the sixties, I think longer than that though.
Who led the Sixties Scoop system?
I'm not sure who led it, I would guess white people in government.
How many children were impacted?
Thousands of children were impacted.
-Cori K

What is the Sixties Scoop?
I don't believe I have heard of the Sixties Scoop before.
When did the Sixties Scoop take place?
I would assume it maybe took place in the 60s.
Who led the Sixties Scoop system?
Probably run by the government.
How many children were impacted?
300+ kids were impacted.
- Cooper R

The Sixties Scoop, Another Act of Forced Assimilation

Don't be misled by the name, the Sixties Scoop didn't just take place for a decade and it didn't begin in the 60s, it actually began in the 1950s and some might say it's still ongoing. New Tribe Writer Cheyenne McGinnis takes a look into the origins of the epidemic.

By Cheyenne McGinnis

The Sixties Scoop was a failure of the Child Welfare system; it was an extension of racist policies outlined in the Indian Act that aimed to "kill the Indian in the child". This process of child apprehension continued from the Residential School days, in 1951 the Indian Act was amended to give provinces jurisdiction over Indigenous Child Welfare through Section 88 of the Act.

Given the socio-economic state of many reserves at this point in time due to numerous factors including the history of Residential Schools, many provinces were underfunded when it came to dealing with this new issue. Instead of providing community resources and supports, the provinces removed many children from their homes and off their reserves. When children were removed, they were placed in foster care and eventually adopted out to predominantly white, middle-class families, often without consent. It is estimated that over 20,000 children were taken during the Sixties Scoop epidemic.

This experience left many adoptees with a sense of loss surrounding their cultural identity. The physical and emotional separation from birth families continues to affect adult adoptees and Indigenous communities today, it was another act of forced assimilation by the Canadian government.

What about the apologies?

A few steps have been taken to address the dark legacy of the Sixties Scoop including an apology issued by the Province of Manitoba in 2015. The apology coincided with the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action. The TRC also cites the Sixties Scoop as an important part of Canada's legislated "cultural genocide" against Indigenous peoples. Manitoba also announced that Sixties Scoop history will be included in school curriculum. In May 2018, Alberta Premier Rachel Notley apologized to Alberta's Sixties Scoop survivors in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, Saskatchewan has also followed suit.

In February 2017, the Canadian government announced that it was ready to negotiate a settlement to the \$1.3 billion class-action lawsuit filed in 2009. Ontario Superior Court

Judge Edward Belobaba ruled in favour of Sixties Scoop victims, finding the federal government did not take adequate steps to protect the cultural identity of on-reserve children who were taken away from their homes. This was the first victory for a Sixties Scoop lawsuit in Canada. The federal government announced a settlement of \$800 million with Sixties Scoop survivors later that year. The Canadian government has yet to issue a formal apology about the Sixties Scoop.

Advocates continue to pressure governments for an apology through open letters and continued action. The impacts of the loss of language, culture and family ties have been felt throughout every Indigenous community in Canada and issuing this apology may be a step towards healing for many of the survivors.

About Cheyenne



Cheyenne (Natoyihkii) McGinnis is a Blackfoot/Cree writer and artist who resides on the West Coast of Turtle Island, she has been a part of New Tribe Magazine for over two years, watch for more of her work in our upcoming issues.

AIM: The sinister adoption campaign that managed to place hundreds of Indigenous children into white homes across the prairies

How the Adopt Indian Métis program became the solution to the “problem” of Indigenous children in the child welfare system.

By Olivia Condon Storey

“Unwanted Indian and Métis children....”

“They are the product of a sudden sharp rise in illegitimate births and marriage breakdowns.”

These quotes, from a CBC broadcast that aired in 1968, are just a few of the disparaging slogans used as part of an adoption program aimed at placing apprehended Indigenous children into white homes.

The Adopt Indian Métis (AIM) program saw hundreds of First Nations and Métis children from Saskatchewan used as part of a horrifying marketing campaign to help the province’s overburdened child welfare system cope with an increasing number of Indigenous children entering it in the 1960s.

Largely heralded as a success at the time, AIM took a systematic approach to removing Indigenous children from their families and adopting them into predominately white homes, away from family and culture, permanently.

With a two-year grant from the federal and Saskatchewan provincial government, the pilot project, which started in 1967, succeeded, in part, due to a rise in the prevalence of the social

work profession and increasing government interference on First Nations.

In her recently published book, *Intimate Integration: A History of the Sixties Scoop and the Colonization of Indigenous Kinship*, Métis adoptee, author and University of Saskatchewan Professor Allyson Stevenson examines the program and how Canada’s history of colonialism and the child welfare system in Saskatchewan enabled its success.

“Understanding the AIM program is part of a larger process that saw increasing interventions by social workers in Indigenous families,” Stevenson says. “In Saskatchewan in the 1960s, First Nations and Métis children were increasingly being apprehended by social workers across the province.”

Stevenson says that the back and forth between the federal and provincial governments on whose responsibility it was and who was going to carry the cost for the Indigenous children entering the system at the time created a problem for which AIM was the solution.

“These jurisdictional issues are also a really important

component in the Sixties Scoop,” she says. “You have, with the AIM pilot project in 1967, a way for the provincial government to promote the adoption (specifically) of First Nations and Métis children permanently into, although they maintain it wasn’t specifically for, white families.... of course the messaging was very much geared towards enticing white families to adopt Indigenous, First Nations and Métis children.”

A newspaper marketing campaign saw picture ads of adoptable Indigenous children describing one boy as a “... handsome boy with sparkling dark eyes, brown hair and light tan skin,” and others featuring phrases like: “Without parents, without a home free from prejudice and full of love, these children of Indian Heritage face an uncertain future,” and “Once this child’s life and future was uncertain, lonely. He faced the problems of a Métis child growing up without parents to guide him.”

Over the course of AIM, between April 1967 and January 1970, 160 Indigenous children were placed into adoptive homes.

“While the numbers represent a

WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW



IS THERE A HOME THAT NEEDS A FAMILY?

Rose Marie 5, Deanna 4, Bobby 3 and Cindy 2, are a family of three sisters and a brother who need a father and mother. They would like to be adopted into one home. Interested couples of Roman Catholic faith, with or without children, are asked to contact:
Frank Dornstaeder, Director

Assiniboia Times September 20, 1967

large increase, in reality, of those coming into care, only 3.5-4.5 per cent of children were adopted, with the rest remaining in foster care only rarely returning home," Stevenson says in *Intimate Integration*.

"The logics that animated the Scoop persist," she says.

"Battles between provincial governments and First Nations governments about how children should be looked after, the continued high rates of children in care, the over-incarceration of Indigenous Peoples in Canada which removes parents from their children and children from their parents... When you start looking and seeing the world through this lens it's hard to see any change that has taken place."

But through it all, Stevenson says it's important to know that there was significant push-back from the First Nations and Métis

communities to this program, and others like it.

"There has been a really long history of resistance to this and I know that some people perceive it as playing politics with the lives of children and I don't think anything can be further from the truth," she says, referencing the Saskatchewan Native Women's movement and Saskatchewan's Métis Society as a few that raised their voices to the issues.

"The logics that I'm talking about aren't those legislative changes, they are those fundamental belief systems where people can't see the long-term damage that these policies have, or they see it and that's just not something they're willing to make fundamental changes to."



Author of *Intimate Integration* Dr. Allyson Stevenson
 Photo credit Kelsey Victoria Photography



Dr. Allyson Stevenson's book *Intimate Integration* documents the rise and fall of North American transracial adoption projects, including the Adopt Indian and Métis Project and the Indian Adoption Project. In the book, Stevenson argues that the integration of adopted Indian and Métis children mirrored the new direction in post-war Indian policy and welfare services.

Survivor Stories

With over 23,500 Sixties Scoop survivors (at last count) across Canada and beyond, we are grateful to all those who have shared their stories with us. They have helped us to gain understanding, learn more and create the articles that make up this issue of New Tribe Magazine. Over the next few pages, you will learn about the personal heartbreaking, inspiring, traumatizing and encouraging experiences of three individual Sixties Scoop survivors. Sherri, Flora and Crystal have all honoured us with their willingness to share. Here are their stories...



If you are experiencing emotional distress and want to talk, contact the toll-free Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 or the online chat at hopeforwellness.ca open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Meet Sherri Kellock

By Taylor VanEyck

Sherri Kellock is a Sixties Scoop survivor with an inspiring story of reconnection. Kellock works as an Indigenous Youth and Community Liaison, Youth Justice where she uses her past experiences to make connections that help individuals and the community. Sherri shares her story in hopes that others can relate and through relation she hopes to inspire courage in others to push through feelings of fear and reconnect with their culture.

Sherri's experience began when she was born at Edmonton's Charles Camsell Indian Hospital (see story on page 20) she was placed in foster care and adopted out to a couple who was looking for a baby girl to complete their family. Sherri's adoptive parents were unaware of the Sixties Scoop epidemic and adopted Sherri to give her the best life possible. Sherri's connection with her adoptive family is healthy and strong. "It is really important to me that I acknowledge my blessings that I was adopted into a loving, caring, supportive family who I consider my family. They did not treat me different," says Kellock. Despite this, being adopted separated Sherri from her culture and left her struggling with identity throughout her youth.

As a child, Sherri longed to know why she was put up for adoption and would make up stories in her mind about her past. During her 20s she attended post-secondary education and met individuals who encouraged her to discover more about her identity. One day she entered a government office in downtown Calgary knowing very little about her background, she left with a status card and the knowledge that her family stemmed from Bigstone Cree Nation. This enormous lead was her starting point in finding her birth family. "I'm grateful to have reunited with some of my birth family, they have made me feel loved and welcomed and also helped me

understand what really happened back then and for that I'm grateful," says Kellock "This helped me immensely in my own healing too," she continues.

Becoming involved with Indigenous groups while attending post-secondary school was extremely helpful in her path to reconnection. Kellock describes it as, "a point where opportunities just started coming into my path such as Elders and others sharing their stories of hope with me." From there, she began volunteering with the Calgary Aboriginal Awareness Society. "This started my journey of not only working but also living in our urban Indigenous community, giving me a feeling of belonging," she says. She continued to pursue volunteer work within the community and eventually a career with the City that allows her to be involved in improving the lives of Indigenous individuals.

In her work she sees the effects of intergenerational trauma. "Whether it be a youth who is wanting to reconnect with their culture or with co-workers who are learning about Intergenerational trauma and colonization," Kellock says she is able to apply her personal experience to her work situations when appropriate.

Today, Sherri is a mother of three and is involved with the urban Indigenous community, incorporating tradition into her life. She stresses education and research of topics such as the Sixties Scoop as the best way that allies can contribute to reconciliation. She continues to hope for change in social systems and believes it is her duty as an Indigenous person to look out for future generations, the way previous generations have looked out for her.



Meet Flora Johnson



Flora Johnson's Calgary home is bustling.

It's a house full of artwork, full of kids and grandkids and it's full of

love.

Sadly,

Flora's homes

haven't always been this way.

Born in Flin Flon, Manitoba and raised near Sherridon, a small

community in northern Manitoba, Flora was taken from her family when she was five years old and placed like so many others into the depths of hell they called the foster care system. "When they came and took me, they took me to a foster family in the Pah and that's where I was raped several times," says Johnson who bravely and openly shares her story. "I thought they would put me in a safe place, I never did feel safe," she says.

Flora, one of nine children recalls the day she was taken away. "What I remember is Gary and I holding onto each other and crying, we were four and five years old and it took three adults to pull us apart. I remember Gary leaving in a car

and I never seen him again." The pair would come to be separated from each other for 47 long years. Gary is Flora's younger brother; they were the babies of the family.

Five was considered an age when a child was becoming too old to be adopted out back in the 1970s, despite this, Flora came to be adopted to a family in Apple Valley, Minnesota. "I got on an airplane with a social worker and when I got off the plane, I was handed over to an adoptive family. I remember the boy was wearing a leather jacket with fringe and I just kept running my hands over the fringe, it reminded me of my dad, and the moccasins he always wore," she says.

"At first when I got to the adoptive home, they treated me like I was somebody," says Flora. That positive treatment wasn't going to last. When she was in grade 1, the not-so-loving 'new' family had to go before a judge, presumably to finalize the adoption process. "We came out of the courthouse, got into the car and my adoptive mother turned around and said to me 'we now own you' and everything changed after that," says Flora. Flora, the little girl who was no older than six had completely lost her language and her culture at the hands of her new, not-so-loving, family.

As the years passed, the situation worsened. "It was hard growing up," says Flora as she describes a time when a

white friend came to her crying, explaining they could no longer be friends because the friend's parents didn't want her around Flora. Enduring physical abuse at the hands of her adoptive parents combined with the emotional anguish of missing her family led Flora to leave the Apple Valley home and find her way on her own when she was only sixteen. She hitchhiked across the United States and endured more hardships than most can imagine. "I was raped, beaten and thrown out in the alley," she says while explaining a time her life was saved by a taxi driver in Colorado.

Flora came to find herself widowed with three children when she went to see a medicine man on the advice of a friend. "I went to a sweat and had a vision that I needed to go home," says Flora. Through a repatriation program she drove across the border and back home to Canada. Once she was home, her reconnection journey began.

Her reconnection led to a mixture of good news and sad news. Flora learned that her mother Josephine had been murdered on January 8, 1973 outside of Winnipeg, right around the time that Flora's adoption had been taking place. Josephine Campbell Sanderson was stabbed 42 times, she was 36. Flora continues to grieve the loss of her mother and continues to search for clues about her murder and the events that led to it. Having

nothing of her mother (not even a photograph) has left Flora hurting but hopeful that one day she will find answers.

Flora was able to meet her birth father before his passing, she and her children spent some valuable time with him on his trap line. "The first time we saw each other, I was so nervous, he looked at me and said Flora my girl, I am so sorry," says Flora as she explains the reunion. Flora has been able to reunite with numerous family members, sadly all but three siblings have passed away.

Flora has put in a lot of hard work finding her family and getting to know them, but hard work is not something she is afraid of.

After returning to Canada and settling in, she earned her B Pressure Welding ticket, this opened doors and possibilities for her but also came with its own set of racial stereotypes. "When I first arrived at camp, they put me to work cleaning, until they realized I was their B Pressure Welder," says Flora.

Now retired from welding, Flora has turned to her creative side. Already an accomplished artist, Flora aspires to become a graphic designer. "The more I work on my artwork, the more I am at peace," says Flora.

That peace also comes from having a support system in her family and through her journey to reconnect with her culture.

"My art comes from within, it helps me heal," she says. It's no coincidence that red is one of the most prominent colours in her artwork. Red for strength, courage and love; all of the things Flora Johnson is today.



I spent most of my life seeking answers. My brother Roland who passed away this year always asked me to ask questions, but I felt like I shouldn't because it might bring up hurt feelings. Now I regret not asking. So please, ask the questions and find the answers.

- Flora Johnson

On the left is a Flora Johnson original art piece created specifically for this Sixties Scoop edition of New Tribe Magazine.



Creator's Children

An Introspective on Sixties Scoop Survivors

By Crystal Semaganis

I am a child of the Sixties Scoop; as the youngest of seven children, my family's experience was chronicled in the CBC podcast *Missing & Murdered: Finding Cleo*, our quest to locate the last of my remaining siblings, Cleo Semaganis-Nicotine.

Having your very DNA denied is a lifelong sentence for survivors. We have been renamed; our birth certificates altered to erase Indigenous connections. Many Sixties Scoop survivors have regained their Indian status, but too many remain unaware of their Indigenous origins, their heritage and culture. Imagine being Cree, Inuk, Dene, etc., but not knowing it because you are living your life in Texas, sadly unaware. This is an international tragedy.

The trauma is immense. It manifests itself in social issues that have taken lives and livelihoods of survivors since the apprehensions began. Suicide, substance abuse, addictions, homelessness, law and justice issues and incarceration, mental health issues including PTSD, OCD, anxiety and depression, loss of culture and identity and perhaps the most insidious of all, attachment disorder (also known as reactive attachment disorder).

Attachment disorder is the inability to form trusting relationships with other human beings, it derives from trauma in early childhood. Attachment disorder affects Sixties Scoop survivors like me, I have trouble processing emotions and having normal human reactions. Steady employment is a challenge because of the inability to deal with conflict. I have a crippling fear of abandonment and rejection. I trust very few people. The thought of



exploitation silences us and robs us of meaningful relationships that others take for granted. Estrangements and rejection are common for survivors with over half of Sixties Scoop adoptions failing, my own included. Holidays and family events like Christmas, weddings and reunions are triggering, often you'll find us alone on these occasions.

Lateral violence is also an issue, for without our culture, language and community anecdotes from childhood, Indigenous communities do not know us. We often have fractured relationships with our biological families and nations. We were not raised in the culture and we can be reminded of this time and time again when

seeking employment, training and other opportunities within Indigenous circles.

We Sixties Scoopers are a hardy and resilient bunch. We ARE adaptable, and in my case, isolation meant a great deal of time was left for introspection. In me, it has forged an activist where an Indian Child once was in small town Saskatchewan facing racism on the playground with no other Indigenous people in sight. This experience is echoed thousands of times over in homes and spaces across Mother Earth, and thus I have called us, the Sixties Scoopers - Creator's Children.

"I have chosen to no longer mourn for that which I cannot have, in my healing journey I view myself as Creator's Child."

Sometimes, we are forgotten by our communities, sometimes we fight to belong. Oftentimes, we crave a family that we will never have and we must accept this. I have chosen to no longer mourn for that which I cannot have, in my healing journey I view myself as Creator's Child.

It is my own truth, that Creator gave us sacred breath to meet each day and our experiences, traumas and lack of cultural upbringing and language do not diminish us. We are sacred, hardy people and worthy of spots in Indigenous circles. We are resilient despite decades of isolation. We have a vast capacity for kindness, doing good and advocating for that which we know all our people deserve.

All My Relations

Crystal Semaganis aka Christine Cameron currently resides near Timmins, Ontario. She is a Sixties Scoop survivor, an activist, mother, grandmother, artist and dancer.

Finding Cleo



Learn about Crystal (also known as Christine Cameron) and the Semaganis family's struggle to find their sister Cleopatra Semaganis-Nicotine by listening to the CBC Podcast *Missing & Murdered: Finding Cleo*.

The award-winning investigative podcast's quest to find out what happened to Cleo is filled with twists and turns that open listeners ears and eyes to many of the atrocities of the Sixties Scoop.

Cleo was taken from her home in Saskatchewan and adopted out to an American family in the 1970s. Cleo's birth family had lived for many years with the assumption that Cleo had been raped and murdered while trying to hitchhike back to her Saskatchewan home, they learn that this wasn't the case; what actually happened to Cleo was also heartbreaking.

Each of the ten episodes uncovers layer after layer of new revelations complete with what can only be described as divine interventions perhaps by Cleo herself, as her spirit seemingly guides her sister and podcast host Connie Walker to her final resting place.

Listen to CBC Podcast Missing & Murdered: Finding Cleo where you get your podcasts.





In Our Own Words: Mapping the Stories of 60s Scoop Survivors Diaspora

Reconnecting the Disconnected Survivors of the Sixties Scoop

The path to reconnection will usually start with calls to government agencies which can often result in dead ends and the searcher going around in circles trying to get answers. With the creation of a new online network and GIS mapping tool, information for some Sixties Scoop survivors could literally be at their fingertips.

GIS (geographic information system) is a tool that captures, stores, checks and displays data related to geographic position. By relating data, GIS can help us better understand spatial patterns and relationships and in the case of the project *In Our Own Words: Mapping the Sixties Scoop Diaspora* Sixties Scoop survivors can log on and see that they are not alone. "The intended purpose of the map was to raise awareness and have a visual representation of what trafficking of Indigenous

children looks like at a global level," says Colleen Hele-Cardinal, cofounder of the Sixties Scoop Network and creator and visionary of the GIS Mapping tool.

Survivors can choose to participate by registering inside the system, adding as little or as much information as they are comfortable with. Some survivors simply add a few dates and locations while others have uploaded stories, video clips and other details.

A striking visual is created when survivors share where they were taken from and where they were taken to. The interactive map is a stark reminder that children were taken from their home, their province, their country and also their continent; sent off as far away as places like New Zealand and South Africa.

"Seeing the map has the visual impact of what displacement and loss of identity means; severing our relationships of language and connection to land has had catastrophic impacts for us. But there is hope as more and more of us share our truth and reclaim our cultures and ceremonies," says Hele-Cardinal who is also a Sixties Scoop Survivor.

In Our Own Words: Mapping the Stories of 60s Scoop Survivors Diaspora is a collaboration between Dr. Raven Sinclair and the Sixties Scoop Network (formerly the National Indigenous Child Welfare Network).

For more about the Sixties Scoop Network and to access the map go to sixtiesscoopnetwork.org find the map at the links on the top of the page.

USAY brings families together with a little flour, a pinch of salt and a lot of love

Due to the pandemic and related public health restrictions, USAY has had to rethink how we engage Indigenous youth and their families. We wanted to combine online skill building, traditional practices and something delicious that families could enjoy together. Frybread seemed like the perfect way to accomplish all of these goals.

Enter Russ Baker and his talent for making excellent frybread. Thirteen participants, some as young as nine logged on to a virtual session hosted by USAY and learned about the history and origins of frybread and how it came to be a staple in our diet. While our dough was rising, we watched videos that discussed the significant role bread has played in cultural identities and childhoods.

Russ spoke about how his Elders have told him that if you have a gift to make sure you share it with the world in the right way. His gift as a great frybread maker and teacher was evident throughout the workshop. Throughout the session, participants shared how food has impacted their lives in a positive way. The Head Chef from Telus Spark also joined the session, we are hoping he becomes inspired to bring more Indigenous food to his menu.

A special thank you to Alberta Health Services for their support in making our virtual cooking class a reality



Fry Bread Recipe

INGREDIENTS:

4 CUPS OF ALL PURPOSE FLOUR
2 TSP OF BAKING POWDER
1/4 CUP OF POWDERED MILK
PINCH OF SUGAR
PINCH OF SALT
2 CUPS WARM WATER
CANOLA OIL FOR FRYING

"This recipe has been influenced by Nohkums, teachers, supervisors, and others who have given me many tips over the years"

-Russ Baker

DIRECTIONS:

MIX ALL DRY INGREDIENTS THOROUGHLY
MIX WARM WATER AND STIR GENTLY UNTIL DOUGH IS SLIGHTLY WET
COVER AND LET RISE FOR 30 MINUTES
PUT FLOUR ON CLEAN COUNTER SO THAT THE DOUGH DOES NOT STICK
SIFT FLOUR ON WET DOUGH UNTIL COMPLETELY COVERED
FLOUR HANDS AND START TO KNEAD DOUGH OUT GENTLY
TAKE A CUP TO MAKE THE SHAPE IN THE DOUGH OR PULL OFF PIECES
AND THEN SPREAD OUT
PUT 1 OR 2 HOLES IN CENTRE
TEST OIL WITH TINY PIECE OF DOUGH; IF IT DANCES IT IS READY
PLACE IN OIL AND FRY UNTIL LIGHT BROWN ON BOTH SIDES
PLACE ON PAPER TOWEL TO SOAK UP ANY EXTRA OIL

-RECIPE BY RUSS BAKER



Photo by Chaz Prairie Chicken



Photo by Dawn Fox

Book Review

Keeper'n Me

By Richard Wagamese

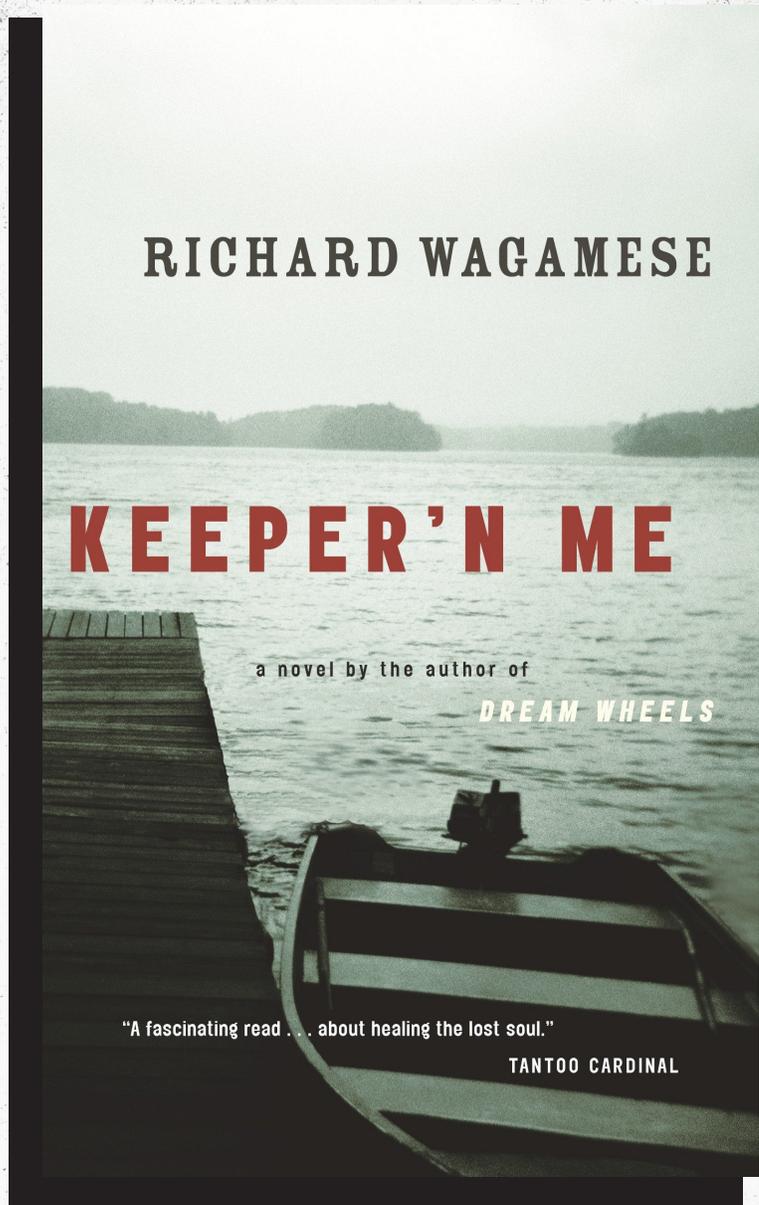
Reviewed by Lonnie Dixon

The book *Keeper'n Me* by Richard Wagamese is a strong compelling tale of survival, resilience, identity issues and the journey to find your way home while overcoming obstacles along the way. The book tells the story of an Anishinaabe boy named Garnet Raven and the trials and tribulations he has faced in the stages of his early life through to his journey home within himself. Being the product of the Sixties Scoop, Garnet Raven was taken away from his family at age five and put into foster care by the Ontario Children's Aid Society.

Bouncing around from home to home being the brown skin kid, Garnet slowly lost his place in the world. After twenty long years of being away he finally finds his way back to White Dog, his family, his people and his way of life. This book is all about identity issues early in life. Raven finds himself asking, "who am I?" "Where do I fit in?" "Where do I belong?" These questions haunted him and followed him for years until he followed his calling home.

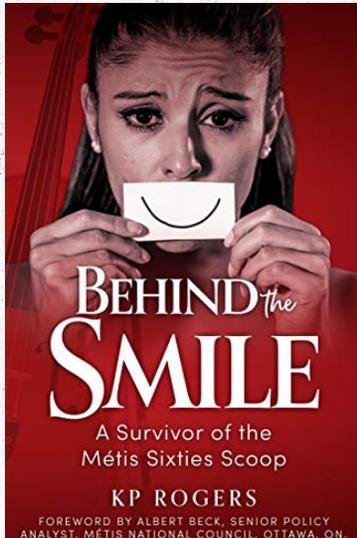
This piece talks about the effects of the Sixties Scoop and

the subsequent struggle with identity issues. It demonstrates how he found his way out; it tells how hard it was growing up being the only brown kid in white home after white home. Throughout my review I've learned a lot, not only about the book, but also about myself. I have asked myself many of the same questions about identity and connecting myself back to who I am.

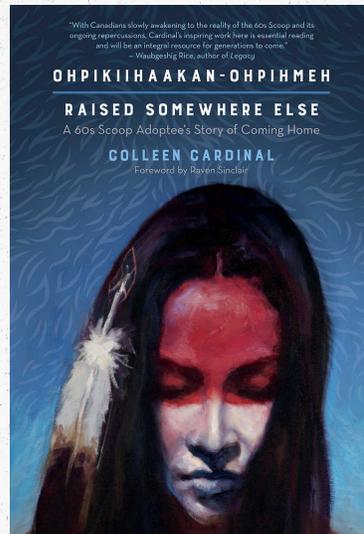


SUGGESTED READING

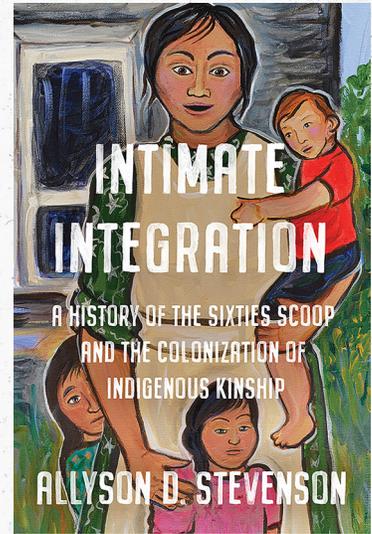
New Tribe writer Terry Hachey-Collins has compiled a list of suggested readings for those looking to dig deeper into the Sixties Scoop.



Behind the Smile: A Survivor of the Métis Sixties Scoop
KP Rogers



Ohpikiihaakan-ohpihmeh (Raised Somewhere Else): A 60s Scoop Adoptee's Story of Coming Home
Colleen Cardinal



Intimate Integration: A History of The Sixties Scoop and The Colonization of Indigenous Kinship
Allyson Stevenson

ABOUT THE COVER



The cover of this issue is an homage to Flora Johnson's story. Flora was taken into foster care when she was 5 years old. As part of that process, she was forced to have her photo taken either for her file or perhaps so she could be advertised through one of the government programs such as Adopt Indian Métis. Flora recalls that they placed her in an uncomfortable dress that did not fit and forced her to look happy, when she didn't appear happy enough, she was slapped, leaving a mark on her cheek. The child posing on the cover is Flora's granddaughter. We chose this interpretation for the cover and the corresponding AR as a way of confronting that story, to show the resiliency and safety that Flora has created in her own family.

The Charles Camsell Indian Hospital

By Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo



Sitting near the epidemic intersection of Indian Residential School and the Sixties Scoop is the Indian Hospital. These institutions popped up across Canada in the mid 1900s, first posing as places to treat Indigenous people from the north who were diagnosed with tuberculosis while later becoming institutions reportedly using patients for experimental medicine and conduits for the continuation of the cycle of systemic racism. The exterior shell of one of these hospitals still sits atop a small hill in Edmonton's Inglewood neighbourhood. Some say it's haunted...

The Canadian government organized "X Ray Tours" from the 1940s to 1960s that sent planes to remote Indigenous communities in northern Canada to screen for tuberculosis. Indigenous people including infants with symptoms were shipped to the Charles Camsell Indian Hospital for government mandated treatment.

Like other institutions created for the purpose of assimilation, those who experienced living at the Charles Camsell were subject to dietary/culture shock and language barriers. They were taken far from home and had very few, if any, visitors. In Gary Geddes book *Medicine Unbundled: A Journey Through the Minefields of Indigenous Health Care*, Linda McDonald describes being sent to the Camsell from Yukon. "My earliest memory is of mom walking with me to the little lake we lived beside. She carried me in her arms, and she was crying. That is all I remember of mom saying good-bye. I think I recall being on a plane with someone."

McDonald goes on to explain her first experience upon arrival at the Charles Camsell. "The

bathroom seemed very large. A nurse all in white was taking my clothes off and making me stand in a shower. I think this was my first shower experience. I was crying and she said, "shut up" and banged my head against the wall of the shower. I remember the smell of the shower and the large bars of Ivory soap," continues McDonald. Another contributor to Geddes' book mentions, "I was in the Charles Camsell Hospital in Edmonton from 1960-1962...I went in an Indian girl and I came out a white girl."

But not everybody came out of the Camsell alive and some of those who left the Camsell were sent to live with families that were not their own.

The relationship between Indian Hospitals and the Sixties Scoop epidemic is one that is still being explored.

"Not everybody came out of the Camsell alive and some of those who left the Camsell were sent to live with families that were not their own."

For more information on the topic of Indian Hospitals check out Gary Geddes book *Medicine Unbundled: A Journey Through the Minefields of Indigenous Health Care* and to learn more about the Charles Camsell Indian Hospital go to <https://ghostsofcamsell.ca>



A Reflection

When agreeing to research and write about the Charles Camsell Indian Hospital, New Tribe writer Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo had no idea it would open a Pandora's box of emotions

By Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo

I never imagined a writing assignment could be so difficult and hit so close to home. When I accepted the Charles Camsell assignment there was a lot I didn't know. I didn't know my biological father and one of his brothers were born there, neither of whom know the history of their first few years of life. I did not realize that I would feel guilty after asking them to share a story they didn't have.

My biological father and both of his brothers spent a large part of their childhood in foster care and the child welfare system, none of them have ever shared a happy story about their experiences. One of my uncles is a storyteller like me and has countless tales that sadden me. Stories about being neglected, abused, scrubbed so hard to get the 'dirt' off his authentically Stoney skin. He even has a story about being a second-hand witness to a murder of another Indigenous child in care in his neighborhood, sharing how the non-Indigenous foster father was never investigated, punished or charged. I will never forget my uncles' stories; they're burned in my memory. I thought I was accepting a



Photo of Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo taken by Indigenality Photography by Colé Richards

story assignment about an Indian Hospital; I didn't know that it had impacted my family. Researching the Charles Camsell Indian Hospital has brought up family trauma, PTSD, grief, sadness and loss for me as a First Nations woman. Which speaks to the horrific legacy and deep trauma of Indian Hospitals and the Sixties Scoop.

Editor's note: We wish to thank Sissy for her honest account of the impacts of working on this issue and encourage anyone who is struggling to reach out to their local Distress Centre.

If you're experiencing emotional distress and want to talk, contact the toll-free **Hope for Wellness Help Line** at 1-855-242-3310 or the online chat at hopeforwellness.ca open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Sky Woman Reuniting

"This is my mother, my brother Gary and myself," says artist Flora Johnson. She and her brother were reunited after 47 long years apart due to the Sixties Scoop. The original art piece is acrylic on canvas and the original size is 18"x24".

About the Artist

Flora Johnson, a talented artist and a Sixties Scoop Survivor lives in Calgary, she enjoys spending time with her family and spoiling her grandchildren. Flora's work can be seen on her website <https://florajohnson.wixsite.com> and her Facebook page ART by Flora.

Welcome to Della's Story

We had first envisioned Della's Story Escape Room as an in-person experience however, like other programming and projects USAY has been forced to pivot. To do so, USAY created an online interactive journey that has already impacted hundreds of participants.

Della's Story Virtual Escape Room participants work in teams who are positioned as junior scientists from the future. The junior scientists are tasked with uncovering memories from three separate rooms:

- A Residential School Classroom
- An Old Barn
- An Office

The memories serve as clues to unlock the final room and more importantly they are reminders, glimpses of Della's past that teach participants about what happened to Della and so many other Sixties Scoop Survivors.

We invite you to turn the page and take a look into Della's Story...



In the beginning...

The Della's Story Virtual Escape Room idea began with Della (a long time USAY volunteer) feeling conflicted about the funds she received from the Sixties Scoop class action lawsuit. USAY staff sat down with Della and calculated that she was paid less than 25 cents per hour for all the work she did as a child on the farm where she was fostered to. This served to alleviate some of the guilt Della was feeling.

The USAY team reviewed the file Della received from the lawyers and it included documents filled with blacked out redactions, despite this, Della was finally able to confirm her parent's names (something she had been unsure of for 50 years).

After working with Della to unlock the clues to her own life, USAY realized how difficult it is for Sixties Scoop Survivors to find out anything about their past. The virtual escape room "Della's Story" shows participants how hard it is to piece together information and scattered memories. Della hopes that those who take part in the Della's Story Virtual Escape Room experience can take away at least these three things

- Sixties Scoop Survivors need good allies
- The Sixties Scoop is not over, it has just evolved
- Programs that promote culture and language have helped her on her path to healing



Trained Facilitator Jared (who is also Della's Grandson) walks participants through the interactive escape room.

◆◆◆
YOU CAN TRY IT FOR YOURSELF!
Contact USAY (403) 233-8225

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

"Amazing job with this!"

"It was awesome!"

"It was fantastic! THANK YOU! I would love to see this continue and spread the word for people to participate in this impactful experience."

"Gratitude for taking an issue to people in such an effective, creative and personal way. It is stories that will heal us all, and stories we engage by being as fully present to the trauma/experiences as possible."

"Keep up the great work.

The innovation that USAY approaches with all of your work is invaluable. You bring stories to life and find ways to validate lived experiences, while also delivering messages of how efforts to change and dismantle inequitable systems is possible - and that these possibilities exist within community when the resources are placed with them."

Meet Della



Della is a Sixties Scoop Survivor from the Neskonlith First Nation in British Columbia. She was taken from her family in 1964 and fostered onto a farm. She spent her time there with her biological sister and other Indigenous children. Della left the farm when she was 18 years old.

In the early 1980s, Della went back to her Nation and was able to meet her brother who attended Kamloops Indian Residential School. At that time, she learned that many of her family members were deceased or could not be located. From that point forward, Della started her own family and became a mother to five children.

Della started her healing journey while USAY supported her in recovering information about her story, identity and family history. Through that process, and the feelings of being lost in information, USAY and Della worked together on a virtual escape room that could allow others to understand what this process of rediscovery is like.

Della is happy to have her story act as a catalyst for future conversations, knowledge building and the creation of good allies.

Reflections

DELLA'S STORY

I was able to participate in this interactive and engaging experience with a group of colleagues. As an Indigenous woman, I want to express my gratitude to USAY and Della for bringing this opportunity to light. It is the talking of, learning about and engaging in actions like this that open up the conversation of impacts that STILL impact our Indigenous communities in Canada. If you have not done this yet, I encourage others to add this as part of your learning experiences and share what it has meant to you. Hand to Heart.



- Christy Morgan Trellis

I was so impacted by Della's Story. I think it is a really creative, modern, and respectful way of telling Della's story and making it representative of the experience of so many children. Every time I learn more about the history of colonization in Canada I am left staggered by the reality, and yet hopeful as I see the resiliency of the community. Thank you for allowing YMCA Calgary to be a part of Della's story and for continuing to find interesting ways to use technology to engage us in these important conversations.



- Jason Lidbery
YMCA Calgary

Gone are the days when we should expect Indigenous people to change and assimilate. The time has come for systems to change, shift and adapt. One of the crucial ways to change a system is when you change attitudes and beliefs. Della's story is an impactful, innovative way of amplifying a truth within the shared history of this country, that is not often told or known. It has contributed to the knowledge creation we are embedding within the fabric of our organization, in an effort to shift and change our practice as a system. Hand to heart to Della for sharing her story and to USAY for amplifying it in this unique and innovative way!



- Tim Fox
The Calgary Foundation

Back in December of 2020, members from the Truth & Reconciliation Commission (TRC) suggested that after 5 years of releasing the final report, it is now more urgent than ever for Canada to implement the 94 Calls to Action. Truth comes before Reconciliation and reconciliation cannot happen without the truth. Canadians need to understand the truth in an authentic and meaningful way.



- Patrick Twinn
ATB

Della's Story did just that for our team - it provided us with an opportunity to learn a little bit about Della and her story in the Sixties Scoop. It is events like this that foster allyship and reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and mainstream society. Former Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild suggested that if he was able to, he would add a 95th Call to Action saying "We must work together."

The Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta

Supporting those disconnected by the Sixties Scoop through empowerment

The Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta (SSISA) has a mission to promote reconciliation, healing, education and advocacy of survivors and their families through the inclusion of all Indigenous people by lobbying so the actions of the Sixties Scoop never happen again.

The non-profit society was formed to represent Sixties Scoop survivors in Alberta, to create dialogue and engagement and develop true reconciliation. Their hard work and collaboration efforts led to an official apology being given from the Alberta government to Sixties Scoop survivors in Alberta back in 2018.

Post apology, the group continues to raise awareness and educate others on the effects of the Sixties Scoop. "It's always been a goal of ours to educate mainstream Canadians on the atrocities and legacy of the Sixties Scoop," says SSISA President Adam North Peigan.

SSISA has partnered with groups including the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta and Alberta Education to ensure teachers and nurses are well informed on the Sixties Scoop and the impact on society.

SSISA facilitates the *What Was Lost: Reflections from The 60s Scoop* presentation, an experiential, participatory exercise that encourages participation by main steam Albertans. "This exercise opens up a lot of eyes and ears to the trauma," says North Peigan.

The group has also toured Alberta with the national exhibit *Bi-Giwen: Truth Telling from the Sixties Scoop*.

"When one of our non-Native brothers or sisters walk through the exhibit they come out of there and they are very apologetic. They say that they



are sorry, and they tell us they didn't know that happened in Canada," says North Peigan about the impacts of the exhibit which will be on display once again when Covid-19 regulations allow. "This is a remarkable piece of work. If you ever get the opportunity you have to come and check it out, make sure you have lots of Kleenex because you're going to come out quite emotional," says North Peigan.

Knowing the stresses that Covid-19 has placed on the lives of Sixties Scoop survivors, SSISA has been working to deliver Covid care packages to survivors across Alberta. From Cardson in the south to High Level in the north, the group has delivered more than 5,000 care packages all the while continuing to assist survivors over the phone and via video conference providing support and guidance to those who might need it. SSISA also works as a conduit between government and survivors who are seeking assistance in navigating settlement issues.

Settlement Payments 1-844-287-4270

Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta 587-530-5910

If you're experiencing emotional distress and want to talk, contact the toll-free **Hope for Wellness Help Line** at 1-855-242-3310 or the online chat at hopeforwellness.ca open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



The Sixties Scoop Class

Action Settlement

By Lonnie Thomas Dixon

One day while walking home, I found nest of baby chicks. I brought one inside to show my grandparents. Instantly I got in trouble and told to take the baby bird back where I found it. I was told we do not disturb natural order and we don't take things away from their natural state. "That is its home that Creator made for him. That's where it gets its loving, its nutrients, its identity. That is where it needs to be, with its family and community. We don't disrupt balance," my grandparents said.

It took a long time for me to understand the meaning of what I was told and why I had to take the bird back. Today as an empowered Indigenous male, I understand the reasoning of the lesson my grandparents taught me all those years ago.

November 2017 the Sixties Scoop Agreement became a discussion piece on the agenda of the Canadian Government. But it wasn't until December 2018 that it became an official

document and mediation tool to resolve a long-standing issue between the Canadian Government and Indigenous and Inuit peoples of Canada.

The Class Action Settlement (CAS) was proposed in November 2017 to compensate, heal and help restore those that lost so much because of the Sixties Scoop. In the winter months of December 2018 this document was finalized and approved to set in motion.

The Canadian Government agreed to compensate everyone who identified as Indigenous or Inuit and were taken from their homes between January 1, 1951 and December 31, 1991. Those who meet the prerequisites then go to the next step of the application process where they need to provide more documents to either be approved or rejected. Back in June 2020, the courts approved an interim \$21,000 payment to those who have been accepted.

Due to Covid-19, the process has been a long, grueling one for not only the Sixties Scoop survivors but for the people who act on behalf of the Government. The process has been slow as the claim deadlines have been pushed back. Those in office reviewing and going over applications are having to deal with a huge backlog

of applications due to the restrictions which are making for unhappy Indigenous folk waiting to hear back from the Government.

Waiting for approval is one of the many things that can trigger survivors. The whole process and recollection of the events is opening old wounds.

"Money doesn't take back harmful actions, money doesn't erase a cultural genocide, money isn't an apology and doesn't hold those accountable for what they have done."

Perhaps money is the first thing that comes to mind for many Canadians when they hear about CAS but money doesn't heal trauma. Many survivors requested that compensation come in education at all levels about the event, compensation to help revitalize languages in communities where it is being lost, compensation in cultural awareness about Indigenous peoples. Money doesn't take back harmful actions, money doesn't erase a cultural genocide, money isn't an apology and doesn't hold those accountable for what they have done.

Bill C-92



By Terry Hachey-Collins

In 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, through multiple avenues criticized how legislation treats and handles Indigenous families. Not only did they feature real personal stories of individuals who had first-hand experience, but they also made a ground-breaking ruling in the First Nation Child & Family Caring Society case. This case found Canada had been discriminating against First Nations children. Canada has been held in non-compliance with this decision seven times since the decision was made, but something did come out of it; the recognition of a long-existing problem has brought on Bill C-92, an Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis

children, youth and families. Bill C-92 came into force January 1, 2020.

The Act in itself is a step forward for Canada and an even bigger step for family services. A framework that acknowledges Indigenous culture as legitimate has been needed for countless lifetimes since the colonization of the continent. Among other things, it promises prenatal care and recognizes that this care is the starting point for the welfare of Indigenous children. Bill C-92 also states that children can no longer be apprehended due to socio-economic reasons, meaning they cannot be taken from their homes due to poverty.

Lawyers and social workers will have to make reasonable ongoing efforts to address issues at home so that taking the child out of their home becomes the last resort. When a child has been taken out of their home, placement priorities must now consider the child's proximity to extended family and community, notice must be sent to the child's caregiver or parent, as well as the leading body of their community. These same individuals also have the right to represent the child in question if the case goes before the courts for any reason.

Bill C-92 recognizes a simple truth: one size does not fit all when it comes to Indigenous child and family services. Under Bill C-92, Indigenous communities and groups are supposed to be free to develop policies and laws based on their particular histories, cultures and circumstances.

Bill C-92 Quick Facts

- Bill C-92 affirms the jurisdiction of all Indigenous Peoples with regards to child and family services

- According to Census 2016, Indigenous children represent 52.2% of children in foster care in private homes in Canada, despite accounting for only 7.7% of the overall population of children under 15

- The first five Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada relate to child welfare, including Call to Action #4 which calls "upon the federal government to enact Aboriginal child-welfare legislation"

- Budget 2016 included new funding of \$634.8 million over five years, and Budget 2018 included new funding of \$1.4 billion over six years in the First Nations Child and Family Services Program to ensure the safety, security and well-being of Indigenous children

- In 2018-2019, the total First Nations Child and Family Services Program funding under Indigenous Services Canada was more than \$1.1 billion



A different direction: Calgary association weaves culture and understanding into the child welfare system

For nearly three decades, **Four Directions Foster Parent Association of Calgary** has been bringing families together

By **Olivia Condon Storey**

Recognizing a significant gap in resources for Indigenous kids in the child welfare system back in the early 1990s, Martha Semeniuk decided to take matters into her own hands.

With a few other dedicated individuals, Martha opened the Four Directions Foster Parent Association in November 1994 to expand support available to primarily Indigenous kids in foster care across Calgary and southern Alberta.

From visitation supervision to transportation needs and cultural teachings, Martha's journey has brought her to the place where she has become a beacon of hope for the over-represented Indigenous kids and families in the province's child welfare system. It began in the same way it's going now: strong and humbling.

"Our mandate is to provide services to youth in care and to support them with their culture, connect them with their roots, to their home in their community," says Martha. "There are definitely gaps (in the system) so we try to bridge that gap between the ministry and the kids in care to give them the knowledge they should have."

As a foster child and later a foster parent herself, Martha says she understands the importance of having access to care and services that are not a priority in the current child welfare system.

"We try to encompass everybody involved so we provide a safety net for our kids," she says. "I think our biggest thing is to be flexible, a lot of times we'll get special requests and if we can do it for you, we'll try."

4D, as the organization is affectionately known, offers services such as assisting struggling foster families, serving as a go-between for youth and their care workers, kinship services for the province, private guardianship adoption, home study writing, legal counsel for youth and much more.

The agency has taken an all-encompassing approach; offering support and resources to children and their families to ensure the best care practices will follow the families into their future, outside of the system.

When she decided to get into this line of work, Martha spoke with community members and conducted her own research to find exactly what

niche needed to be filled. "First, I made myself very familiar with the customs and traditions of Treaty 7 and I got to know a lot of Elders and tried to get knowledge on how I could assist the kids with the trauma and separation and try to get them home," she says.

"But sometimes," says Martha, "the kids just need a "safe space."

"A lot of kids just come to the agency to eat and that's fine, food fills the belly and makes love," she says, adding that they try to serve traditional foods and incorporate traditional experiences like sweats and medicine walks with all kids, including the non-Indigenous ones.

As part of that safe space, Martha said the handprints of yellow, red, black and white along the back wall in 4D's common room illustrate this feeling perfectly. "You can tell this is a place of warmth and love because of the handprints on the wall and that's the first thing I do, it's sort of their trademark like this is your home," says Martha. "We'll provide you with all the love and food you need to keep you filled."

Among the countless other services offered, the agency focuses a lot of energy on connecting or reconnecting kids with their siblings in other foster homes and offers support to the biological families when they've been reunited.

"It's about reconnecting the family and making sure they stay together," says Martha. "A lot of damage is done when children are separated from their families, so we try to encourage our families who have lost rights to their children to get parent training or assistance with their addictions, get into proper housing, and we provide access to all of that."

With more than a dozen employees and countless children and their families served over the past 26 years, Martha said it's the little things that bring smiles to everyone's faces.

"The success is at the end of the day when you get kids who are now in their 30s coming back saying 'if it wouldn't have been for you guys, I wouldn't be where I am today. I made it through, I've graduated, I now have a family of my own and I know how to be a parent, how to love my child and how to love myself through all of the trauma,'" recounts Martha.

"I think our happiest moment is when a child goes home, and they don't go back into the system again."

Meet Martha Semenik



As a Sixties Scoop survivor, a foster child and later foster parent Martha's passion to serve her community came from lived experience.

Thankfully, Martha's story in the foster care system is a positive one. "In foster care, I was treated very well. I don't have a bad story to tell, I don't think I would have made it as far as I did without the foster parents that I had who were very, very supportive," says Martha.

She came to Calgary in the 1980s and got involved in the local sports scene, coaching softball and hockey, serving as a summer sports director in the Marlborough community.

"I wanted to keep kids off the streets, keep them involved and I felt that keeping kids actively involved in something they liked, the less problems there would be," says Martha, adding a specific point of pride comes from winning provincial championships with her all-girls softball teams.

But then there was a bit of a "lull" in her life.

It was this short period of downtime that inspired her to start a dance troupe and ultimately form the Calgary Métis Cultural Dancers/Jiggers.

"We performed in all four corners of Alberta and we did the Calgary Stampede Parade for 10 years, we were always the highlight and won many awards." Martha still offers dancing and jigging programs through 4D but now spends most of her valuable time dedicated to keeping the agency running like clockwork.

"Two years ago, I was given the privilege of being given a Blackfoot name: Niitaki which means strong, old, energy, love, caring, compassionate, all of those words that we don't hear that often," she said. "That was one of the most honourable things in my life."



Colouring It Forward - Pays It Forward

Recently, the world has rediscovered the therapeutic value of colouring pages; sitting down and colouring between (or outside) the lines is no longer child's play.

By Terry Hachey-Collins

Colouring It Forward started as a dream for founder Diana Frost and has turned into a passion that keeps gaining momentum. "The dream told me I would produce a series of colouring books with Elders and artists," says Frost. "I liked the idea of helping people to relax, to enjoy the beauty of the artwork and the wisdom of the Elders," she continues.

A colouring book featuring real stories from Elders and Indigenous art had not been widely available until Colouring It Forward, the availability and affordability of the products has made a big difference in some people's ability to connect with culture. "People have told me that the books help them to learn their culture. One lady said it was the first time she was able to connect meaningfully with her foster children," says Frost. The act of colouring is reported to have therapeutic benefits including stress relief, reduced anxiety and increased relaxation. Colouring It Forward has become most well known for their high-quality colouring books currently featuring Cree, Dene, Blackfoot and

Ojibway wisdom but they do offer much more.

Through their website Colouring It Forward showcases and sells Indigenous art pieces, notebooks, calendars and other work by Canadian Indigenous artists while at the same time giving back to the community in numerous ways. Colouring It Forward has also released their first subscription box. "The Equinox Box supports Indigenous small businesses, artists, and musicians while helping people take care of themselves," says Frost about the self-care box. The first of the self-care boxes was in collaboration with Sacred Scents, Loretta's Wellness Circle and other Indigenous artists.

To learn more about Colouring It Forward check out their website colouringitforward.com

Colouring page generously supplied by Colouring It Forward. Colouring page art by Kalum Teke Dan.





Ribbon skirts are in the spotlight after movement sparked by young Saskatchewan girl

By Sydney Hamilton

Photos submitted by Lana Kulak



Symbols of strength, survival, protection, power and support, the contemporary history of the ribbon skirt can be traced back to the 18th century when trade items were introduced and used in conjunction with traditional animal hides and natural paints.

Distinguishable by their vibrant colours, eye catching designs and unique patterns, no two ribbon skirts are the same. Some skirts have a few ribbons adorning the hem of the skirt while others bring the ribbons all the way up to the hips. These ribbons are all different colours, representing varying aspects of one's identity and expression of character and often depicting a cause that the wearer is supporting.

The ribbon skirt tradition was brought into the spotlight when Isabella Kulak wore one to formal day at her school in Saskatchewan. After being shamed for not dressing like the other children who were wearing store bought clothes, Isabella shared her experience with her parents. Through social media and other outlets, a movement quickly took shape, marches were held and support was expressed in person and online.

There has been an outpouring of support from across the country. Isabella and her family

continue to receive gifts and tokens of appreciation and support including ribbon skirts, dresses, hoodies, t-shirts, books, thousands of letters, pictures, paintings, cards and much more. She's even received frankincense oil and jewelry as those who have been touched by the story reach out.

Isabella's bravery has also earned her a spot as an honorary member of the RCMP Women's Advisory Committee. "The RCMP is changing their dress code for Indigenous members and is making a RCMP ribbon skirt, Isabella is being gifted the very first one," says her mother Lana Kulak.

The ribbon skirt is a contemporary form of traditional Indigenous attire that has been adapted by countless Indigenous communities as a form of resilience and strength. The pain in shaming someone for their attire is a common feeling shared by sisters, aunts and grandmothers around the world, however this movement has enabled them to show pride in their ribbon skirts and all that they mean to Indigenous women and girls.

A Look at Jordan's Principle

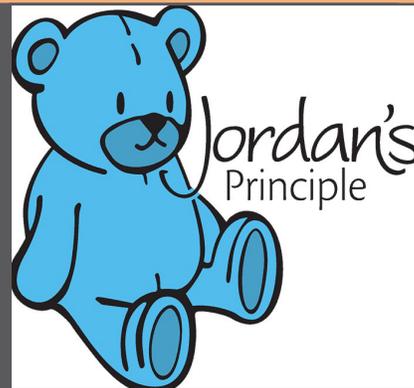
By Phillip Haynes

Jordan's Principle makes sure all First Nations children living in Canada can access the products, services and supports they need, when they need them. Funding can help with a wide range of health, social and educational needs, including the unique needs that First Nations Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA children and youth and those with disabilities may have.

The principle is named after Jordan River Anderson, an Indigenous child from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba. Jordan was born with a rare genetic condition that required him to stay in the hospital since birth. By the age of two, he had the chance to return home with his family, but the indecision from both provincial and federal

governments on who would pay for Jordan's at-home care prevented him from leaving the hospital. The argument lasted until he was five when sadly he fell into a coma and passed away before being able to go home.

His family fought for Jordan's Principle so that other Indigenous families and youth would not have to face what Jordan went through. The Principle passed in the House of Commons in 2007 and has been impacting families since. Nicole Aubin is one of the many mothers that has applied for the Jordan's Principle for her children. Transitioning her kids to online school meant that they needed the necessary electronics, but she did not



have them. Nicole submitted a request through Jordan's Principle and within a month, she acquired laptops for her children. She expressed how she was satisfied with how quick communication was and that she is grateful for the help Jordan's Principle allowed her to receive. Experiences like Nicole's continue to show that Jordan's Principle is changing Indigenous families across Canada.

For More Information contact
Jordan's Principle: 1-855-JP-CHILD (1-855-572-4453)

USAY Members Contribute to Indigenous Place Making Initiative

Resiliency, strength and creativity is part of our DNA as Indigenous people. This creativity and strength is clearly evident in USAY's upcoming art installation, *The Beginning* which is part of the Indigenous Placemaking Initiative within the Calgary Library. This initiative develops traditional and contemporary artworks that promote an educational understanding of Indigenous peoples and cultures within Treaty 7 territory – including signatory Nations and non-traditional Treaty 7 Indigenous peoples.

USAY is working with a group of Indigenous female-identifying people to create a layered glass sculpture that will be located at the Shawnessy Library. The art installation will be comprised of seven pieces of layered glass that have been sandblasted to depict Treaty 7 creation stories, told through weeks of consultation with Elders. USAY looks forward to the unveiling event during Aboriginal Awareness Week.

Right: This sketch was created by Kiera First Charger, one of the artists working on *The Beginning*



Podcast Recommendations

New Tribe Staff Writer Sydney Hamilton shares four podcasts that have broadened her view on the Sixties Scoop

Media Indigena

Sixties Scoop Survivors take Canada to Court

Raven Sinclair is a Sixties Scoop survivor exploring the systemic issues of Canada's child welfare system. She unravels the contrasts between what the government said it was trying to do, and what was actually occurring on the ground during child removal. Sinclair touches upon how child removal continues to this day but has morphed into a new disguise.



2 Crees in a Pod

60's Scoop with Colleen Hele-Cardinal

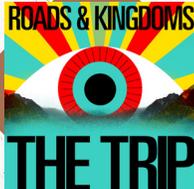
Colleen Hele-Cardinal addresses the trauma that forced removal has on one's identity. Feelings of loss and distance cannot be filled with money but rather require guidance and support.



The Trip

Surviving the 60's Scoop

An explicit podcast that looks at the raw realities of the events leading up to, during and after the Sixties Scoop. Nakuset, reveals her lived experiences of being adopted during the Sixties Scoop by a Jewish family and how it led her to the activist work she currently does in Montreal.



Sask Scapes

The 60's Scoop – with guest Wayne Smoke Snellgrove

Wayne Smoke-Snellgrove recounts what it was like to be a child adopted during the Sixties Scoop to a family in the United States. The listener is taken through the inner thoughts of a child unaware of the concept of family and culture and how that led to his addiction later on in life while being a professional athlete



The Path to the Apology

On June 11, 2008, when former Prime Minister Stephen Harper stood in parliament and issued an apology to the students of Indian Residential Schools, Adam North Peigan was watching and began to wonder. "I was really, really happy that Residential School survivors were getting acknowledged, one thing that was going through my mind was you know what, I didn't go to Residential School but what about what happened to me?"

Again in 2015, North Peigan watched another televised apology, this time from the Premier of Manitoba apologizing to Sixties Scoop survivors. It was that evening that North Peigan decided he would do what he could to prompt an official apology in Alberta for those who suffered similar experiences as he had as a child, knowing that this would be a significant part of the healing journey. "This was the first time I had seen a national leader stand up and acknowledge what had happened to me," says North Peigan. "If Manitoba can do that, why not Alberta," was his next thought and so began a letter writing campaign and his quest for Sixties Scoop survivors to receive an apology from the Province of Alberta.

Many letters, lots of lobbying and three years later, North Peigan was joined by hundreds of others in the Alberta Legislature on May 28, 2018 when Premier Rachel Notley issued a formal apology. An apology that was created with input from survivors across Alberta.



President of the Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta, Adam North Peigan, addresses the crowd gathered at Alberta's legislature after the apology.

To you, the survivors of the Sixties Scoop, to your children, to your parents, to the rest of your families, and to your communities, from me as Premier of Alberta, from all of us here as the elected representatives of the people of Alberta, and on behalf of the government of Alberta, we are sorry.

For the loss of families, of stability, of love, we are sorry. For the loss of identity, of language and culture, we are sorry.

For the loneliness, the anger, the confusion, and the frustration, we are sorry.

For the government practice that left you Indigenous people estranged from your families and your communities and your history, we are sorry.

For this trauma, this pain, this suffering, alienation, and sadness, we are sorry.

To all of you, I am sorry.
In Cree the word is ni mihtâtam.
In Dene the word is bek'e nasdlí.
In Beaver the word is sekaa-tah.
In Nakota the word is wécã ptac.
In Blackfoot the closest term is tsik skâp(h) tsap spinaa'n.
In Soto the closest term is gaween-ouchi-dahh-do-taw-naan.
In Michif the term is ni mihtatayn.
We are sorry.

-An excerpt from the apology delivered in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta by Premier Rachel Notley on May 28th, 2018

What did you learn about

At the beginning of this project, we asked a cross section of individuals what they knew about the Sixties Scoop. Some had vast knowledge while some knew nothing at all about the epidemic. We gave those same people the opportunity to review a draft of this magazine, this is what they had to say...



I have learned so much from this magazine. First of all, I was amazed by the strong and resilient survivors we met through reading the articles. They were stolen children who carry the lasting impacts of these atrocities by our government with them. The survivors have gone on to make such a difference. I was surprised by my lack of knowledge of the Adopt Indian Métis Program, Charles Camsell Indian Hospital, Jordan's Principle, Bill C-92 and the compensation for those affected up until 1991?!! For me, the most impactful article was about AIM. The children were advertised with the feel of a Sears catalogue, and there was actually a government grant for the program. Ruthless!!

-Leah Mathieson



After reading through the magazine draft, I've learned a lot about the specifics of what the Sixties Scoop is and how far reaching it was both geographically and psychologically. One thing that really stuck out to me was how far it displaced children from their families. I never imagined that the children would have been taken outside of the country, let alone to other continents like Europe and Australia, yet this happened fairly readily during the Sixties Scoop. Another point that stuck with me was how this would impact someone who was displaced that far psychologically, and how this could completely eliminate any connection to their heritage because they may never even know they were displaced. The last thing that I never really considered being possible was how long this went on, with the settlement covering up until 1991, just 30 years ago. Through all this, a common theme was that it seems like most of the survivors were hopeful in that they would be able to reunite with lost families and cultures, and that the lessons that can be learned from this will hopefully be taught to younger generations so that something like this doesn't happen again.

- Mackenzie Morpew

out the Sixties Scoop?



The depth of how far the Sixties Scoop went was something I was not aware of. The sheer number of children involved and the fact that there are some people still out there who don't even know that they were a part of it; to say I am shocked is an understatement. This piece of history is sadly overlooked and undertaught. The story that stands out most to me is The Charles Camsell Indian Hospital, I'm not even sure I have the right words to convey how shocking this story was to me. I truly appreciate the survivors coming forward to share their stories. I for one, commit to continuing to learn about the impact these events have, and will remember these stories as I continue to pursue the history of the Sixties Scoop.

-Cori Kupsch



I am most surprised by the fact that I had never once heard of the Sixties Scoop, something so widespread and atrocious, I am also surprised that it is still so recent and even ongoing. The sheer scope of the epidemic is baffling to me; it's difficult to imagine that something which affected so many people could have the obscurity that it does. I found Flora Johnson's story incredibly impactful. It hurt to learn that such racially and ethnically driven atrocities happened in our recent history, to people who are around today, but her resilience is inspiring, and it is comforting to know that she was able to find her family and a path to healing.

-Cooper Roe



I guessed that reading the Sixties Scoop Special Edition would conjure up some emotion for me as I am slowly exploring my own Métis heritage. I was more than correct in that assumption. Where I was wrong however, was in assuming the Sixties Scoop was part of 'recruiting' Indigenous children into Residential Schools, but after reading this magazine, I am appalled to discover these to be entirely separate atrocities, accounting for tens of thousands of little children being displaced from their homes and families, to have all of their lives and the lives of their future generations altered in such permanence is beyond comprehension. To the individuals who were brave enough to recount your stories here and to those whose untold stories you represent, you now own a piece of my heart. You are the definition of resiliency. I see you.

-Janice Kupsch



SACRED
TEACHINGS

ÁÍŚÍNAI'PI

WRITING ON STONE

