



# #ItStartsWithUs

Database Report  
February 2019

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## Introduction

### Honouring the Lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Trans and Two-Spirit People

#ItStartsWithUs is a collaboration between No More Silence (Tkaronto-based), Families of Sisters In Spirit (Ottawa-based) and The Native Youth Sexual Health Network (spanning both sides of North America's colonial entities) intended to honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, trans and two-spirit people (MMIWGT2S). As writers located in Tkaronto (what is now called Toronto), we begin by acknowledging that we live and work on stolen Indigenous lands that have been shared by the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Huron/Wendat peoples for thousands of years.

As part of our work, and with the assistance of Dr. Janet Smylie (Métis) and Conrad Prince of the Well Living House at the Keenan Research Centre in Tkaronto, we created a community-run database that documents the violent deaths of such individuals in Ontario from the 1960s to 2016. In this report, we highlight some of the most crucial findings of the project.

First, we would like to acknowledge the women, families and communities who have been organizing around the MMIWGT2S issue for decades, especially when police and governments have failed to acknowledge, listen or act despite the ongoing murders and disappearances. We recognize that the origins of this work lie in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside where community has been gathering names for their February 14<sup>th</sup> Memorial March since 1991. It is primarily through events and gatherings, organized by loved ones and community groups, such as the February 14<sup>th</sup> Strawberry Ceremony in Toronto and the Full Moon Memory Walk in Thunder Bay that these stories are reported, remembered, and honoured on public record. In fact, in 40% of cases included in the database, we were able to identify a site or event where the person was explicitly honoured. We honour the generations of work that has brought us to where we are and continues to teach us how we must move forward in achieving justice together.

Media coverage on the broader issue of MMIWGT2S and on specific cases has increased thanks to the decades of pressure from families and community groups. As a result of this, further names have been verified, confirmed and entered into the database. For instance, the CBC MMIW database has been helpful in pulling together, verifying, and updating information on cases. However, the journalistic record remains flawed and incomplete, and even though a government-led National Inquiry has held hearings across the country for the past two years, deaths and disappearances continue to go unreported. In one case, in spite of being a recent violent homicide, absolutely no media coverage could be found in relation to the death. The case was only recorded in the database through a community contact, once again highlighting the need to centre and prioritize family/community knowledge, networks and outreach.

The decision to begin compiling the names gathered on February 14<sup>th</sup> and to research the stories came out of a 2013 No More Silence community gathering titled Violence No More. At the time, the only serious research that had been conducted was that of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) and Amnesty International, which included a scant 500 names. Of course, we knew this was only the tip of the iceberg and rather than place our trust in official institutions, we decided to do the work ourselves. The RCMP, which initially declared NWAC's findings to be exaggerated, released more data (over 1000 deaths) after being publicly shamed when Ottawa-based researcher Maryanne Pearce published her dissertation in 2014, which documented over 800 deaths of Indigenous girls and women.

We began data entry in January of 2014. The traumatizing nature of the work (documenting grisly details of murder) was evident from the start. After we realized just how incapacitating and time consuming the research was for those of us whose personal trauma was being triggered, we made a collective decision to delegate the research to allies who generously offered their time. This research could not have been done without them and we are forever grateful for the hard work and the great care they invested. Kate Miley, Shaista Patel, and Maryam Zafari have been tireless and unwavering in their commitment to this work.<sup>1</sup>

The database includes stories of women, girls and Two-Spirit people ranging in age from young children (even toddlers) to Elders. The stories almost all have extreme violence in common. Every single story broke our hearts. While we rely on classifications used in the media and stemming from police reports such as "dead" and "missing" and other jarring categories of how their lives were ended (e.g., blunt force trauma, strangulation, etc.), we also want to note that each death documented in this report was mourned by families, mothers, daughters, fathers, children, friends, other relations and the broader community.

As the research proceeded alongside our continued advocacy for justice and public education, another aspect of the work emerged. With the assistance of Maggie Cywink, the sister of Sonya Cywink who was killed in London in 1994, we began creating online tributes honouring how these women, girls, trans and Two spirit people had lived their lives—where they grew up, what their nicknames and hobbies were and so on. This has proven to be a strong healing force for the bereaved. In this way, we pay tribute to their loved ones who survived and even thrived, despite carrying the burdens of colonialism such as residential schools, the child welfare system (almost always a factor) and the gendered discrimination of the Indian Act.

Here is an excerpt from Sonya Cywink's tribute page:

*Sonya was a domestic diva long before it became fashionable, a queen of grilled cheese and inventing a few new sandwiches along the way. She taught Mag to dip chips in ketchup long before dipping sauces or ketchup chips were popular. She never had an unkind word for anyone and would see the good everywhere and in everyone.*

Sometimes, as was the case with Sonya's, the tributes led to members of the public coming forward decades after the incident with new leads in the unsolved investigations of the case.

Aside from the Trans and Two Spirit page overseen by Dr. Alex Wilson and Jeffrey McNeil, and the Newfoundland and Labrador page overseen by Amelia Reimer, we have not had community members with the capacity for the work come forward from other provinces.

This report focuses on Ontario as we believe that this work is best conducted locally. We have gathered many more names since the research was completed in 2016. There were 11 murders in 2018 alone (see our complete list at the end of this document). While we do not have the capacity to continue the database, we remain committed to documenting the ongoing violence in our community lists. As is the case with all of our work, we prioritize our independence from government institutions and have never looked for funding from such sources. We continue to look to community for leadership and guidance.

We know that so long as racism and settler colonial impunity for these murders—most recently evidenced in the not guilty verdicts of Tina Fontaine’s killer and in the case of young Colten Boushie—exist that the violence will persist. The violence is also intrinsically tied to resource extraction and the ongoing need of capitalism to exploit land and resources. Only a deep shift in power relations will end this devastation. We continue to work for decolonization and the restitution of loving ways of relating to each other and the land that will bring about healing and peace for all our relations.

Miigwetch,

Audrey Huntley

### Community Knowledge

91% of the names we researched came from lists and information sources gathered by Indigenous women

- 70 names from NMS
- 59 names from Maryanne Pearce DB
- 34 names from other lists and reports
- 14 names from news sources
- 9 names from community submissions

**Table 1: Sources of Information**

Original Source	
NMS List	70
Pearce DB	59
ON NWAC List	14
News	14
Community	9
United SOS	8
"Native News"	6
"Our Stolen Sisters"	4
OPP Report	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>186</b>

## Section A: Research Summary

# #ItStartsWithUs

### Where did the names come from?

The database team has **collected 186 names in total, of which 117 names have been entered in the database.**

In the first phase of research, we concentrated on consolidating and verifying names already in circulation. We worked with several primary sources of information, described below.

### Primary Sources

#### No More Silence List

We began with a list of **70** names of MMIWG2S in Ontario, published by No More Silence (NMS). These names were largely gathered through community knowledge at the annual February 14<sup>th</sup> Strawberry Ceremonies in Tkaronto, organized initially by NMS and now by an organizing committee including NMS.

#### Maryanne Pearce's Database & Thesis

The second major source of names was Maryanne Pearce's PhD thesis, *An Awkward Silence: Missing and Murdered Vulnerable Women and the Canadian Justice System* (2013), which she generously shared.<sup>ii</sup> This research helped to verify details about individual cases, and provided an additional **59** names.

#### Amber O'Hara

Alongside these two sources, Amber O'Hara shared her research with us before she passed from her archived website, [www.missingnativewomen.org](http://www.missingnativewomen.org). This resource was especially important in providing additional information on cases that were hard to verify. In many instances, these additional details helped to identify research leads and verifiable sources.

### Additional Resources

While researching the **129** names from the NMS and Pearce lists, we identified an additional **57** names for investigation and found several other sources of information, including news articles and community contacts. Please see the **Table 2** for full details.



## Criteria for Inclusion, Verification and Confirmation

In order to be included in the database the name had to **1- meet the criteria** (woman, girl, trans and/or two-spirit person, died a violent/suspicious death in Ontario), **2- be confirmed Indigenous** (by community knowledge or other reliable source), and **3- be verified by two official sources** (newspaper article, police information, report or government/court document).

In cases where names came from direct community knowledge, the need for two “official sources” was not always required.

**Table 2** breaks down the number of names entered from each of the sources we consulted. “Y” indicates that the name was entered into the database, while “N” indicates it has not been entered into the database. The reasons for not entering the name are detailed in the brackets beside the “N”.

*\*“No verification” indicates that there is both no confirmation the person was Indigenous, and no verification from an “official” and/or community source.*

### OF THE 186 NAMES COLLECTED:

- 184 names have been researched and files created
- 2 names require research and verification
- 117 names have been entered into the database
- 67 names have been researched and not entered

**Table 2: Breakdown of the number of names entered or not entered in the database per source**

<b>NMS List</b>	<b>70</b>
Y	62
Y (Killed in Saskatchewan)	1
N (Deceased, Not confirmed Indigenous)	2
N (Deceased, No verification*)	1
N (Missing, No verification)	4
<b>Maryanne Pearce DB</b>	<b>59</b>
Y	27
N (Deceased, Not confirmed Indigenous)	11
N (Deceased, Some indication they are white)	4
N (Missing, Some indication they are white)	6
N (Missing, Not Indigenous)	2
N (Missing, No verification)	1
N (Status Unknown, No verification)	3
N (Deceased, No verification)	2
N (Killed in Alberta, No verification)	1
N (Deceased, Confirmed, Verified, Nova Scotia)	1
N (Deceased, Confirmed, Verified, Quebec)	1
<b>ON NWAC</b>	<b>14</b>
Y	6
N (Status Unknown, No verification)	3
N (Deceased, Not confirmed Indigenous)	3
N (Missing, Confirmed, Verified)	1
N (Deceased, Confirmed, Not verified)	1
<b>News</b>	<b>14</b>
Y	8
N (Deceased, Not confirmed Indigenous)	2
N (Missing, Found)	1
N (Deceased, No Verification)	3
<b>Community</b>	<b>9</b>
Y	7
N (Confirmed, need more information before entry)	2
<b>United Sisters of Ogden Simpson (United SOS)</b>	<b>8</b>
Y	2
N (Deceased, Not confirmed Indigenous)	5
N (Deceased, Confirmed, Not verified--residential school death)	1
<b>“Native News”, Yahoo Group, Re: 1993 Federal Inquiry Denied Unsolved murder Thunder Bay</b>	<b>6</b>
Y (killed in Manitoba)	1
N (Unknown, No verification)	1
N (Confirmed, Cis Man)	4
<b>“Our Stolen Sisters”, Gathering in Honor of Sonya Nadine Mae Cywink, Pamphlet</b>	<b>4</b>
Y	1
N (Confirmed, Verified, Need more information before entry)	3
<b>OPP report</b>	<b>2</b>
Y	1
N (Missing, No further information)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>

## What happened with the 69 names not entered?

As **Table 2** indicates, the reasons for not entering names are varied. Non-entry does not mean that the names do not belong in the database, but that based on the information accessible at the moment, we are unable to enter the names. Reasons for not entering names include that the person was found to be a cis man,<sup>iii</sup> non-Indigenous, they were shortly found after having gone missing, they were not from, nor killed in Ontario, or we simply could not confirm the person's Indigeneity or verify two "official" sources. All research has been saved and, where appropriate, has been or will be shared with other researchers, groups, organizations or communities.

**Table 3** helps to create a clearer picture of the failed criteria for entry: what names can be ruled out from eventual inclusion, and what names are likely to be entered once more information

Table 3: Names Collected and Not Entered

<b>Cis Man</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Names Requiring Research and Verification</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Researched and Not Confirmed Indigenous</b>	<b>51</b>
Missing, Not confirmed Indigenous	3
Missing, Found	1
Some indication they are white	12
Not Indigenous	2
DIC, Suicide, Not confirmed Indigenous	1
Deceased, No Verification	24
Deceased, Probably Indigenous	8
<b>Confirmed Indigenous Not-Entered</b>	<b>12</b>
Need more info before entry	8
Died in and from other Provinces	2
Missing	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>69</b>

becomes available. **Out of the 69 names not entered, only 9 names (4 cis men, 2 not Indigenous, 2 not from or killed in Ontario, and 1 missing but found) can be absolutely excluded from eventual inclusion in the database.** While in 12 cases there is some indication that the girl/woman was white, and these are likely to be eventually ruled out, it is important to note the case of Tammy Lynn Lamondin Gagnon. Despite prominent media coverage of her case in the late 1990s, when she went missing, it was only recently that Gagnon's mother identified her as Indigenous in the press. This example underlines the importance of community knowledge and the limitations of "official" sources.

With 8 names confirmed as Indigenous but needing more information before entry, and 8 names where the person is probably

Indigenous but there is no confirmation, **it is very likely that all 16 of these names will eventually be included in the database.** There are 6 missing cases in total (1 found, 2 confirmed Indigenous, and 3 not confirmed Indigenous), of which 5 may eventually be included. In the other 25 cases there was simply no information available to verify or confirm the case. Given the quality and nature of our information sources, upwards of 31 additional names could yet be included in the database.

**An estimated 8 to 31 additional names will eventually be included in the database, making for a total of 125 to 156 names.**



Section B: Data Analysis

In the Database, Not Included in Data Analysis

Missing

While we began by entering only confirmed and verified deaths, as work continued we began entering some names of those who are missing, especially those assumed dead. Of the 117 names entered into the database 11 names of missing persons were entered.

In one case, after some research, it was found that a woman, whose name had been circulated on lists since 2009, had been found shortly after she was declared missing, and was alive raising a young family. Her name was included in the database, to record that she was found.

The other 10 missing cases constitute cases where a person has been missing for over 5 years, and where the family strongly suspects the possibility of foul play, or believes their loved one to be deceased. Of these 10 cases, 3 of the cases occurred before 1980.

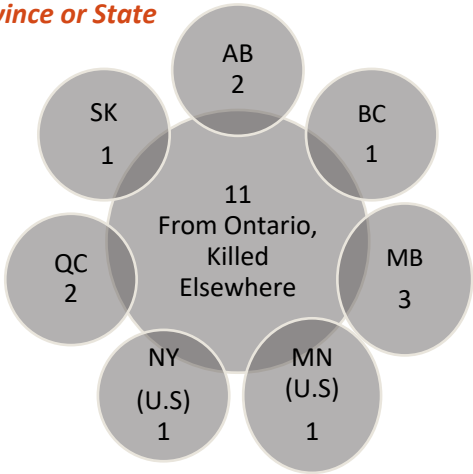
Table 4: Number of Missing Cases Entered in the Database by Decade

Missing	10
2000-2009	3
1990-1999	3
1980-1989	1
1970-1979	1
1960-1969	1
1950-1959	1
Missing 2009, Found Alive	1
Total Missing Cases	11

Not Killed in Ontario

As research continued we found it important to keep track of deaths where the person was from Ontario, but died elsewhere.

Figure 1: Place of Death Outside of ON by Province or State



All 11 of these cases were homicides, with 9 violent homicides, and 8 deaths occurring between 2006-2011, one in 1994, one in 1984, and two in 1978. In total 8 cases have been closed and 3 remain unsolved.

Table 5: Type of Homicide Outside ON

Bludgeoned	1
Dropped from 11th storey window	1
Gunshot	2
Stabbing	4
Strangulation/Blunt Force	1
Vehicular	2
Grand Total	11

One closed case resulted in no charges, as the death was deemed accidental (the victim was on the side of a highway without shoes or coat, and described as waving her arms when she was struck, accidentally, by an oncoming car). In the other 7 closed cases, someone was charged. The charges led to six convictions, and one not guilty verdict. Information on the race and gender of convicted perpetrators was available for 4 of

**Table 6: Number of Deaths per Decade**

Unknown	1
1920-1929	1
1961-1969	4
1970-1979	7
1980-1989	7
1990-1999	19
2000-2009	39
2010-2016	17

the cases (2 white men, 1 Black man, and 1 Native woman). In two cases the perpetrator was an acquaintance, in four cases they were the victim's partner. One of the gunshot deaths was deemed drug-related, but no information concerning the relationship between the victim and shooter was available.

### Ontario Deaths by Year and Decade

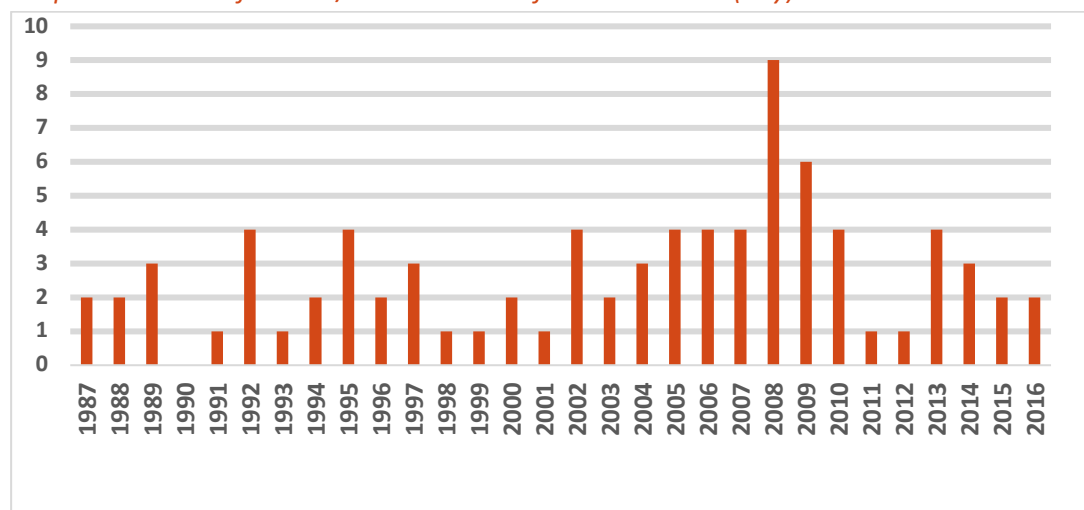
Between **1920 and July 2016 we have a record of 95 deaths occurring in Ontario** that meet the criteria for entry into the #ItStartsWithUs database; however, in one case, a year of death could not be established. Of the 94 cases with a recorded year of death, 87% occurred between 1987 and 2016, with almost half (43%) occurring in the decade between 2000 and 2009.

The average number of deaths per year is 2.2 between 1987 and July 2016, 1.9 between 1990-2000, 3.9 between 2000-2010, and 2.4 in the period between 2010 and July 2016.

There are 0 deaths occurring in Ontario recorded in the database for the seven years between 1980 and 1986. While we have done research on a number of deaths and missing cases during this period, none have met the criteria, verification, and confirmation necessary for database entry.

From this point onwards, the focus in data analysis will be on the 82 Ontario deaths known to have occurred between 1987 and July 2016, representing just under a 30-year period.

**Graph 1: Number of Deaths/Year in Ontario from 1987-2016 (July)**



***Map 1: Deaths in Ontario 1987-July 2016 (82 cases known location)***

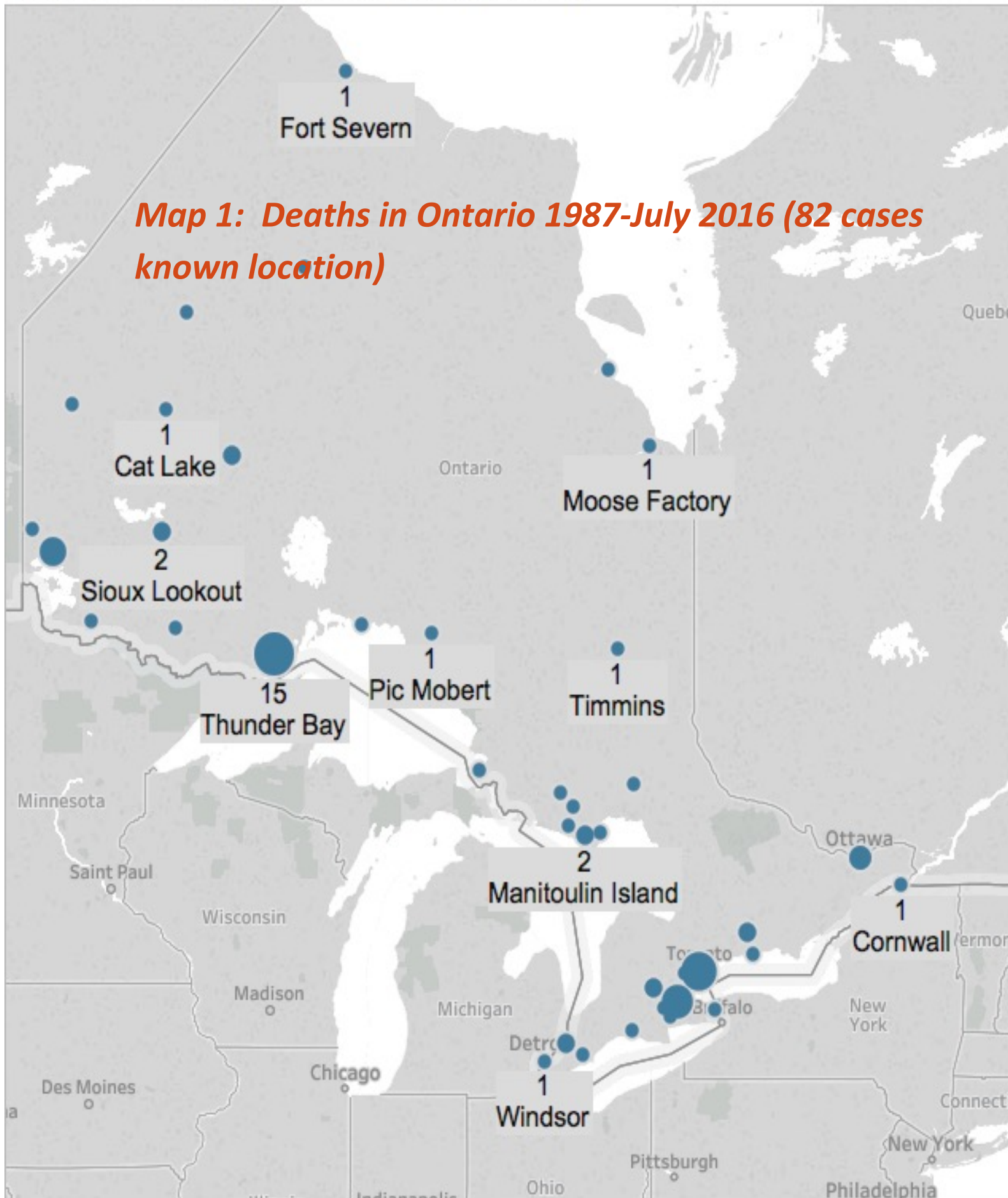


Table 7: Place of Death

Ancaster	1
Atitokan	1
Brampton	1
Brantford	1
Cat Lake	1
Cobourg	1
Cornwall	1
Elliot Lake	1
Fort Severn	1
Gore Bay	1
Goulais Bay First Nations Reserve	1
Hamilton	5
Kasabonika Lake First Nations Reserve	1
Kashechewan First Nations Reserve	1
Kenora	4
Kitchener	2
Manitoulin Island	2
Mishkeegogamang First Nations Reserve	2
Mississauga of the New Credit First Nations Reserve	1
Moose Factory	1
Niacatchewenin First Nations Reserve	1
Niagara Falls	1
Ottawa	3
Peterborough	2
Pic Mobert	1
Pikangikum First Nations Reserve	1
Schreiber	1
Sioux Lookout	2
Six Nations First Nations Reserve	1
Weagamow Lake First Nations Reserve	1
Spanish	1
<b>Thunder Bay</b>	<b>15</b>
Timmins	1
<b>Toronto</b>	<b>13</b>
Wabaseemoong First Nations Reserve	1
Walpole Island	2
Elgin County	1
Chatham	1
Sudbury	1
Wikwemikong First Nations Reserve	1
Windsor	1

### Location of Deaths between 1987-2016

- 54% of deaths occurred in Northern Ontario (44 cases).

### Highest number of deaths per geographic location:

- Thunder Bay (15 cases)
- Toronto (13 cases)
- Kenora (4 cases)

### Location of person when found

- 54.3%—the majority— were found **outside**, often in remote, rural or secluded areas.
- 33.7% were found in private residences.
- 12% were found in non-residential buildings.

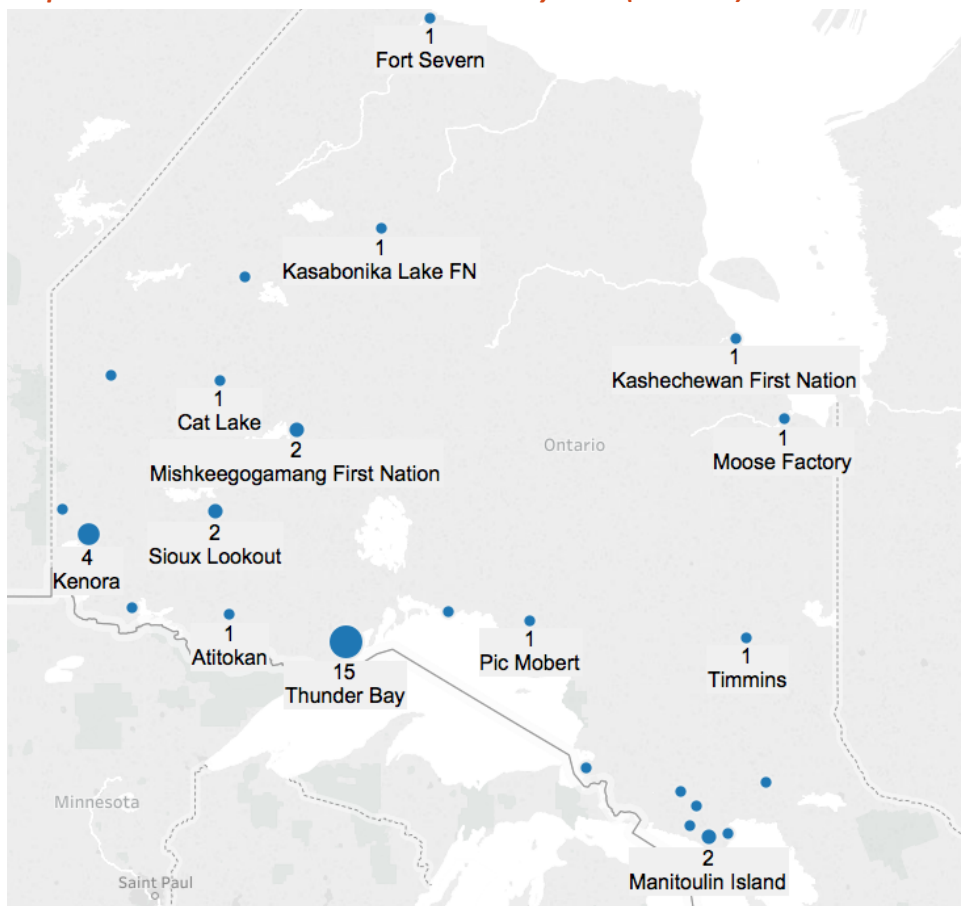
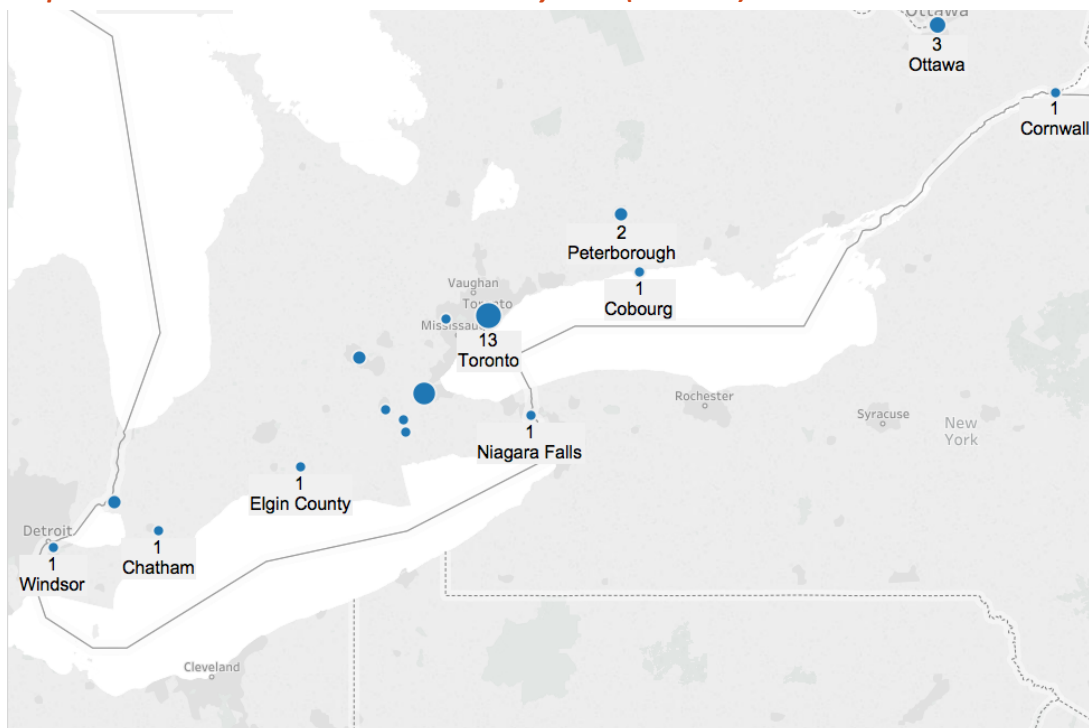
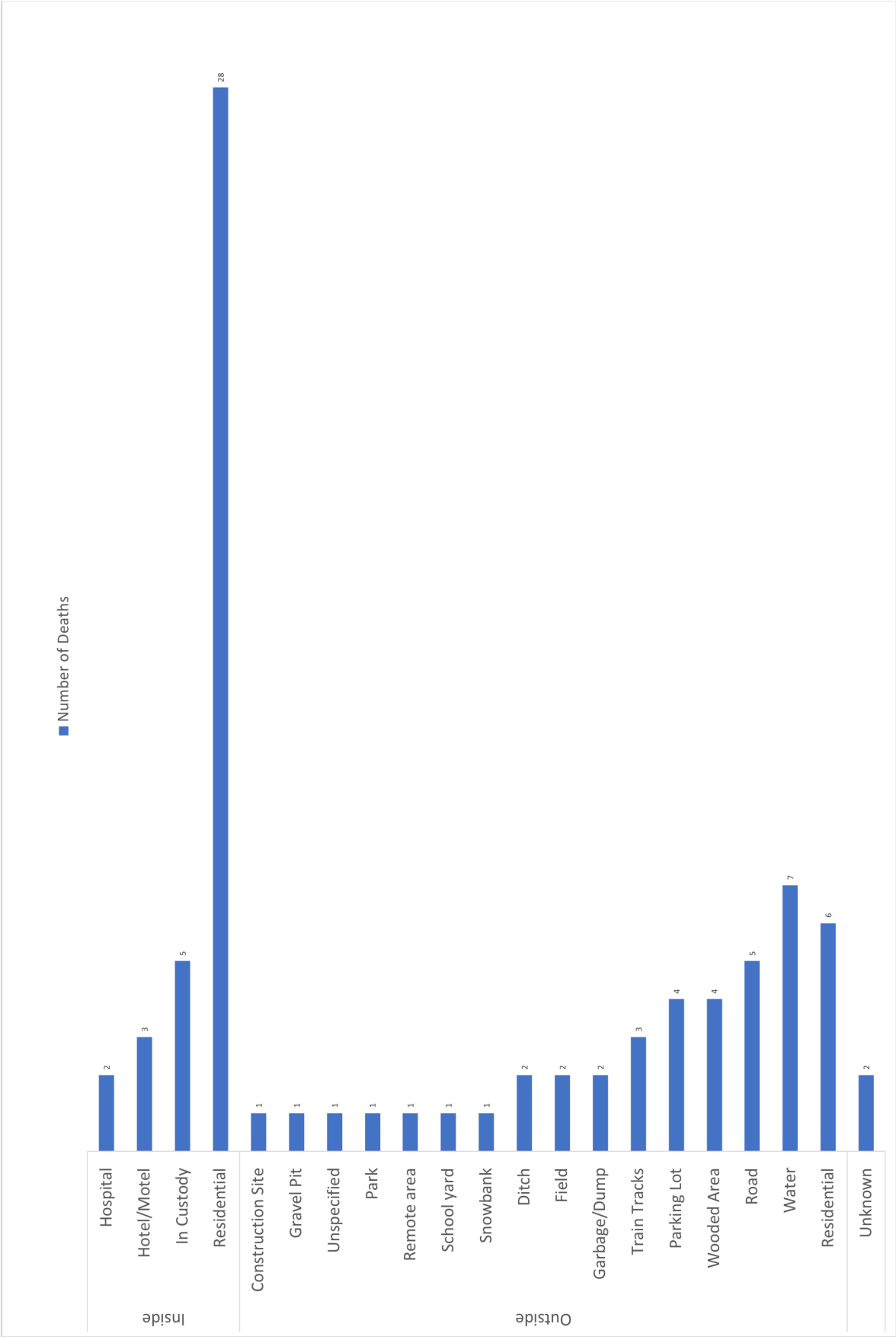
**Map 2: Deaths in Northern Ontario 1987-July 2016 (44 cases)****Map 3: Deaths in Southern Ontario 1987-July 2016 (38 Cases)**

Table 8: Type of Location





## Cause of Death

In this section, we report the cause of death in detail as it appears in the original source (newspaper article, coroner's report, etc.), using categories that reflect legal terminology. We acknowledge that this material will be triggering for many readers. While such graphic language is jarring, we include it as a way to convey the extreme violence that is intrinsic to gender-based colonial violence.

### Summary

In total there were 70 cases classified as a violent homicide and/or suspicious death and 12 non-violent deaths and homicides, representing 85% and 15%, respectively, of all recorded deaths between 1987 and 2016. Blunt force trauma is the leading cause of death in 26% of violent homicides and 22% of all deaths.

Over the following pages, we examine the details of each cause of death category. Due to the large number of violent and suspicious deaths, at this time we are unable to provide as detailed of a case analysis as that offered for each of the non-violent deaths and homicides. It is important to note that even when deaths are officially deemed “non-violent,” they often involve police racism and other forms of structural colonial violence.

*Table 9: Cause of Death*

<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Non-Violent Deaths &amp; Homicides</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Death in Police/State Custody</i>	4
<i>Overdose</i>	3
<i>Vehicular (1 counted as suspicious)</i>	4
<i>Freezing Death (2 Non-violent, 2 counted as Violent)</i>	4
<b>Violent Homicides &amp; Suspicious Deaths</b>	<b>70</b>
<i>Blunt Force</i>	18
<i>Knife-related</i>	12
<i>From Trauma</i>	12
<i>Asphyxiation</i>	9
<i>Gun-related</i>	5
<i>Unknown</i>	6
<i>Undetermined due to the state of the body</i>	5

### Non-Violent Deaths & Homicides

#### *Deaths in Police Custody*

All four deaths in police custody occurred between 1999 and 2008. Two of the deaths occurred as a result of suicide by hanging, one in jail, and the other in prison. In both cases, an Inquest was held. In both cases, the Elizabeth Fry Society intervened, arguing that incarceration for Indigenous women with mental health issues is “inappropriate.”

It is unclear whether an inquest was called in the two other cases of death in police/state custody.

There is little information on the “sudden death” case, except that the woman was allegedly arrested in her home community for intoxication, was transported to the OPP detachment near Pickle Lake, and was found unresponsive upon arrival. She died four days later in the Thunder Bay Regional Health-Sciences Centre. Very little is known about the last case, beyond that she was reported to be intoxicated when detained, and died later in Kenora Police custody.

#### *Death as a result of overdose/intoxications*

One of the cases is among the deaths recently investigated in the inquest into First Nation student deaths in Thunder Bay. The cause of death was ruled to be alcohol poisoning. Only two days before her death, the young woman had moved from her community in a remote area to Thunder Bay. She was found “passed out” in the hall of the rooming house where she lived, and remained there until the next morning, when she was found unresponsive.

One death by alcohol poisoning occurred in a government-run home for people struggling with substance use. Her family believes she was the victim of structural racism and hospital negligence. She died hours after being discharged from hospital, where she had spent eight hours with no blood work or mental health assessment. Her mother petitioned the Coroner for an inquest, but it was denied. The Coroner found that she had died from “acute alcohol poisoning.” It is unclear whether she was in legal custody at the time of death.

While the police judged the case a death as due to overdose, the autopsy was inconclusive, with no trace of drugs or alcohol. Despite being found in her own room, which contained her I.D., she was “Jane Doed” and her family was not informed until weeks later.

### ***Vehicular***

In total there were 4 deaths occurring as a result of being hit by a vehicle. In one case, the death of a young child occurred as a result of a vehicular homicide by an impaired driver. Police deemed that the vehicular death caused by a freight train did not involve foul play. This case was one of the three very prominent recent deaths of young Indigenous women in Toronto.

In another case, a woman was killed as she crossed a highway. Though police had received two phone calls about the woman, and four police cars were reported to be only half a kilometer away, they did not respond due to another incident involving a stolen pickup truck. Why the truck was deemed more important than a person’s life is not clear. No one was charged in this incident. The police indicated she had a “transient nature.”

The third incident involved a car and police racism. The woman, with a visual disability, who later died in an Ottawa hospital, was struck by a car in Hull, QC; but that was not the only cause of death:

*“Her death was the result not only of physical injury but also of police racism (the officers at the scene referred to (her) as a ‘squaw,’ dragged her from the middle of the road by her coat and left her on a snowbank), stereotyping (when an ambulance was finally called, the drivers refused to take her to hospital because they assumed she was merely drunk, not injured),... the bumbling of a major hospital (which lost her purse and couldn’t identify her), and the behaviour of (her) companions who abandoned her.”<sup>iv</sup>*

### ***Freezing Deaths***

All four deaths involving freezing occurred in northern Ontario. The victims were between 11 and 41 years of age. Two cases were homicides involving sexual assault. In the two other cases,

no evidence of foul play was found, but it hasn't been ruled out. The status of investigations in both of these two cases is unknown.

In the case of the two homicides involving sexual assault, one remains unsolved, while the other went to trial. The unsolved homicide involved a young woman found naked and frozen in an icy waterway. The body was described as having "extensive trauma." In the case resulting in trial, the young girl was found without her clothes and with alcohol poisoning. There was evidence of sexual violence, and a young Indigenous man was charged with sexual assault, but the outcome of the trial is not known.

### **Violent Homicides & Suspicious Deaths**

In 18 cases the primary cause of death is recorded as involving **blunt force**. In 6 of these cases the cause of death is recorded only as blunt force, with an additional case described as resulting from strangulation as well. Another 4 cases were recorded as death by beating. In 7 cases the cause of death was described as bludgeoning (or with blunt force to the head), representing **39%** of blunt force trauma related deaths, and **10%** of violent homicides and/or suspicious deaths overall.

There were 12 reported cases of **knife-related deaths**, with 1 case where the cause of death was recorded as decapitation and 11 cases recorded as death by stabbing. Of these 11 homicides, one case also involved death by beating and in another case a cut throat injury was also involved. Knife-related deaths represent 15% of deaths overall, and 19% of violent homicides and/or suspicious deaths. An equal number of deaths (12 cases) resulted **from trauma**. Of these 12 cases, 2 deaths occurred from unspecified trauma as a result of a murder/suicide, 3 as a result of fire, 2 as a result of falls from buildings, and 1 as a result of prolonged inversion. In 4 cases, death was recorded as the result of complications from injuries and/or from internal bleeding or hemorrhaging, including one case, where these internal injuries were caused by sexual assault.

**Asphyxiation** was the recorded cause of death in 9 cases, with 4 cases described as caused by strangulation, 1 by suffocation, and 1 by drowning. There were a total of 5 **gun-related deaths**, including one case resulting from a murder/suicide. In another 5 cases, the cause of death was listed as **undetermined due to the state of the body**, in 2 of these cases this was a result of decomposition, in 3 cases the cause of death could not be determined due to the extent of injury (mutilation) and/or dismemberment. In the 6 remaining cases listed as **unknown**, no recorded cause of death could be found.

## Status of Investigation or Case

**Table 10: Status of Investigation or Case**

<b>Closed</b>	<b>62</b>
Death in Custody	2
Alcohol Poisoning, Inquest request refused	1
Deemed Suicide or Accidental, Family/Community Suspicious	4
Freezing Death, Foul Play Not Suspected, Not Ruled Out	2
Accidental	1
Murder/Suicide	3
Inquest	4
Trial	45
<i>Convicted</i>	37
<i>Outcome Unknown</i>	5
<i>Not Criminally Responsible</i>	1
<i>Charges dropped</i>	1
<i>Homicide (Original conviction overturned)</i>	1
<b>Open</b>	<b>13</b>
Homicide	10
Undetermined	1
Suspicious	2
<b>Status Unknown</b>	<b>7</b>
Homicide, Status Unknown	6
Suspicious Death	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>

### Inquest or Trial: Conviction Rate

Of those cases that went to trial the conviction rate was 82% (37/45). Fifteen cases (including the two that went to trial but were overturned/charges dropped) are currently open.

### Solve Rate:

**18% of cases are currently open.**

The percentage of unsolved cases increases to 25% when we consider the 10 missing cases. And when we include deaths prior to 1970, the percentage goes up higher still.

Only 3 of the 11 cases of death prior to 1970 have been solved. In one of the pre-1980 cases considered solved, family members still suspect foul play despite a coroner's verdict claiming an accidental death by choking due to intoxication.

When we take the additional cases from post-1980 where family members suspect foul play (4 cases) despite state findings, and where the status of investigation is unknown (9 cases), **the rate of unsolved cases may be as high as 44%.**

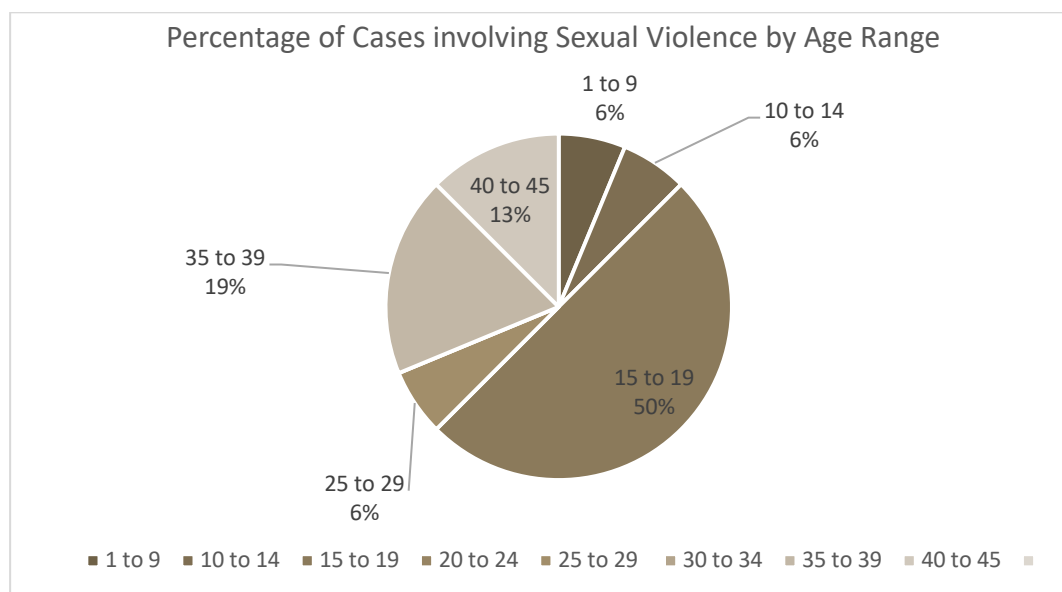
## Sexual Violence

Evidence of sexual violence is reported in 16 of the 82 cases, representing 23% of violent deaths and 19% of deaths overall. Due to a lack of detailed information, this number is likely much higher. Based on the information available, we were able to ascertain that 22 cases involved **no** sexual violence; however, it is unknown whether sexual violence occurred in the remaining 44 cases. In one case, the sexual violence occurred post-mortem.

The majority of these cases have been closed, with the status of two cases unknown, and one open. Charges were laid in 14 cases, all of which went to trial. While we don't have information on the outcome of one trial, all 13 others brought about a conviction, with nine life sentences without chance of parole. All of the perpetrators were identified as male, 1 was white (but killed two women), 6 were Indigenous, and in the other 7 cases, no data on the race of the perpetrator was available.

In 15 of the 16 cases involving sexual violence, we had data on the person's age at their time of death. While the data is limited, in 50% of these cases involving sexual violence the victim was between 15 to 19 years of age.

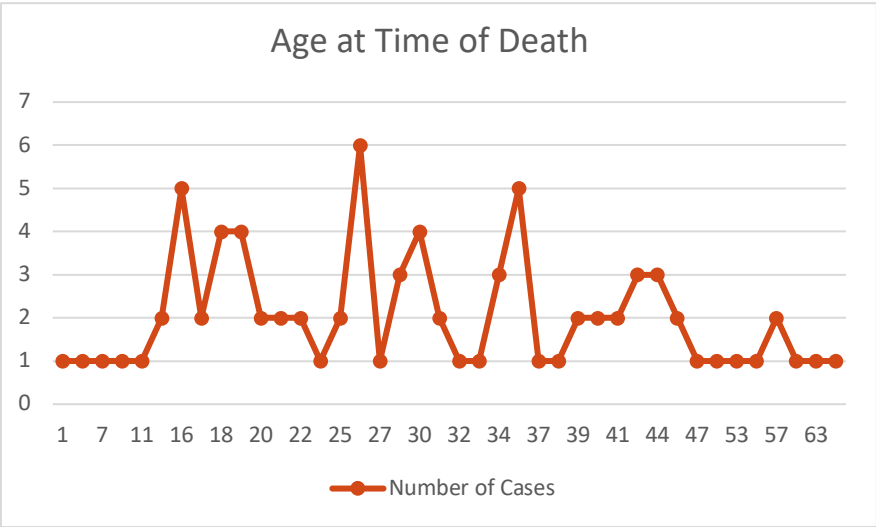
*Graph 2: Age of Victim in Cases involving Sexual Violence*



Age at the time of Death:

The majority of deaths occurred between the ages of 16 to 39, representing 67% of cases analyzed. The greatest number of deaths in any age range occurred between the ages of 15 to 19, followed by 25 to 29. Depending on the definition used, youth represent between 27% (UN definition age 15 to 24) to 44% (age 12 to 29) of deaths.

Graph 3: Age at Time of Death



Graph 4: Percentage of Cases per Age Range

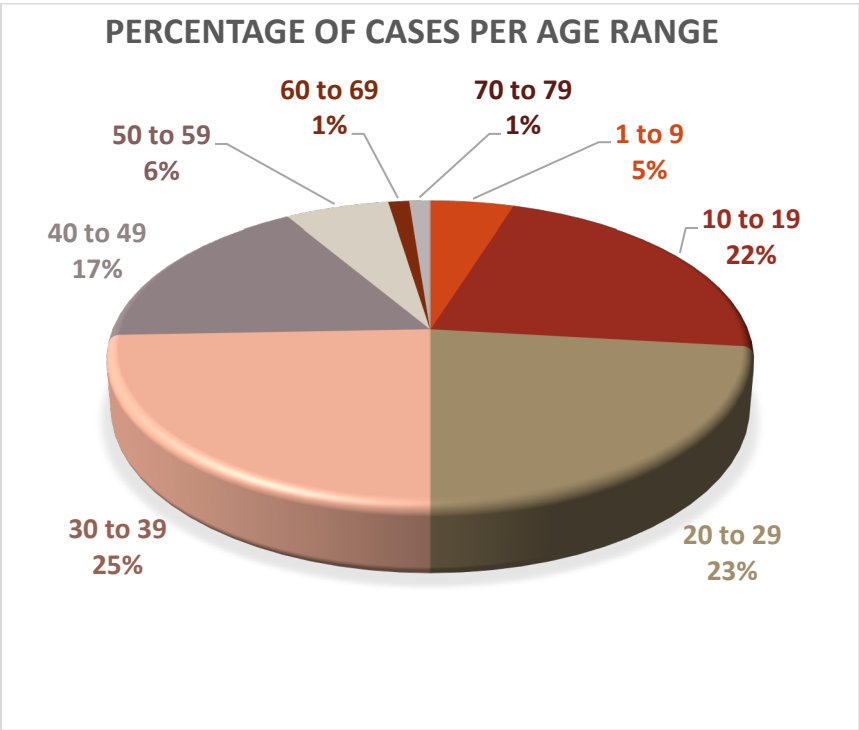


Table 11: Number of Cases by Age Range

Age Range	
1 to 10	4
1-4	1
5-9	3
10 to 19	18
10-14	3
15-19	15
20 to 29	19
20-24	7
25-29	12
30 to 39	20
30-34	11
35-39	9
40 to 49	14
40-44	10
45-49	4
50 to 59	5
50-54	2
55-59	3
60 to 69	1
60-64	1
65-69	0
70 to 79	1
70-74	1



## Indigenous Women & Girls Murdered or Missing in Ontario

- ♥ Adele Rose Mary Matinet, 22, murdered in Atikokan February 2004.
- ♥ Adrienne Amikons, 14, murdered in Peterborough December 1997.
- ♥ Agnes Sutherland of Fort Albany, 62, died in custody on February 4, 2018.
- ♥ Alice Quoquat Netemegestic, murdered in Thunder Bay in the late 1970s.
- ♥ Alissa Martin-Travers, 5, murdered in Cornwall April 2008.
- ♥ Alloura Wells, 27, murdered in Toronto in the summer of 2017.
- ♥ Ameilia Sainnawap, 31, of Thunder Bay was found dead on August 22, 2018.
- ♥ Annie Pootoogook found dead in Ottawa on September 19, 2016.
- ♥ Ashley Chantal Mckay, 25, murdered in Thunder Bay on October 30, 2018.
- ♥ Ashley Mandamin, 20, of Atikameksheng Anishnawbek Whitefish Lake First Nation was found dead in Sudbury on August 2, 2018.
- ♥ Ashley Smith, 18, murdered in Fort Frances October 2007.
- ♥ Autumn Andy, 15, murdered in Big Grassy River on June 10, 2018.
- ♥ Azraya Kokopenace found dead in Kenora, Ontario in April 2016.
- ♥ Barbara Kentner, 34, attacked by racists in Thunder Bay on January 29, succumbed to her injuries and died on July 4, 2017.
- ♥ Barbara Loon, 34, murdered in Sioux Lookout May 2009.
- ♥ Barbara Shapwaykeesic, murdered in Thunder Bay in 1989.
- ♥ Bella (Nancy Marie) LaBoucan McLean, 25, fell from the 31st floor of a Toronto condo on July 20, 2013.
- ♥ Bernadette Leclair, 16, murdered in Thunder Bay in 1987.
- ♥ Betty Anne Cup, 72, of Shoal Lake First Nation was killed on October 12, 2018.
- ♥ Beulah Peters, 23, of Munsee Delaware First Nation, was struck and killed by an impaired driver on December 2, 2018.
- ♥ Carolyn Connolly, 54, her body was found on August 2, 2008 near Sherbourne and Dundas Streets, Toronto.
- ♥ Cecilia Payash, 48, missing since 1957 from Red Lake Ontario.
- ♥ Charnelle Masakeyash, 26, missing in November 2015, her partial remains were found in Mishkeegogamang First Nation in June.
- ♥ Charity Keesic, 19, From Moose Factory murdered on August 2001.
- ♥ Chelsea Nagokee, 28, of Porcupine, found dead near mall in Timmons on November 12, 2018.
- ♥ Cheyenne Fox, 20, fell from 24th floor of a Don Mills condo on April 2013.
- ♥ Chloe Matthews, 11 of Big Trout Lake, her body was found in 2011.
- ♥ Clarene Rose Panamick, 36, murdered in 1991.
- ♥ Cynthia Lynette Jamieson, 44 of Six Nations; murdered in Hamilton on June 12, 2002.
- ♥ Danielle Marie Faye Big George Zaagaategabowik of Big Island First Nation, 23, killed on August 30, 2018.
- ♥ Debbie Sloss-Clarke, 42, found dead in her room at Gerrard and Sherbourne, Toronto on July 29, 1997.
- ♥ Deborah Toulouse, 41, murdered in Manitoulin Island on May 18, 2002.
- ♥ Delaine Copenace found dead in Kenora, Ontario on March 22, 2016.
- ♥ Denise Katherine Bourdeau, 39, murdered in Kitchener-Waterloo her remains were found in April 2007.
- ♥ Diane Dobson, 36, found dead in Windsor in Feb 1995.
- ♥ Diane Marshall, 43, found dead in Toronto in May 2006.
- ♥ Donna Kabatay, approx. late teens; murdered in Seine River First Nation.

- ♥ Donna Tebbenham, murdered in Thunder Bay in 1987.
- ♥ Doreen Hardy, 18, murdered in Thunder Bay in 1996.
- ♥ Edith McGinnis Quagon, 42; murdered in Minneapolis.
- ♥ Elaine Vawn LaForme, 48, murdered in New Credit on Jan 22, 2012.
- ♥ Elena Assam-Thunderbird, 17, beaten to death on June 1, 2002.
- ♥ Evaline (Evaleen) Cameron, 19, of Whitedog Reserve was found dead in October 1995.
- ♥ Gloria Jean Martha Abotossaway, missing since 1984.
- ♥ Heather Pelletier, 30, was murdered in Toronto Her decomposed body was found in May 1988.
- ♥ Helen Gillings, 19, murdered in Hamilton, February 1995.
- ♥ Helen Louise Jacobs, 73, murdered in Elliot Lake, July 2005.
- ♥ Helyna Rivera, 25, of Six Nations murdered in 2011 in Buffalo.
- ♥ Hilda Agawa, 63, of Batchewana first Nation murdered in June 2009.
- ♥ Jane Jack, 22, stabbed to death in Kenora on April 28, 1995.
- ♥ Jane Louise Sutherland, 20, her body was found on Oct. 23, 1984 in Hull's Jacques Cartier Park across the Ottawa River from Lowertown.
- ♥ Jeanine St Jean, 42, of Schreiber was found dead in November 2006.
- ♥ Jennifer Stewart, 36, stabbed to death in Ottawa August 2010.
- ♥ Jocelyn McDonald, 16, was murdered in Kenora October 2000.
- ♥ Jordina Skunk, 29, found frozen to death in Fort Severn First Nation on January 31, 2008.
- ♥ Josephine Thompson, 18; murdered in 1971 – her body found by the railway tracks in Macdiarmid/Rocky Bay.
- ♥ Judie Thibault, 57, murdered in Thunder Bay in November 2000.
- ♥ Judy Ann Quill, 33, murdered in Kenora, in March 2009.
- ♥ Karla Desrosiers, 45, found by her daughter 3 days after being raped and murdered in her apartment on January 17th, 2007.
- ♥ Katelynne Sampson, 7, found dead with signs of bodily trauma in Toronto Parkdale neighbourhood in August 3, 2008.
- ♥ Kelly Morrisseau, 27, murdered in Ottawa; her body was found in Gatineau Park on December 10, 2006.
- ♥ Laura Pilon, 22, murdered in Thunder Bay in 1992. Liana Mathewson, 44, of Sault Ste. Marie was strangled in 2008.
- ♥ Leanne Lawson, 23, murdered in Ottawa in 2011.
- ♥ Lisa Lynn Anstey, 21, murdered in Toronto on May 12, 1997.
- ♥ Liz Bonnie Sakakeesic, 16, murdered in Cat Lake First Nation in 1994.
- ♥ Lorraine Rivers, 18, murdered in Thunder Bay in March 1966.
- ♥ Loretta Lavalley, 36, was strangled in November 2008 in Brampton.
- ♥ Lynn Childforever, 20, died in 2008.
- ♥ Mae Morton, 15, left to freeze to death outside Beardmore in 1962.
- ♥ Margaret Perrault (Bluebird), 32, murdered in Thunder Bay in 1988.
- ♥ Margaret Yvonne Guylee, disappeared in Toronto in 1965.
- ♥ Mariah Wesley, 18, of Kenora was stabbed to death in 2009.
- ♥ Mary Ann Davis, 25, from Manitoulin Island was murdered in 2005.
- ♥ Mary Peters King, murdered in Thunder Bay.
- ♥ Maxine Susanne Peters, 34, of Walpole Island First Nation; killed on June 13, 2004.
- ♥ Melissa Miller, 37, of Six Nations and her unborn baby boy, killed not from far Oneida on November 2nd along with two other community members on November 2, 2018.
- ♥ Mercedes Stevens, 9, murdered in Kashechewan First Nation, Sept. 2006.
- ♥ Minnie Sutherland, 40, killed in Hull on Dec. 31, 1988.

- ♥ Mitzi MacDougall, 27, of Red lake murdered in 1998.
- ♥ Pamela Holopainen, 22, of Schumacher; last seen in Timmins on Dec. 14, 2003.
- ♥ Patricia Carpenter, 14, her body was discovered at a construction site next to Massey Hall in 1992.
- ♥ Paula Joy Martin, 31, died from stab wounds in April 1996.
- ♥ Petrina Lynn Whitecrow of Seine River murdered in Fort Frances.
- ♥ Rebecca Jean King, 22, missing since Oct. 21, 1999 from North Bay.
- ♥ Rena Fox, 38, murdered in Thunder Bay, Feb. 2003.
- ♥ Renee Neganiwina, 26, was murdered in a house fire in 2015 in Hamilton.
- ♥ Robyn Garlow, 30, of Hamilton, murdered by police on Oct. 20, 2018.
- ♥ Samantha Johnings, 19 months, of Hamilton, murdered on Dec. 13, 1992.
- ♥ Sandra Kaye Johnson, 18, was found dead on Feb. 13, 1992 near 110 Ave in Thunder Bay.
- ♥ Sarah Jane Wawia Bernard, 43, was murdered in Thunder Bay in 1966.
- ♥ Sarah Mason, 44, was murdered in Thunder Bay in 1997.
- ♥ Sarah Skunk, 43, missing from Thunder Bay since 1995.
- ♥ Shawna Taylor, 37, died in Toronto on August 24, 2017.
- ♥ Shelley Lynne Joseph, 40, of Six Nations, was murdered in Hamilton on July 2, 2004.
- ♥ Shelley May Anderson, 51, from Cobalt, is missing since summer 2009.
- ♥ Sonya Nadine Mae Cywink, 31, found dead in 1994 at Southwold Prehistoric Earthworks near Iona.
- ♥ Spring Phillips, 26, was murdered in Toronto in December 2009.
- ♥ Susan Asslin, 19, was stabbed to death near Dryden in 1974.
- ♥ Tashina Cheyenne Vaughn General, 21, was murdered along with her unborn child, body found on April 26, 2008 at Six Nations, near Chiefswood Road and Indian Line.
- ♥ Terra Gardener, 26, was killed by a train in Toronto on May 14, 2013.
- ♥ Theresa Anne Yakimchuck, 23, is missing from Dryden since June 1973.
- ♥ Theresa Wilson (Jamieson), 30, was murdered and her body was found in Thames River, Chatham in March 2011.
- ♥ Therese Labbe, 47, her body was found in Mountjoy River in October 1989.
- ♥ Tricia Paquette, 8, was murdered in Brantford, February 1978.
- ♥ Vanessa Tagoon, 29, was found dead in Ottawa in 2009.
- ♥ Verna May Simard-Shabaquay, 50, fell from 6th floor of Regent Hotel in Vancouver on Sept. 16, 2011.
- ♥ Verna Patricia Sturgeon, 33, was murdered in September 2010.
- ♥ Viola Melvin, 67, was murdered in Toronto on April 14, 1977.
- ♥ Viola Isabella Panacheese, 42, is missing from Sioux Lookout since August 1991.
- ♥ Vivian Cada, 53, found dead on June 30, 2005 in apartment at 285 Shuter St., Toronto.

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<sup>i</sup> Audrey Huntley, along with Mag Cywink, supervised this research. Maryam Zafari helped to prepare the report, along with Kate Milley, who drafted the report. We would also like to thank Dr. Sarah Hunt, who provided invaluable feedback on the preliminary draft, and Dr. Carol Lynne D’Arcangelis who provided copy editing.

<sup>ii</sup> From 2008 to 2013, Maryanne Pearce compiled a database on 3,329 missing and murdered women in Canada as part of her dissertation at the University of Ottawa Law School on “the vulnerabilities which may increase the risk of a person becoming a victim of homicide or going missing” (p. 9). The database includes the names of 824 Aboriginal women. Her work can be found at <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/thesescanada/vol2/OOU/TC-OOU-26299.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> The term “cis” refers to a person who identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth. “Cis man” refers to a person assigned the sex/gender “male”/masculine at birth, and who identifies as a man.

<sup>iv</sup> From Suzanne Methot’s review in Quill & Quire of the book about this case titled *Fireworks and Folly* by John Nihmey. See: <https://quillandquiere.com/review/fireworks-and-folly-how-we-killed-minnie-sutherland/>