

To the members of the NCRA Awards Committee,

I am writing to nominate the CJSW podcast series 'Survivors' for the Documentary award. 'Survivors' is a podcast series which takes a step back in time and details the disturbing and horrifying history of one of Canada's darkest policies as well as the continued intergenerational effects that persist to today and into the future. This series approaches the subject from multiple lenses, the system is examined through historical texts and reports, first hand documentation, as well as first hand accounts from survivors of the system, experts in the field, and even the Honourable Murray Sinclair.

The series contains eight episodes which each tackle a different issue of life in the system: the first day, an average day, assimilation, physical & mental health, religion, intergenerational trauma, and truth and reconciliation. The final episode features an extended interview with the Honourable Murray Sinclair who served as the chairman of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 2009 to 2015

This historical narration and scripting of this podcast were performed by Cameron Siferd, a Métis individual majoring in both Sociology as well as International Indigenous Studies. The information used includes a large bibliography of textbooks as well as first hand accounts to bring an accurate citable script. Abuse, experimentation, excuses, as well as a litany of other terrible examples of the actions of the institutions involved against the Indigenous children of these lands is put on display.

What makes this podcast stand out from your standard historical program are the impactful interviews which were performed by Grace Heavyrunner. Grace spoke to each of the guests and performed all of the interviews. Grace, a residential school survivor herself brings a unique lens to this project being able to connect to the people she spoke to with an immense level of understanding. The stories we receive from the individuals who bravely provided them are extremely powerful. Some stories heartbreaking, others inspiring, this podcast is not one that can be taken lightly. The array of ages and connections the individuals who were interviewed emphasize the effects and reach that this school system had.

The podcast is scored with original music by Edmonton based musician and composer Matthew Cardinal. The music maintains the severity of the topic while simultaneously emphasizing emotional moments and allowing for calm reflection. Further each episode features a drum song from Clarence 'Skip' Wolfleg jr. The songs are accompanied with an explanation of their purpose and encourage a positive movement forward towards a reconciled future.

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