

Article #2

Celebrating International Women's Day

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Last year, Foglers' FR Women's Network celebrated International Women's Day with guest speaker Connie Walker, an award-winning Cree investigative journalist who is leading the dialogue on Indigenous women's rights in Canada.

Connie started her career with CBC in 2001, and was the writer and host of the much-acclaimed CBC News podcast, *Missing & Murdered*, which has been downloaded almost 30,000,000 times. Connie spoke from the heart and took everyone through a thought-provoking history of the coverage of Indigenous issues in the media over the last 25 years.

Re-emergence of Indigenous Voices in the Media

At the event Connie described her career trajectory as a journalist at CBC; the influence of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report; how the coverage and reporting on Indigenous issues has evolved in the media; and the rise of social media and the platform it has provided.

In 2013, CBC Aboriginal was created, and Connie spoke of how it provided a dedicated space for Indigenous content under one banner. Today, the site is called CBC Indigenous and has 10 dedicated Indigenous reporters pushing into the spotlight a diversity of stories and issues that are important to Indigenous communities across Canada. Connie also described how reporting on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for CBC impacted her greatly. The impact of residential schools for the Indigenous community was finally brought to light through the Commission's report, and unfortunately "not a single Indigenous person



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in Canada was not touched by the legacy of residential schools."

In 2015, Connie became part of a CBC unit that was devoted to investigating missing and murdered Indigenous women. CBC launched [an interactive database](#) and, through an exhaustive process, probed more than 250 unsolved cases.

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From this, the [Missing and Murdered](#) podcast was developed. The second season podcast, titled *Finding Cleo*, provided seven hours of investigative reporting over 10 episodes, and has been downloaded almost 30,000,000 times. Connie remarked that bringing these unsolved cases to the attention of the public in the podcast format permitted the reporters to explore issues, including the legacy of the residential schools program, in a more in-depth manner. The opportunity to provide the context surrounding the events allowed for a greater understanding of the choices made by the individuals involved. Of note, Connie spoke about the importance of representation in reporting and how, when voices are represented, their stories are heard.

When Connie finished her presentation, you could hear a pin drop in the room. Guests commented that her talk was both informative and poignant. According to one guest:

"Fogler, Rubinoff LLP organized one of the best International Women's Day events I attended. Apart from flawless logistics that allowed participants to network with ease, I was first and foremost impressed with the topic and the speaker of the event.

'*We Don't Need a Voice, We Need More Microphones*', with award-winning journalist Connie Walker, took us all on a journey of understanding a part of history that's so difficult to talk about, because it hurts: the abuse and discrimination that native people, particularly women, were subjected to until not very long ago. I think it also shed a bit of light on how far we've come and how further we need to still go to make things right.

It was a brave topic to choose, that's long overdue and one that certainly puts Fogler, Rubinoff LLP at the forefront of any diversity & inclusion discussion. I hope you organize a similar event soon, this one was outstanding!"

We truly appreciate Connie sharing her experience and perspective in such a compelling manner. Connie was the recipient of the Canadian Journalism Foundation's *Landsberg Award*, which celebrates a journalist who is raising awareness about women's equality issues in Canada, and truly deserved being recognized in this way for her work.

After 18 years as a reporter and investigative journalist with CBC, Connie recently joined Gimlet Media based in New York to continue with her investigative reporting and podcasts. Connie's current project is an 8-episode Gimlet series that explores the mysterious disappearance of an Indigenous woman named Jermain Charlo. You can follow Connie at [@connie_walker](https://twitter.com/connie_walker).