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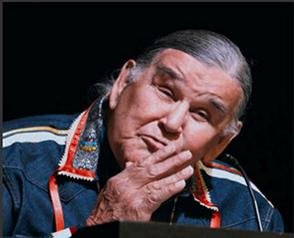


INDIAN SCHOOL
1884 — 1934
SPECIALLY THOSE WHO DIED
AND MAY HAVE BEEN
BURIED NEAR HERE.



DODGING BULLETS

Stories from Survivors
of Historical Trauma



“Historical trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma “

Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, PhD

Logline

Native Americans have dodged bullets since first contact with Europeans. This film brings a cross-generational sampling of Indigenous people, researchers, and politicians to reveal stunning reasons for their disproportionately high incidences of health and social issues. This collection of remarkable stories, names Historical Trauma as the unique and insidious part of the genetic code that resilient Native American populations are still finding ways to dodge.

“So a cop sees a drunken Indian. The old drunken Indian thing. But what a cop doesn’t see is why that person’s drunk. The pain they have in their heart, what they’ve lost, they’ve lost everything.”

— Rick McArthur
American Indian Movement
Legal Rights Center, Lakota Nation
Relating the police to the 7th Cavalry



Synopsis

America's fickle love affair with Native Americans is limited to revisionist stories of passive Indian maidens like Pocahontas and Sacajawea or fierce doomed warriors like Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. Worse, the modern stereotype America has about Native Americans is limited to the oppressed drunkard or the fat casino cat, neither of which deserves understanding nor empathy. No matter what kind of image is evoked, you can't win if you're Native: A successful 'Indian' exploits the American way by not giving back his fair share and a downtrodden 'Indian' can't pull himself up by his bootstraps no matter how much government assistance he's given. Native Americans are blamed for not taking responsibility for the plight of their people and told that they don't deserve help or money despite the fact that Native Americans have the highest poverty rates and the lowest access to health care of any race in the United States.

But when we look beneath the stereotypes and understand the issues and statistics of what's really happening in Indian Country, the truth is surprising, complex, and frustrating. There are spiritual, psychological, and physical wounds experienced in large numbers of the Native American population and these hurts have a name, Historical Trauma. The theory of Historical Trauma stemmed from research done by Dr. Maria Yellowhorse Braveheart in her own community during the 1980's and this research continues to this day by groups of sociologist, psychologist, and scientists.

Dodging Bullets confronts Historical Trauma head-on through interviews and discussions with young Native Americans whose lives are stricken the effects of Historical Trauma. The film explores research by professionals whose work helps develop a better understanding of Trauma, how it relates to Native Americans specifically and provides insight into ways we can improve the outcomes of Native people dealing with these challenges. The individuals interviewed in the film come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds: for example, a middle-school student living on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation recovering from the trauma of losing her brother to a shootout with police; a former A.I.M. (American Indian Movement) member who, now late in life, speaks about the importance of love; sociologist and psychologists who are focused on on-site research studies in Indian country; a NIH-funded scientist who has studied and evaluated the epigenetic changes caused by trauma; a recovering alcoholic who has gone back to culture and is working with youth in Indian country to teach them *mino bimaadiziwin* (to lead a good way life). Live and scored music, provide an influential and authentic backdrop to the film as well as an insight from a musical storytellers point of view.

Dodging Bullets' subjective credibility comes through interviews with professionals whose careers focus on developing an understanding of Historical Trauma. However, the substantial impact of the film comes from the personal stories captured by First Nations People who are resiliently living with the effects of Historical Trauma. Ultimately, it will take understanding and acknowledgment of Historical Trauma and modern day issues, as well as systemic changes to health care, before there can be true healing in Indian Country. Without serious change, the scars of their ancestors will continue to haunt the Seventh Generation (a term used to describe contemporary Natives who live seven generations after the last Indian Wars were fought).

“There is no more hiding in the back room
when we are confronted, we’re coming out”

— Leonard Thompson
White Earth Nation
Discussing the current rise to
power of the First Nation’s youth



CO-DIRECTORS

Kathy Broere, Co-Director Browning Segment

Kathleen is the product of the beautiful love story between an Irishman from Butte, Montana and a lovely Blackfeet woman from the Blackfeet Nation. Kathleen Năatoōsippisstăa•kii Egan Black Broere. Kathleen, meaning courage and Holy Owl Woman was given to her because of her willingness to listen. She is a mother, wife, educator and protector of children. Kathleen has lived and worked on the Blackfeet Reservation since 1984 as Licensed Clinical Counselor and a Marriage and Family Therapist. She has worked in the Browning Schools for the last 20 years.



She believes her greatest hope and gift to this world is her two boys, Egan and Ryan and her grandchildren.

Sarah Edstrom, Co-Director Duluth and Red Lake Segments

Sarah's Anishinabe name is Keezheekoni, meaning "Burning Fire." Her name giver told her that the name reflected her fiery passion and ability to light up a room. She was raised by parents who taught her the importance of speaking out against injustice. She has two sisters who have shown her what powerful women look like. She has 3 nieces and 3 nephews who prove that the future is in good hands. She has a husband who has taught her that love nourishes the spirit. She has a dog who has taught her that if you look cute enough, you can get away with climbing onto the table and eating a cake that is roughly half your size.



She has worked as an advocate in the Native community since 2010. Her hope for the film is that it will serve as a response to every person who has ever said "Native Americans need to get over colonization. All of those atrocities happened hundreds of years ago." The truth is, colonization and genocide against Native Americans has never stopped. It has merely changed tactics.

CO-DIRECTORS

Jonathan Thunder, Co-Director Tall Paul Music Video

Jonathan Thunder is a painter and digital media artist currently residing in Duluth, Minnesota. He has attended the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe and received a Bachelor's Degree in Visual Effects and Motion Graphics from the Art Institutes International Minnesota. His work has been featured in many state, regional, and national exhibitions, as well as in local and international publications. Thunder has won several first place awards in SWAIA's annual Class 'X' Moving Images competition for animation and experimental film.



Bob Trench, Co-Director Lindy, Treaty Rights and Wounded Knee segments

Bob will believe he is of Irish descent until the results of his 23 and Me test come back. He attended the University of Utah Film School and graduated from Hamline University. He is an award-winning creative director and has produced commercial films with a focus on health care and chronic disease management for over 20 years.



“From a social justice perspective historical trauma is, absolutely, a very real thing. If you systematically tell the history of this nation and leave out this history of colonization, oppression, marginalization, genocide, ethnocide attack... that is socially unjust.”

— Melissa L. Walls, PhD
Associate Professor
University of Minnesota



Melissa L. Walls, PhD

Associate Professor
Department of Biobehavioral Health & Population Sciences
University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus

Storytellers

Emmy May

Chy

Dirk Whitebreast

Melvin Lee Houston

Mike Her Many Horses

Leonard Thompson Jr.

Linda Eagle Speaker

Tall Paul

Public Speakers

Rep. Betty McCollum

President Barack Obama

Rep. Keith Ellison

Jesse Ventura

Bill Means

Cultural Experts

Melissa L. Walls, PhD

Dr. Anton Treuer

Dr. Michelle Johnson-Jennings

Lester Johnson III, Ed.D.

Richie Plass

Tara Houska

Don Coyhis

Rachel Yehuda, PhD

Vanessa Goodthunder

Rick McArthur

Clyde Bellecourt

PRODUCTION

Director Browning Segment Kathy Broere

Director Duluth and Red Lake Segments Sarah Edstrom

Director Tall Paul Segment Jonathan Thunder

Director Lindy, Treaty Rights and Wounded Knee segments Bob Trench

Original Music Keith Secola

Motion Graphics Jonathan Thunder

Logo Design Jonathan Thunder

Graphics Design Lucie Skjette

Producer Tom Trench

Executive Producer Larry Long

Director of Photography Bob Trench

“A” and “B” Camera Matt Myers

Location Camera Graham Nolte

Location Camera Julie Verano

Dakota Translation Vanessa Goodthunder

Location Sound Del Helmer

Dialogue Editor Steve Aram

Production Assistant Anthony Maroney

Production Assistant J. Maki

Production Assistant Sylvia Walker

Still Photography Dick Bancroft

Still Photography Bob Trench

Still Photography Thomas Casey

Praise for the film

Best of Fest—Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival

The documentary feature *Dodging Bullets* breaks new ground in form and in its subject matter. The filmmakers offer a series of largely episodic stories, intimately documented, about Native American individuals who have been impacted by ethnic genocide in the United States... it is ultimately a story of resilience and hope as the filmmakers bring a nuanced perspective to a difficult topic, demonstrating the dignity of their subjects and offering the possibility of freedom from generations of inherited traumatic stress.

Jesse Roesler, Dr. Morgan Adamson, Rebecca Carpenter MSIFF Film Jurors

Best Documentary—North Dakota Human Rights Film Festival

"Powerful. We will be unable to move forward in healing until we understand the traumatic damage our forefathers levied against the Indigenous people. The past brought to life by '*Dodging Bullets*' makes this understanding possible. Everyone must see this film."

Sean Coffman Executive Director, The Human Family, North Dakota Human Rights Film Festival

Best Documentary—Bigfork Independent Film Festival

"Living next door to the Flathead Indian Reservation we thought we knew the plight of Native Americans, but our eyes were opened by this film. Historical trauma is a real thing, and something we all have to come to grips with. The producers did a great job putting this messaging into such a powerful film."

Steve Shapero

Director, Bigfork Independent Film Festival

Indigenous Youth Education

"*Dodging Bullets* gives a face to the present effects of historical trauma through telling individual stories of Native people and communities. It does an amazing job of not only showing the hardships, but also highlighting the beauty and resiliency within Indian Country today. The stories told were very relatable to our youth that we showed the film to, and sparked important discussion around intergenerational trauma and healing as a collective."

Payton Counts Indigenous People's Task Force Keep the Fire Alive

Indigenous Education

"*Dodging Bullets* shows pride of the people and their struggles without making Native people look easily influenced or weak. It also, does not display the angry undertone that those of us working within our tribes work so diligently to heal our people from. The message has been heard within this film. It was true to those involved while focusing on the strength, resilience and the pain, not the anger. It allows the non-native audience to truly hear and see the pain without blatant finger pointing or going the other direction by making it more palatable for non-natives tastes. This in turn has given them a different perspective to the anger they have seen that has turned them away from the truth in the past."

"Pinagigi *Dodging Bullets*."

Kimberly Whitewater

Wakjexiwiga

Community Supportive Services Division Director

HCN Social Services

College Education

"The primacy of addressing of the social determinants of health and health disparities, violence against the Native community and people of color, and race related stress is unquestionable during this time. Dodging Bullets is an extraordinarily relevant film and an important resource for educators across disciplines to draw students into reflection and action about the impact of historical trauma. Rarely has a film been able to fully capture the complexity of these contemporary social justice concerns through historical accounts and personal narratives."

George S Leibowitz,

PhD Stony Brook University School of Medicine and Social Welfare

College Education

"Dodging Bullets was a powerful and compelling documentary that revealed the injustices against Indigenous peoples including the characterization through mascots, and the relationship to mental health, self-worth, and identity in Indigenous youth. The film is tied together with deep themes in a modern way. It appeals to all ages. I showed it to my Critical Race, Gender & Sexuality students and Native American Studies students and they were deeply impacted. It resonated with them because so many come from backgrounds of Intergenerational Trauma. The film brilliantly wove together a positive path to healing through ceremony and cultural identity."

Rain L. Marshall, JD, (Ihanktonwan),

Lecturer

Humboldt State University

Medical Education

"Dodging Bullets was an eye-opening and influential documentary that exposed the effects of Historical Trauma against Indigenous peoples. As a regional campus, we have a unique mission to educate physicians dedicated to family medicine, to serve the needs of rural Minnesota and Native American communities. We held an open screening of the film to all students and members of our campus during Native American Heritage Month that was hosted by our student chapter of the Association of Native American Medical Students (ANAMS). It was crucial to share this film on our campus to better understand how Historical Trauma impacts the health and wellbeing of our Native American patients and Native American students."

Paula M. Termuhlen,

MD Regional Campus Dean

Professor of Surgery University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth Campus

Public School Administration

"The Tomah Area School District used the documentary, Dodging Bullets, as a professional development opportunity to introduce the concept of historical trauma to our professional and support staff. Tomah is a community in which an Indian boarding school existed, where many Ho Chuck families reside, and where the school mascot was, up until 2007, the Indians. The documentary provided a powerful glimpse into historical trauma originating in this country and how the ripples of early actions continue throughout time. As a nation we must acknowledge the damage created by government policies, accept responsibility, and forge improved relations with the first inhabitants of this land. Dodging Bullets makes the case for this work."

Cindy Zahrte, District Administrator

Tomah Area School District

Social Services

"The Dodging Bullets documentary was informative and emotionally powerful in its portrayal of historical trauma through moving personal stories and vignettes. We showed it at our annual conference for people working in the health and human services system. Participants found it incredibly valuable to learn how the historical treatment of Native peoples continues to impact individuals today and felt empowered to better support and address these topics in their work with clients in this population. Individuals also found parallels in the United States current treatment of immigrants at our border and racial injustice that are perpetuating or creating new trauma for individuals and families in these groups. It was very applicable to our audience, predominately social workers and counselors, but I would recommend Dodging Bullets to anyone interested in social justice and the history of the United States."

Sharon Hollister

Director of Professional Development

Minnesota Social Service Association

Faith Youth Education

"Until our Mission Trip group screened Dodging Bullets, we had never understood the generational wounding that historical trauma has caused the Native American people. This powerful film opened our eyes to the plight that many tribal communities are experiencing and inspired us to work for positive change for our Native brothers and sisters"

Theo Chalgren

Assistant Director for Youth Formation

St. Victoria Catholic Church

PRODUCTION NOTES

Original Music by Keith Secola—©Akina Music Publishing

“Protect Ya Spirit” Written and Performed by Tall Paul
with Larry Long’s American Roots Revue.
Filmed Live at the Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua, WI

“Morning Song” Written by Edna Manitowabi,
Performed by Dorene Day Waubanewquay
with Larry Long’s American Roots Revue.
Filmed Live at the Dakota Jazz Club, MN

Original Hand Drum by Mitch Walking Elk

“Women’s Warrior Song” Which Came to the Women
of the St’at’imc Nation During the Oka Crisis in 1990.
Performed by Karlee Fellner

Additional Footage and Stills by:

A.I.M. Era Photography Courtesy of Dick Bancroft
©Dick Bancroft 1960-2018

Wounded Knee Photography Courtesy of Thomas Casey
©Thomas Casey 1969-1980

South Dakota Photography Courtesy of Bobby Trench
©Bobby Trench 1992-1996

Family Photography Courtesy Dirk Whitebreast

Family Photography Courtesy Chy Irwin and Family

Family Photography Courtesy Emmy May

Family Photography Melvin Lee Houston Family

Vanderbilt University Archives

Into the West Mini-series

KOTA TV

St. Augustine Indian Mission

Moody County Historical Society

Native Mascot/Logo Exhibit Courtesy of Bittersweet Winds

No Honor in Racism Segment Courtesy of Red Circle Agency

Tribal Nations Map Provided by tribalnationsmaps.com

Amy Goodman Footage Courtesy of Democracy Now!

John Trudell Quote Used with Permission
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Painting Courtesy of Bree Waabinesiik Green

PRESS PHOTOS

