

Aboriginal ex-Mountie recalls racism, harassment

Marge Hudson was first aboriginal female RCMP officer in Manitoba

[CBC News](#)

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Transformed, triumphant and determined are all words that could be used to describe Marge Hudson, a former RCMP officer who said she faced racism and discrimination in the force.

Hudson was the first aboriginal female RCMP officer in Manitoba. So she had to break two barriers.

"I represented the RCMP and served Canada.... I'm proud to do that," she told CBC News in an interview.

After she joined in 1979, Hudson became the poster girl for in the male-dominated institution.

But she said during her 30 years on the force, she experienced harassment and watched others get promoted over her.

The RCMP's commanding officer in Manitoba, Assistant Commissioner Bill Robinson, said he has only ever heard good things about Hudson.

"The communities, quite frankly, loved her. They loved her approach, they liked the way she handled herself," he said.

But it was what Hudson heard that tainted her early experience in the RCMP.

"I could hear the male members talking about me, you know, like, saying, 'Well, I would do her.' 'Why don't you go ahead and do her?'" she said, tearing up while recalling it.

'I had two shots against me'

Hudson said she started out as a special native constable and eventually moved up to regular constable, but she never moved beyond that position, while fellow non-aboriginal officers climbed the ranks.

"Am I brown, is that the reason? Am I female, is that the reason? I had two shots against me right there — being aboriginal, being female," she said.



Hudson told CBC News she has burned most of the photos and other memorabilia from her time in the RCMP. 'I got rid of the extra baggage that I was carrying,' she said. (CBC)

"We were the ones out there to serve and protect, and faithfully, that's what I did. But where was my protection? The RCMP eat their own."

Once, she was encouraged to drop a complaint or face a transfer.

The stress manifested itself in her weight gain, and Hudson said her heaviest weight was 330 pounds by 2003.

She hit her breaking point in 2009.

"I had it with this organization, this outfit and the bullying and all this sh-t. I don't need this," she said.

She says she quit but the RCMP classified her departure as a retirement.

Robinson, who said he is not aware of racism being a problem in the RCMP, said this is the first time he has ever heard of Hudson's allegations against the force.

"I would have seen her in a minute" to talk about the issues, he told CBC News.

But when he was told that Hudson was denied an exit interview when she left the force, Robinson said, "I can't comment on that. I don't know who would've denied her that."

Harassment claims haunt force

While racism might be an issue that has not hit the headlines in recent years, the claims of sexual harassment and other misconduct have [recently become well documented](#) even being [raised in the House of Commons](#).

Cpl. Catherine Galliford, who was the face of the B.C. RCMP for years — announcing the arrest of Robert William Pickton and revealing charges laid in the Air India bombing — has filed an internal complaint that makes serious allegations about misconduct inside the RCMP.

Since Galliford spoke out, [more members of the RCMP](#) have come forward with serious allegations of harassment.

And it's not only female members. Alberta RCMP [Sgt. Jerry Hoyland has complained](#) about 26 separate incidents of alleged harassment, but said he got only grief for his trouble.

As for Hudson, she has tried to move on from her Mountie days. She has burned most of the photos and other remnants of that time.

"I burnt it because, like, it's not who I am. I got rid of the extra baggage that I was carrying," she said.

Not only has she relieved herself of both the weight of that career, but also her physical weight, dumping 200 pounds in four years.

"I love me. I like who I am," she said.