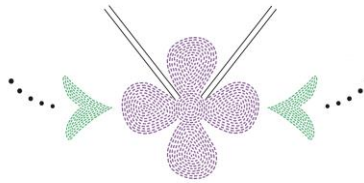


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale  
sur les femmes et les filles  
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls  
Truth-Gathering Process – Part I Public Hearings  
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel  
Britannia Ballroom  
Metro Vancouver, British Columbia**



***Public***

**Sunday April 8, 2018**

**Public Volume 116:**

**Audrey Siegl, In Relation to her Mother**

**Heard by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson**

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## II

### APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Non-appearance
Government of British Columbia	Non-appearance
Government of Canada	Anne Turley (Legal Counsel)
Heiltsuk First Nation	Non-appearance
Northwest Indigenous Council Society	Non-appearance
Our Place - Ray Cam Co-Operative Centre	Non-appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	Beth Symes (Legal Counsel)
Vancouver Sex Workers' Rights Collective	Non-appearance
Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Metis Nation	Non-appearance

III  
LIST OF EXHIBITS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
<b>Witness: Audrey Siegl</b>		
<b>Exhibit: (code: P01P15P0504)</b>		
1	Folder containing 19 digital images displayed during the public testimony of Audrey Siegl.	70
2	Video clip (11 seconds, 3.07 MB, MP4 format).	70

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Heard by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson

Order(s): None.

Commission Counsel: None.

Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Reta Blind, Gladys Radek, Bernie Williams, Laureen "Blu" Waters-Gaudio, Kathy Louis, Florence Catcheway, CeeJai Julian, Merle Williams, Deni Paquette, Donna Dickison, Ruth Alfred, Harriet Prince, Louise Haulli, Elaine Bissonnette, Eunice McMillan, Candace Ruth, Janice Brown, Theresa Russ, Deanna Lewis, Jennifer Thomas, Margerat George, Juanita Desjarlais

Clerk and Registrar: Bryan Zandberg

V

**NOTE**

*NOTE: The use of square brackets [] in this transcript indicates that amendments have been made in order to include information deemed inaudible or indecipherable by the original transcriptionist. Amendments to this transcript were completed by listening to the source audio recording of the proceeding and were performed by Bryan Zandberg, Registrar for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ, May 2nd 2018 at Vancouver, British Columbia.*

1 Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Sunday, April 8, 2018, at 12:11 p.m.

3 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** -- the Health Room B.

4 We are so gracious. We've had Elder Thelma Stogan from  
5 Musqueam offer to do private brushings that want to be  
6 cedar brushed off, and Kelly White will be assisting her,  
7 so if you do feel you want a private space to be brushed  
8 off, you can make your way to that health room. Thank you.

9 --- Upon recessing 12:00 p.m.

10 --- Upon resuming at 12:08 p.m.

11 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** There we go.

12 So we're going to begin our second hearing of the day here  
13 in Hearing Room 1. Louise is just attending to the *Qu'liq*,  
14 so we'll have a moment to acknowledge that. This afternoon  
15 we're going to be hearing from Audrey Siegl, and I'm going  
16 to now start by passing the mic to you figuratively.

17 **MS. AUDREY SIEGL:** Thank you. I will start  
18 by introducing myself. [speaking in Musqueam], and  
19 considering the legal process that is in a lot of ways the  
20 guiding entity above, underneath, around the Inquiry,  
21 instead of an oath, the [Speaking in Musqueam] Musqueam  
22 people, we have a word: "Ma" (ph). It's a certainty  
23 marker. When I introduce myself, and I say [Speaking in  
24 Musqueam], that "ma" is -- is an indicator that not only is

1        what I say true, but that it's unquestionable. It's like  
2        the trees, it's like the water, it's just -- it's just how  
3        it is. So -- I don't affirm to the Canadian Government  
4        that what I say is true. I affirm to the ancestors and the  
5        women who came before me and to all the women who were here  
6        representing that -- that what I say is true.

7                    **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Hello. Hi. I  
8        want to acknowledge you, and that on this land, that law is  
9        the law we will follow today.

10                   **MS. AUDREY SIEGL:** I -- I do a lot of public  
11        speaking and presenting, and I've never gotten nervous, and  
12        for -- for the weeks and months leading up today, I haven't  
13        even really been able to put down the specific points I'd  
14        like to connect. As we've heard many say, we're only going  
15        to get one kick at this can, and I want, I need for it to  
16        be the most effective use of this time possible.

17                   My intentions are to connect the dots  
18        between my mom and her experiences, me and my experiences,  
19        and the bigger picture of what happens on Turtle Island. I  
20        know this Inquiry is specific to Canada, but to me, it's  
21        Turtle Island. To me, it's a global issue.

22                   So we sit here today representing women  
23        around the world who are still being silenced and whose  
24        governments won't even grant their voices to be heard the

1 way they -- I honour the women who came before me, like  
2 Bernie and Gladys and Rita and untold numbers and names who  
3 pushed and sacrificed to make it possible not just for me  
4 to exist but for me to sit here.

5 I would also like note that at this time,  
6 the funding for this Inquiry, the 53 or \$54 million that's  
7 been made available, it's a drop in the bucket for Canada.  
8 Canada makes as of 2015 over a billion dollars a day on our  
9 stolen occupied lands. I don't forget that, ever. Like  
10 Bernie said, crumbs; I'm coming after the whole cookie.

11 So to start, there are -- are -- I have  
12 photos of my mom and my sister and I, and for anyone who is  
13 sensitive, I will be -- there's a -- there's a short video  
14 of an assault by a VPD officer at a rally and photos  
15 of -- of an injury afterwards, so we don't want to catch  
16 anyone off guard with that.

17 Some of the things I share, I was really  
18 careful with the pictures I would include because I don't  
19 want my mom to be judged, and I'm worried about people  
20 thinking bad things of her, and I was given great advice to  
21 do this work from where I feel powerful, and I'm learning  
22 that emotions are powerful, so -- and I'm grateful to all  
23 of the strong women who came when I called and who offered.

24 My mom was born in 1953, and the name, one



1 of my working names, the name she put on me is (ancestral  
2 name given), is her name. It was my granny's great  
3 grandfather's name, and he never had an English name.  
4 There is no equivalent, and there is no translation, and my  
5 mom put that name on me because of the work that I do, and  
6 we were so disconnected that I didn't know that the work I  
7 do is a continuation of the work she does, and she  
8 was -- she was born to Celina and Steve August (ph). She  
9 was the last of nine babies. It was a blended family.  
10 Both grandparents were married before, and she was  
11 beautiful. She was, like the rest of the nine kids, taken  
12 for residential school. Both grandparents went to  
13 residential school, and I've heard some rumblings about  
14 both their parents went to residential school, so we're  
15 potentially three generations of residential school, and I  
16 was lucky I didn't have to go, but my cousin, who is only a  
17 year or two older, went to residential school. This is not  
18 far-off history, and it is by no means over and  
19 forgettable.

20 And my mom was only four when they came to  
21 get her, and she's like Bernie. She was tiny. There's my  
22 mom. And my grandpa fought for her because he saw what  
23 happened to his other kids when they came home. He saw how  
24 broken they were, and he was beat unconscious, and when he

1       came to, she was gone.

2                   And one other thing, if anyone needs a break  
3       or if you're feeling heavy, I'll ask you all to take care  
4       of yourself, too, because some of what I'm saying is going  
5       to be triggering, and I don't want to hurt anybody.

6                   So the sad thing is -- the sadder -- the  
7       sadder -- the sadder reality is that at 4 years old, she  
8       had already been messed with within her family and in the  
9       community. We know this is a truth that happens in our  
10      communities all across Canada, everywhere. Colonization  
11      has happened. In our languages, we have names for body  
12      parts, but we don't have swear words, we don't have  
13      cursing, and we can see now the -- the dominant culture,  
14      the invasion of the dominant culture enacted on us. It  
15      worked as it was supposed to. It has created some  
16      insidious behaviors that have carried on from generation to  
17      generation.

18                  So my mom was in the residential school  
19      until she was 16 years old, and I will also say now that  
20      since I was little, I -- I sat at tables  
21      with -- with -- with old-timers born in the late 1800s, and  
22      my grandpa was born in -- in -- my granny was born in 1916,  
23      and my grandpa was born in 1906. That's the generation who  
24      raised me, and that's -- that's my mom as the baby in that

1 picture, and my granny, my grandpa, little -- and -- and  
2 her siblings. That's the time. Like, the little one there  
3 on the lap, that's about how old my mom was when they took  
4 her, so -- so we can see.

5 And since I was little, my job was to sit  
6 and watch and listen, so my mom, my granny, and my aunty  
7 all shared with me what happened in their lives, and the  
8 one theme that all had in common was it was dehumanizing,  
9 and it was cruel, and it was intended to break people, and  
10 they said, now it's yours. Now I don't talk about it  
11 anymore. You go and you tell them what happens to us. You  
12 tell them what they do to us.

13 So from the time that I was little, it was  
14 my job to sit and watch and listen, but it was also my job  
15 to speak, and it was also my job to remind people of the  
16 truths. I call it court stenographer in my head. I swear  
17 I'm not argumentative, but accuracy is a big thing, and you  
18 think, our cultures, we were oral cultures. We have -- we  
19 have certainty markers like "ma" for a reason. We have six  
20 sets of determiners for a reason. Accuracy is a big thing.

21 So the knowledge, the truth, the teachings  
22 that come through me have been here as long as we have  
23 since the first sunrise, so I -- I am here now in this  
24 body, but we stand with millions. We stand with our

1       ancestors. That's who I work for. I am accountable only  
2       to them.

3                   And when my mom was 16 and set free,  
4       she -- she shared -- she shared what happened to her, and  
5       I'm not going to go over the details of what happened to  
6       her in the schools. Priests, nuns, other students,  
7       separated from her family, little things that stood out to  
8       me that -- for decades, she wanted to cut her hair. She  
9       had that really typical long Indian hair that came to the V  
10      at the bottom, so shiny, and it just flowed when she  
11      walked, not a split end, and she always wanted to cut her  
12      hair. She said, I want one of those fashionable little  
13      haircuts, and every time she would even trim her hair, she  
14      would go into sometimes month-long spirals because they  
15      took her hair when she was a baby.

16                   She, like Bernie, spoke her ancestral  
17      language. She grew up hearing in her mama's womb  
18      Henkomenem. She spoke Henkomenem outside of English. She  
19      didn't -- she wasn't understood in the schools, and the  
20      impact that that had later was that when I took the  
21      language course on our reserve, because I decided I'm  
22      reclaiming who I am, and I'm not going to carry this shame  
23      that was never mine anyway -- I walked into my mom's house  
24      after the class, and I said [speaking in Musqueam]; how are

1       you, Mom? She turned and she looked, and I thought maybe I  
2       had said something really wrong, and she threw the pint  
3       glass in her hand at me, and she chased me, and she told me  
4       to get out of her house, and she was crazy.

5                       And my mom was always volatile because of  
6       what she'd been through. She was always in -- she always  
7       had to protect herself, so my boyfriend got up and left,  
8       and we left, and she called I don't know how many days  
9       later, and she explained, I can't speak the language, and I  
10      can't hear it. I -- I can't. Like, don't -- don't speak  
11      it around me, because of the triggers. This is how  
12      invasive and insidious and ongoing that -- how many decades  
13      later was that, my mom tried to sit in the Henkomenem  
14      language course with me, and the same thing that she never  
15      said out loud -- it's stupid, I'm stupid, I'm so stupid,  
16      I'm just so stupid -- the same things I've said my whole  
17      life.

18                      My mom -- I said, will you please just try?  
19      She was tiny, and she was beautiful, so I called her  
20      "*maman*" because she was like a little French doll, and I  
21      said, *maman*, please come try. Just sit with me. I promise  
22      if you need to go, we'll go. And she said, why are they  
23      handing us out papers? I don't want to fill anything, and  
24      I don't understand this. What's on the paper?

1       Immediately, she was just panicky, and she got up and she  
2       left, and she said, I'm too stupid for this. Why did you  
3       bring me here? I told you I didn't want to do this. And I  
4       felt awful because I thought it was a treasure, and for  
5       her, all it was was a torment.

6                       And when she left the residential school at  
7       16, she went running. As she puts it, when they set me  
8       free at 16, I was going to -- I was gone, and I was looking  
9       for the man, and I was going to have my babies. No one was  
10      going to touch them, and no one was going to take them.  
11      And she was beautiful, and she was feisty, and she was  
12      powerful, and she spotted my dad, and he had no hope in  
13      hell. It was decided, and if you know the west coast, the  
14      land of matriarchs, this -- it -- it -- like, [speaking in  
15      Musqueam], the die was cast. That's it. We're not  
16      stopping this.

17                      So at almost 18, she had my sister, and at  
18      almost 19, she had me, and our dad was -- our dad is about  
19      three years older, so our dad was 21 and 22, and my dad is  
20      a very kind man. He is strong and intelligent and  
21      beautiful, and he comes from a horrific background of  
22      trauma, as well, and he loves -- he still loves my mom, and  
23      he noticed that there were certain reactions to things and  
24      moods and behaviors, and he accommodated, and he did his

1 best to love her and to bring strength. That's the day I  
2 came home from the hospital. That's my dad.

3 And -- and with my sister, everything -- my  
4 sister was born jaundiced, and my mom was tiny, but she  
5 was -- she would always get mad because people always  
6 thought that we were sisters, and she -- she -- she  
7 would -- she was scary, and she was, like, they're not  
8 my -- these aren't my sisters, these are my daughters.  
9 Like, she was just ready to throw down, and people  
10 were -- thought that she was so much younger than she was,  
11 and everything seemed to be going okay, and the trauma,  
12 because she came from a mom who didn't know how to be a mom  
13 who came from a mom who didn't know how to be a mom, and we  
14 come from cultures where now they're called midwives, but  
15 our women knew how to take care of each other and  
16 themselves. These are the medicines that my granny worked  
17 with taking care of women, and -- with the pregnancy with  
18 me, she was already having huge emotional issues. We never  
19 really connected.

20 And when I was born, she had -- and this was  
21 1973 at Burnaby General where the doctor who was my  
22 father's family doctor since they came to Vancouver, a  
23 white doctor, a white male doctor had taken care of my mom  
24 through the first pregnancy and was always kind to her and

1       took good care of her, but she was really hemorrhaging, and  
2       without consulting her, and my dad says maybe they talked  
3       to him, he can't really remember. She didn't even get to  
4       hold me, and they took her, and they tied her tubes.

5               And you think the process the woman's body  
6       goes through to connect with her baby when she came to, she  
7       didn't even know what had happened, and that kind of set  
8       the tone for the rest of -- of our time here together that  
9       we struggled, and we felt disconnected, and at times the  
10      anger and rage that was enacted on her, she enacted on me,  
11      and I'll qualify that by saying we did our work and we came  
12      to our peace. I am very clear that as much as we've heard  
13      people say, and I -- I understand it wasn't -- she didn't  
14      want to. She didn't even mean to.

15              So, like, my first memory is of her shaking  
16      me, and they were drinking, and she was mad -- we were  
17      playing hide-and-seek, and she was never looking for us, so  
18      I went and stood where she could see me. And I jumped out  
19      at her, and she just grabbed me and shook me until I  
20      blacked out, and my dad came home and found me in the crib.  
21      He would come home from work, and she was partying, and he  
22      didn't know what to do because he had taken her to the  
23      residential school she was at. He had taken her to the  
24      foster homes in Kelowna where she lived. He watched her



1       claw at the buildings and throw rocks at them, and -- and  
2       he puts it, scream like a wild animal. He can only imagine  
3       what happened there, and he saw that what was happening  
4       with her was endangering us, so in 1975, '76, he had a job  
5       there with the City making almost 20 bucks an hour, and he  
6       quit to stay home because he was worried about what she  
7       would do to herself and us.

8                   And things kind of stabilized, and he was  
9       able to go back to work, and one day he came home from  
10      work, and we were just gone. Our mom had organized and  
11      figured out and saved money, and she was renting a house on  
12      the reserve, and she just took us and left, and his world  
13      fell apart. All he wanted was to have a family, and he  
14      wasn't perfect, but he was kind and he was good, and he did  
15      his best, and then -- after -- I don't -- I don't know how  
16      long we were there. I was maybe 2, 2 and a half. I don't  
17      know how long we stayed in that house, and -- and then one  
18      day -- and my mom's -- my mom's peer group, they -- the  
19      women she grew up with, they were around the same age.  
20      They all took care of each other, and they -- you know,  
21      when you don't have to explain experiences. They -- they  
22      took care of each other, so some of the women who loved me  
23      and take care of me now knew my mom  
24      before -- before -- before I lived in her.

1           And my mom was increasingly overwhelmed and  
2           angry, and I remember in the morning she would get up and  
3           open the curtains and open the windows and turn on the  
4           big -- like, those big consoles with the record player and  
5           the 8-track, and she would -- she would put on certain  
6           music, and she had her favorites, and we would all just get  
7           up and dance and sing. There was -- and, like -- it's like  
8           she was sunshine, and then one day, she just left.

9           That -- the trauma and what was being triggered and what  
10          she never had a chance to heal was coming up. In her mind  
11          and in her heart, she knew what was best was to leave, and  
12          I ask again and again, what has to happen for a woman to go  
13          and intentionally make these babies and create them and  
14          love them and nurture them from her body, for her to be  
15          able to shift to hurt those babies and then leave them?  
16          And she stayed gone for years.

17          Our dad raised us. There was a short time  
18          in between that some of the women in our community, my  
19          mom's peers came, and they took care of us because we all  
20          know what happens to kids to go to the Government, and we  
21          all know what happens when the Government finds out what  
22          happens to our kids and our communities. They'll blame us,  
23          but they'll do nothing to help us, and they'll still keep  
24          doing the damage and point the big finger at us that we're

1 the bad guys.

2 And one day, my granny said to them, bring  
3 them up to the house, and they said, no, no, Aunty Celina,  
4 no. It's okay. She said, you have to go to school. They  
5 were just high school kids, so they brought them up -- they  
6 brought us up, and -- and during this time -- and I  
7 don't -- I don't share this to make my granny look bad, but  
8 again, the big -- the huge darkness that lives in people  
9 after they have been dehumanized and violated in the most  
10 unbelievable ways, that at my granny's house, I had to live  
11 in the basement, and it was dark, and I was scared, and  
12 there were the big black shadows, and I know lots of you  
13 know and understand the different realities and energies  
14 that exist together, and there was a terrible energy that  
15 lived in the corner, and she would make me go stand in the  
16 corner, and she would put -- like what Bernie shared, she  
17 would put the food on the floor and make me eat it like a  
18 dog, and it was (indiscernible), and I don't -- I don't cry  
19 for me. What happened -- what had to happen to my granny  
20 that tiny little me -- that she was able to do that to tiny  
21 little me?

22 And there was -- you know, I wasn't allowed  
23 to cry. I had to be strong. My granny watched what  
24 happened to her kids, and she knew what happened because

1 she was in those schools. Her family sent her because they  
2 wanted her to have a better chance. She went to the school  
3 in Penelakut, and if I cried, my granny would dig her nails  
4 in, she would scratch me, she -- she had that look. Like,  
5 we all know that granny look, and one day I did something  
6 she didn't like, and she cut my curls off, and she said,  
7 you don't deserve them.

8 And years later, after she passed -- this  
9 gives us insight into who raised my mom and how  
10 disconnected my mom was from her mom, and we see the  
11 intergenerational living. It's not a textbook. It's not a  
12 study. We aren't research. This is what it looks like,  
13 and I asked my granny after she passed -- because my granny  
14 is the same one who raised me and taught me and shared with  
15 me what I know and how I work with the medicines, and I'm  
16 proud of her, and I love her. I asked her, I said, why  
17 were you so mean? She said, was I mean? She flashbaked  
18 to the things she said, and she was -- she was -- she was  
19 devastated. She said, I didn't know how else to make you  
20 strong enough. I knew you were going to have to be strong.  
21 It's going to be a hard life, even harder than ours  
22 sometimes. I didn't know how else to make you strong. I  
23 never meant to hurt you, my love. Love you.

24 From the very beginning, they said, they

1       knew that I was going to be the one to change things, to  
2       have a chance, to be able to make it out of where they were  
3       stuck for four, six generations. They couldn't get out.  
4       They weren't meant to get out. So the advantages that I  
5       have been given, the opportunities that have been shared  
6       with me, came at a high price to them, and in this work  
7       that I've been doing, I've learned a term called vicarious  
8       trauma. I didn't know that was a thing. The worst of my  
9       trauma comes from what I saw happening to other people.

10               And then after this, my dad raised us in  
11       East Van by himself. All the single dads, I love you. All  
12       the good -- all the good men who stand up, who do the right  
13       thing, I love you all. I was raised by a single man around  
14       men and with old-timers on the reserve. My sister and my  
15       cousins, they got to go play. They got to know people in  
16       the community. Most of my community doesn't know who I am.  
17       They haven't known who I am my entire life. They don't  
18       know what -- they don't know what I know or what I don't  
19       know, and this is, again, part of the divide and the  
20       division that is externally enforced on us because of  
21       things like the Indian Act and residential schools and  
22       colonization, and I was lucky that those teachings that I  
23       received from -- from when I was in my mama's belly, that  
24       when I was working so hard to kill myself -- alcohol,

1 drugs, men, you name it. I -- I still don't have a very  
2 clear understanding of danger. I don't say that to be  
3 funny, but it's lead to some very funny situations, and  
4 what saved me, where I met CeCe (ph) five, six years ago  
5 under a bridge at a place called Cesnem (ph), one of our  
6 sacred sites where our ancestors have had constant  
7 occupation. Science dates it for over 10,000 years, but we  
8 know, way longer than that, where our ancestors were being  
9 on earth, for more condos and more buildings and cemented  
10 over it. We had four ancestral remains intact, two adults  
11 and two babies that were unearthed, and they were going to  
12 be paved over or thrown out so a parking lot could go in,  
13 and up to this point, I was one of those people -- like,  
14 what are those people doing in the streets stopping traffic  
15 with their signs and -- like, get a job.

16 (LAUGHTER)

17 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: Do you have nothing  
18 better to do? There are -- there are real venues. Like,  
19 all the shit that people say to us now, I was one of the  
20 people who said that. I was ashamed of who I was, and I  
21 was ashamed of where I came from, and I was ashamed for  
22 every brown person I saw. Like Bernie, I'm Filipino, I'm  
23 Chinese, I'm -- I'm Mexican, I'm Portuguese, I am Greek, I  
24 am not First Nations, and I was humiliated when people

1 would recognize me as First Nations because I -- because I  
2 knew that they were going to treat me differently then.

3 And then five, six years ago when we -- our  
4 community, our women, especially our off-reserve women, we  
5 came and we stood, and we protected those ancestors, and I  
6 started to hear the teachings of the drum. I was raised  
7 with some teachings, and I was raised completely devoid,  
8 absent of other teachings, and I had never touched a drum.  
9 Even when our people sang our songs, it was  
10 this -- (unreportable sound), the wail, (indiscernible).  
11 It would come up. I couldn't stop it. I couldn't hear the  
12 songs. Don't sing. Don't sing. I have to go. I have to  
13 go. Like, panic.

14 And every day, we drummed and we sang, and  
15 we heard our stories, and our old-timers came and sat with  
16 us, and people came from all over. We had monks, and we  
17 had a rabbi, we had Japanese, Korean, Chinese First Nations  
18 from everywhere. Gladys was there.

19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** M'hm.

20 **MS. AUDREY SIEGL:** I didn't even know you  
21 there. People that I know now and the work that I do were  
22 there with me then, and I am only learning this, and  
23 someone -- someone said, Audrey, come and drum and sing.  
24 No, no, no, no, no. And I've been in band, choir, show

1 choir, drama, prelaw debating, anything public speaking  
2 there front of people that -- and it wasn't because I  
3 wanted to. It was where I was steered, and they -- I  
4 heard -- I heard people say because people would  
5 come -- like, non-Native people would come or people like  
6 me, Native people who were separate -- separated would come  
7 and they would ask, and -- and I heard, oh, the drum is the  
8 heartbeat of the earth, of the mother, and the song is the  
9 prayer, and I thought, I don't deserve it. I'll hurt it.

10           And I didn't want to tell anybody that  
11 because I don't want people feeling sorry for me. We  
12 get -- we get both extremes. You're hated on-site for what  
13 you can't control. I can't control the way I look, my  
14 features. I have nothing to do with that, or people feel  
15 pity: Oh, you poor thing. I can't stand either. I was  
16 raised to be articulate, decisive, to speak when someone  
17 needs to speak. If there's a chaos, two options: Make  
18 order or leave. You do not stay in chaos. That is not an  
19 option. I didn't have a lot of the conditioning that a lot  
20 of women have to be silent. At 8 years old I could take a  
21 full-grown man down in two or three moves because my dad's  
22 friends knew that would be necessary. They said  
23 you're -- you're an Indian, you're a brown woman, and  
24 you're -- and you're going to be beautiful. You better



1 know how to protect yourself. This is just how it was, and  
2 under the bridge, one of our -- another -- another  
3 beautiful powerhouse, Yuna Ann (ph), we were standing  
4 singing, because then I was comfortable to stand and  
5 say -- when I stood with Mary and CeCe, and I've always  
6 felt safe with them and loved, and that was a brand new  
7 experience, and Yuna Ann was called away, and she just  
8 shoved her drum at me, and said, here. It was either let  
9 the drum drop or pick it up, take it from her, and that  
10 first (unreportable sound) with the drum, (unreportable  
11 sound), (indiscernible) to wake oneself's up happened. All  
12 of a sudden -- I've had debilitating anxiety, PTSD, you  
13 name it. I'm on disability for six different diagnoses.  
14 Again, this is clinical. What it means is shit happened  
15 and there was no way to deal with because I was never meant  
16 to. I was supposed to kill myself. I was supposed to be a  
17 statistic. I'm not supposed to be here now, yet here I am  
18 with each of you.

19 And that first time playing that drum, I  
20 didn't need a therapist. I didn't need the pills. I  
21 didn't need any of that, and they were helpful at the time,  
22 and I know that they do make a big difference for a lot of  
23 people like they did for me, but what I needed, I needed my  
24 culture. I needed my ancestors. I needed to acknowledge

1 that my ancestors were in this land, and that's where my  
2 power comes from. My (indiscernible) power comes from,  
3 whose cheek bones are these? These are my grandpa's hands.  
4 How do I know how to knit? I watched my granny my whole  
5 life. My job, Mary, you all know this, spinning the wool.

6 (LAUGHTER)

7 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: My job was to take care  
8 of those old-timers to get their tea, to set their curlers.  
9 I brushed my granny's hair. I set her curlers. I bathed  
10 her. I brought her her tea. She showed me how to stir the  
11 tea properly with my pinky up so it made the right noise.  
12 Some things so simple as to spill -- to spill it -- to stir  
13 it so it overspilled, and people thought we were crazy, and  
14 then you put the cup off of the plate and you drink from  
15 the saucer. That's what we always did. And then in  
16 language class, they shared -- Larry Grant (ph)  
17 shared -- our old-timers before, even until not too long  
18 ago, we drank out of shells. My granny drank out of a  
19 shell, and the closest thing we had to a shell was those  
20 saucers. She never used the cup. And I -- I'm not a fan  
21 of English -- fine bone English china, but my granny sure  
22 was, and I have sets of it in my house. I have beautiful  
23 cups that I buy, and rarely use the cup. This is part of  
24 how we live now, new traditions are born, and we connect

1 the dots between my mom's experience, the brutality that  
2 she lived through from birth.

3 Bernie said something when I first met her  
4 years ago. We're born into the struggle, she said. One of  
5 her -- one of her ladies shared it with her. One of her  
6 teachers shared it with her. I didn't choose this life. I  
7 was born into it. I thwarted the plan. I thwarted the  
8 genocide. How -- how -- how did that happen? That  
9 happened because I watched every woman before me struggle.  
10 I saw the pitfalls. I managed to get myself to a place  
11 where I was sober. No drugs for almost 20 years, no booze  
12 for 6 years. I'm learning how to have healthier  
13 relationships with men, and now I watch -- I look back, and  
14 I see my progress and my healing. Seventeen years ago, I  
15 had what the doctors would call a breakdown, but again, it  
16 was an awakening. My ancestors came and they claimed me  
17 and I -- and I woke myself up. I kicked myself in the ass.  
18 You either kill yourself and get it over with and stop with  
19 this bullshit or get up and go, so I got up and I went, and  
20 I found all the tools I didn't even know I'd amassed along  
21 the way all of a sudden were useful. At Cesnem, we were  
22 always looking for people to do media, and one day they  
23 asked, will -- will you talk? Oh, well all of a sudden, we  
24 discovered, Audrey has a talent for talking.

1 (LAUGHTER)

2 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: And in -- in front of the  
3 media, she's comfortable. She's not nervous. She makes  
4 good points. And then *Elsipogtog* happened, Idle No More  
5 happened, and we were called to speak and to sing. The  
6 women started rising, and we heard -- we learned with Idle  
7 No More, Sylvia: When sleeping women wake, mountains move.  
8 Mountains are moving. This Inquiry, which so many women  
9 died waiting for, were murdered waiting for, is an  
10 indicator of that.

11 I don't know what's going to come of this  
12 afterwards, so I'm making the best of it right now. I'm  
13 not counting on this Canadian Government to ever do  
14 anything in my benefit because that means that the  
15 Government will then have to give up the benefits that they  
16 accept and create that come at the expense of our women and  
17 our land. Connecting the dots between genocide and  
18 ecocide. It's cost me every woman in my family, my nieces.  
19 It's almost took my sister. It took my mom, my aunty. I  
20 watched the women around me suffer and die every day.

21 I was just a little kid outside those bars.  
22 My -- my grandpa, my mom, they would take us out for the  
23 day, and my mom was gone for most of my life trying to heal  
24 herself. She spent time in the Yukon. She would send me

1 letters and stones and pelts, and she would say she loved  
2 me, and I believed her, and then when she came back, she  
3 was damaged and she would tell me she hated me. I don't  
4 know how many times she's tried to kill me, and we made our  
5 peace with these things, and I only share them. I don't  
6 want anyone to judge her or look badly on her. Where did  
7 she learn these things? Where did it come from? How much  
8 did she hate herself that how she was living then was  
9 better than what she was hiding from? What's underneath  
10 it? I don't need placebo and Band-Aids. I need to heal,  
11 and I don't need to heal the surface. I need to heal the  
12 big wounds underneath, and I've had that time, I've had the  
13 opportunity, and that's why I do the work I do. None of  
14 the women before me have been able to do it. My granny  
15 fought hard, and she was able to pass the baton to me, and  
16 now I take it, and I run. I'll go through walls, and I do  
17 it all with love.

18 We hear about so often, and we've  
19 experienced here, lateral violence. I've learned to love  
20 people from a distance for my own safety, and I learned  
21 that from my mom, and when I went through my rage with her,  
22 because I was so mad and hurt at what I never got, what I  
23 needed. I needed love. I needed her to hold me. I have  
24 memories of her brushing my hair and rubbing my back, and

1 other than that, it's ugly. And then I realized one day,  
2 she stayed sober for three months, and she was, you know,  
3 functioning alcoholic maybe since she was 12. She stayed  
4 sober for three months and let me rail against her every  
5 day, and she held me and she loved me, and she'd come and  
6 go. As kids, she would bring me presents for the age that  
7 I was when she last left. As a teenager, she brought me  
8 shirts for an 8-year-old. Sometimes she was gone for  
9 years, and we would hear nothing, and this is where it  
10 comes in. Everybody here I'm sure knows, waiting for those  
11 phone calls. You hear the phone ring at night, and you're  
12 like, oh, no. I'm not answering it.

13 Every one of my granny's children -- little  
14 Florence died of pneumonic fever because she was denied  
15 proper health care. A little four-year-old baby was  
16 allowed to die a miserable death because she wasn't worth  
17 saving. Magna Carta, Manifest Destiny, Indian Act.  
18 Connect the dots.

19 So my middle name, Florence, Audrey Florence  
20 Siegl, I carry Florence's name. She only lived to be four.  
21 She was my mom's -- I think she was younger than my mom,  
22 and then learning what happened to my mom, I was sitting in  
23 Grade 9, Templeton, and I was born in '73, so whoever wants  
24 to do the math on what year that was, my mom -- I heard

1 about my family going to boarding schools, and the Canadian  
2 Government's system of shielding the truth, misinformation,  
3 propaganda and lies is so hyper-effective that me, someone  
4 who carried the trauma of those residential schools,  
5 boarding schools, didn't even know it. I believed I was  
6 fine. I just thought it was normal for people to think and  
7 feel how I felt, to watch the family pass out drunk all the  
8 time and have to go in and out of SROs and shelters and  
9 detoxes. Since I wasn't even 12 years old, I've been in  
10 the Downtown Eastside looking for my family, sitting in  
11 Oppenheimer Park my uncles while they drink their Ruby Red  
12 and pass out watching so nobody touches them. Most of my  
13 visits with my mom were in detoxes or SROs. I watched her  
14 kill herself every day of her life. I watched her kill  
15 herself with -- by choosing men who beat her mercilessly,  
16 who raped her, who sold her. She left my dad to go back to  
17 that because that's what she believed she deserved. That's  
18 where she was comfortable.

19 I have trouble with people being nice to me.  
20 Working -- doing the work in all the cities, people are  
21 nice to me, and it messes me up. I don't know what to do  
22 when people are nice. I don't know what to do when people  
23 are mean, when people want things, when people lie and use.

24 And when I realized sitting in that class

1 when that -- this white teacher said, oh, no, here's  
2 another little bit of Canadian history and da-da-da-da-da,  
3 and the video and -- Indian residential schools on the  
4 screen, the pictures, all those pictures we've seen since  
5 TRC of the residential schools across Canada, and then he  
6 said, also known as boarding schools, and I swear to God, I  
7 thought I had passed out and fallen over. Everything went  
8 black. What? Boarding schools? I thought that my mom and  
9 her family got to go to Switzerland boarding school. I  
10 thought that -- that the reason they had such impeccable  
11 manners was because of that high level of education that  
12 they received. To fall from there to knowing that what I  
13 knew happened in the residential schools, knowing that that  
14 was so close to me and that teacher bragged and boasted how  
15 he found himself a Native woman who gave him 14 kids  
16 and -- and was still happy to make more, bragged about how  
17 his people from -- I think it might have been Australia,  
18 but he didn't have the accent -- how they -- how -- how  
19 they knew how to get a good wife, and you always picked a  
20 brown one because she'd -- because she'd never leave you,  
21 and you could do whatever you wanted, and they'd give you  
22 lots of babies. Teachers were allowed to say this. That  
23 wasn't that long ago.

24 And then I realized that that's what had



1 happened to my mom, and even decade -- over a decade later  
2 when I -- when I railed against her and I was so awful, and  
3 she stayed sober and never once did she offer even an  
4 excuse or a defence, but she just sat still and let me,  
5 and -- not -- I don't know how many years after that I sat  
6 with her, and I said, I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry I hurt  
7 you. I didn't know what happened. And then we started our  
8 healing journey together, and that's when she shared a lot  
9 of what happened to her.

10 Then TRC came up, and these prescribed ideas  
11 and timelines and budgets, and, no, this is how it has to  
12 happen. No, it doesn't. My people have been here for over  
13 10,000 years, and this is not how we worked. As long as it  
14 takes is as long as it takes. We don't dictate to each  
15 other -- we don't even have a word or phrase for "thank  
16 you." That was -- that was created to accommodate the  
17 newcomers to the land. What -- when we say [speaking in  
18 Musqueam], technically it means "we're done here."

19 (LAUGHTER)

20 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: And we say it with  
21 sincerity now, but why did we have to create that?  
22 Why -- what happened -- looking at the fact these -- in  
23 our -- in our Chiefs and council on our reserve systems, in  
24 my community, it was our First Nations who brought it in.

1 Families who still work and -- and promote the Indian Act,  
2 that -- still in it. They brought it to our community.  
3 Turn our own people against each other, and then we have to  
4 fight for the crumbs.

5 And now we come to the part where -- where  
6 I'm waking up and I'm learning, and all the pieces of the  
7 puzzle are coming together of -- of what I saw happening,  
8 that all of a sudden, things made sense, and I started -- I  
9 started to not hate myself. I've -- I like myself now, but  
10 I'm still qualifying my existence. I'm still earning my  
11 keep. That's not right. I know I'm not the only one. I  
12 sit here and I share this, and I know it's resonating in  
13 other people, and ever since I was little, I stand up and I  
14 fight, for as much as I wanted to -- to die and as much as  
15 I would go -- walk into a bar and I would say, that man,  
16 that's a dangerous one. Any time anyone tried to kill me,  
17 I fought like hell to live. I have been kidnapped at  
18 gunpoint, I have been held hostage, I have had -- I don't  
19 even know how many times men have tried to rape me. I have  
20 three times -- and this is -- a lot of this during the  
21 drinking time, which people will say that makes it  
22 justifiable. I would leave the bar. Three times, I left  
23 the bar with a man who I thought was a normal guy. All of  
24 a sudden, I'm dropped in the middle of nowhere, and they

1 pull out their weapons, and they say -- one time they gave  
2 me five minutes, another time they said no timeline, and  
3 one time they said a half an hour, and each time they would  
4 say something similar: Go. You don't want us to catch  
5 you.

6 And I don't realize that this isn't normal.  
7 I don't realize that other people, hearing this, hurts  
8 them, and sometimes, that bugs me because why do other  
9 people get to live in bubbles and safety, and I'm not even  
10 allowed to walk down the street?

11 That -- this Indian Act system that the  
12 Canadian Government's policies, which are built on white  
13 supremacy and hatred, reign supreme in their courts. It's  
14 their laws and their reminders of who they are. At  
15 Oppenheimer Park, we set up a tent city. In our ancestors'  
16 times, we had no homelessness. We had natural cycles of  
17 drought and famine, but it wasn't like it is now. What's  
18 happening to our salmon? We are people of the river.  
19 We're salmon people. We know the history of what -- of  
20 what happens to the people who lost their buffalo, and how  
21 did they lose the buffalo? The moose are toxic. The  
22 water's toxic. The salmon are toxic, but fish farms are  
23 allowed to carry on. Right now, Burnaby Mountain. We have  
24 these industry entities that are backed by our government

1 and hired henchmen to stop us from protecting what we are  
2 rightfully bound to be responsible for and to -- I can say  
3 this is my land because I belong to this land. I don't  
4 claim it by their systems of law and property. We saw it  
5 in Caledonia in the '90s; possession is nine-tenths of the  
6 law. People will look at First Nations and  
7 activists -- because now I'm labeled an activist. I've  
8 been on the covers of -- of magazines and countless  
9 articles naming me as a terrorist at the extreme opposite  
10 end of Harper, yet somehow that's a bad reflection of me?  
11 I don't accept it. I worked hard to get out of where I  
12 was. I have been too white for one world and too brown for  
13 another world my entire life. I've been called an apple, a  
14 princess, a white woman who looks like an Indian, and it  
15 doesn't stop. To my own people, I have to qualify and  
16 justify that I have a right to be here and doing the work  
17 I'm doing. I won't do that to another woman, especially  
18 not a brown woman.

19           You don't have to like me. That's fine.  
20 I'll give you all the space in the world, but don't you  
21 dare try to hurt me. It's hard to push back the feelings  
22 of rage and the pushback that wants to come out, but if I  
23 want to work with the medicines, if I want to do the work  
24 that saved me, I have to find good ways to go. My dad

1 always said, give people a good way to go, and I'm  
2 understanding now why. I'm seeing all around me women who  
3 are healing and rising. I say over and over, heal, unite,  
4 rise. Heal, unite, rise. Heal, unite, rise. I don't just  
5 mean us. I mean everybody. [Speaking in Musqueam]. We  
6 are one.

7 But we have these dividing entities. We  
8 look at what happened to my mom and the horrible life that  
9 she lived, and she did her best. She fought hard, and she  
10 was -- I can't even remember how old. She was born in '53,  
11 and not this January but the January before that, I want to  
12 say she died, but she didn't die. She was murdered. Her  
13 whole life she struggled with alcohol and drugs, and why  
14 shouldn't she? It was less painful. There was never any  
15 real help for her, not in our own communities where our  
16 women and children are allowed to be preyed upon. There's  
17 excuses made for the rapists and pedophiles to keep  
18 carrying on their dirty work. Blame it on residential  
19 schools, no individual accountability. I don't accept  
20 that. If I am held accountable, as I should be, so will  
21 you. So I'm silenced in my own community. I'm shunned.  
22 CeCe, Mary, Melanie, a few women in my community stand with  
23 me. Other than that, no one stands with me. Maybe they  
24 support me quietly, but I don't need quiet support. I need

1       you standing here with me.

2                       The day that we buried my mom, I was stood  
3       up -- fifteen minutes before we buried my mom, a man who  
4       came here to do work -- good work of an apology stood me up  
5       and said that I had shamed my family by not following  
6       protocols. They didn't approach me and tell me I was doing  
7       things wrong. They didn't look at why things weren't done  
8       right. Fifteen minutes before they started ceremony, they  
9       stood me up and shamed me. Everyone got in the line and  
10      gave them 50 cents for doing it. Where am I supposed to  
11      feel safe? That's not right.

12                      Sometimes you just got to eat it. Like  
13      Bernie -- Bernie has said time and time again, choose your  
14      battles. That's not a battle I'm choosing to fight, not  
15      now. And I look at how lucky I have been that the work  
16      that I'm doing -- when I started working with the language,  
17      I didn't know my mom was at the groundwork of that at the  
18      foundation working with Arnold Garron (ph), putting  
19      together the lexicon. She tried. She tried every day.  
20      She was never able to work. She couldn't function without  
21      a drink. She had to have her -- she had have to her tokes.  
22      She popped pills. She used any and everything to escape,  
23      and when she was around us, she tried to do better. She  
24      tried to show us different, and she wanted different for

1       us. She left because she thought that that's what was  
2       best, and in the end, she died of a Fentanyl overdose.

3               Five years ago when we set up Oppenheimer  
4       Tent City, we were saying, there's something going on.  
5       There's something in the drugs. Women in the back here,  
6       our Downtown Eastside women who live this every day, were  
7       screaming. Something's happening here. We're dropping.  
8       We're dropping. Every day. Five years later, the mayor  
9       will stand and say, oh, we're going have a task force, and  
10      we'll do this, and we'll do that. Too fucking late. This  
11      Inquiry, too late. The first woman that paid the price for  
12      Canada to exist, one too many. The -- the Time's Up and Me  
13      Too? Too late. Not enough. I don't accept it. It's not  
14      what I need, it's not what I want, and it does not  
15      represent who I am, so I stand and I do the work.

16              I was doing Fentanyl-specific loss and grief  
17      workshops for almost nine months or a year because I don't  
18      know what to do all the time, so I come with the medicines.  
19      Maybe it'll help somebody. I'm -- at least I'm not sitting  
20      feeling helpless. Like the Buddhist -- like the Buddhists  
21      say, if you can't be helpful, be harmless. At the very  
22      least, I'm being harmless, but if I can, I want to share  
23      the medicine. I want -- I just want -- I want people to  
24      heal. I want them to stand. I want to see them -- I want

1 to see them hold their head up, and I want to see pride in  
2 their eyes. I want to see their hearts grow. I want them  
3 to stand and claim who they are and where they come from.

4 And I was in a meeting with VPD, VFD, and  
5 ambulance because I was doing a specific workshop at  
6 Carnegie where they were invited despite the fact that we  
7 all know what the police, the RCMP do to our women still.  
8 Fire, no problem. Ambulance, no problem. The law  
9 enforcement, big problem. But still, I go to them, and I  
10 say, I see this is hurting you. I'm going to lead the way.  
11 Let's set it up, and while I'm in that meeting, my phone  
12 won't stop ringing, and if you know Bernie at all, you know  
13 that the message is coming. My phone wouldn't stop  
14 ringing. My phone wouldn't stop ringing, and it was  
15 Bernie's ring tone, and it was it was "Coal Miner's  
16 Daughter."

17 (LAUGHTER)

18 **MS. AUDREY SIEGL:** It kept ringing, and I'm  
19 trying to have this meeting, and then we finish the meeting  
20 and then go outside, and it's my -- Bernie telling me that  
21 our cousin Alex was -- was there with our mom; my sister  
22 happened to be with Bernie, and the ambulance was working  
23 on our mom trying to save her. She had just come home with  
24 a 5-day party downtown, and -- and she died. We don't know



1 if the Fentanyl was in the crack or in the pot.  
2 They -- they took her off of her bed and put her on the  
3 floor to work on her and left her there, naked, with the  
4 tube in her mouth and let us come in and find her like  
5 that. I have people who loved me through it and took care  
6 of me, and if I had a fire in my belly before and a  
7 determination before -- I don't know what it was that  
8 happened in that moment.

9 My mom and I talked about my work when she  
10 died, and I think to comfort each other, we'd say, oh, and  
11 if I go first, then you'll do this. And we were lucky.  
12 The police and the coroner waited for me to get there to do  
13 the work that my mom asked me to do, our work with our  
14 medicines and our ways. The house she lives in was across  
15 the street from the land, the original homes where my  
16 family grew up right beside the river, six -- six long  
17 houses for six families. My mom left her community early  
18 and never really felt welcome to come back. She waited her  
19 whole life to get a house at home, and when she finally got  
20 a home, it was so close -- a little bit of geography  
21 background. When I say [speaking in Musqueam], it's  
22 actually not geographically articulate. (Place name in  
23 Native language) was one place name like the drive. Where  
24 my people come from is Molly. It's about a 3- or 5-minute

1 walk away, but to accommodate people and not have to  
2 explain and for them to not have to learn about the land  
3 that they're on, we say -- and I do say it with pride  
4 because it is part of the community that my people come  
5 from, but I'm a Molly person, and my mom was born there,  
6 and she died there. We watched them load her in a plastic  
7 bag and drag her out.

8 Bernie and Amy and Destiny (ph) and I, we've  
9 seen a lot. Bernie has seen so much, and we were all so  
10 mortified at how they handled her body. We -- it's been  
11 over a year and a half. We still don't even know how to  
12 talk about it.

13 So even in death, the way they treated her,  
14 it's shameful. Why do I have to sit here and explain this  
15 and justify why she deserved to be treated like a human?  
16 Why did she deserve to not be raped, beaten, sodomized, and  
17 treated like a little animal as a baby and the rest of her  
18 life? I grew up hearing women talk about being raped,  
19 gang-raped and beaten so many times that they lost count of  
20 how many times. Women in my own generation don't know how  
21 many times they've been raped and gang-raped. Do you know  
22 why I've never been raped? Number one, I fought back;  
23 number two, I had women who stepped up and took it so that  
24 I wouldn't have to because they already knew what it was

1 like, and they didn't want me to carry that.

2 I also didn't know the term "survivor's  
3 guilt." I'm loaded with guilt. Why am I here? Why do I  
4 have all these opportunities? Why I do have people to love  
5 me? It's my job. This is my work. I used to think I  
6 would have a life with my family, that I would have  
7 comfort, that I would have a person to love me and take  
8 care of me. Now I know this is my life. I don't want to  
9 be sitting here. I don't want to tell these truths ever  
10 again. How do we wake people up? We humanize it. We have  
11 been commodified. We have been dehumanized. We have been  
12 murdered and criminalized for simply being who we are on  
13 the lands that we dare to still exist on. I'm never  
14 sinking again. I'll never be on my fucking knees again. I  
15 won't beg for anything. I deserve to be here.

16 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** M'hm.

17 **MS. AUDREY SIEGL:** I'm still figuring out  
18 why, but at least I know that. Because I sit here, all  
19 those women before me sit here. Because I'm healing,  
20 they're healing. When I feel pain, we feel pain, it's for  
21 500 years of genocide. This murdered, missing women's  
22 inquiry is to touch on what's happened in the last few  
23 decades. Well, we need to look at the entirety of Canada's  
24 history. What is Canada built on? What is Canada founded

1 on? What is every other developed nation around the world  
2 developed on? It's not okay for it to come at my expense  
3 anymore. It's not okay for it to come at your expense  
4 anymore. Again and again, we stand up and we say no more,  
5 and what do they do? They pull out their military. They  
6 pull out their police. They pull out their -- their new  
7 paramilitarizeed police that have been set up and are being  
8 trained by American military for over ten years along the  
9 borders. They're setting up camps to bring us to, to  
10 silence us, camps that are only accessible by train and  
11 plane, on our lands. If you don't -- if your ancestors  
12 aren't in this land, it's not your land. We have our laws.  
13 We have our ways. You know how we dealt with -- we had  
14 ceremonies to celebrate life and death. We had ceremonies  
15 to celebrate the phases of life. If someone stepped out of  
16 line, we had ways of working with them and healing  
17 them -- healing them, and if that wasn't possible, if what  
18 they had done was so heinous, and this is what mortifies a  
19 lot of people when I bring it up, we had ways of -- of  
20 actually achieving justice. I worked an hour -- Musqueam  
21 oral histories, collections of stories put together by  
22 James Pointe (ph) and others, and they speak openly of how  
23 we maintained balance and justice: Staked up at low tide  
24 or heads on stakes. People will say that that's violent

1 talk. You know, no. You know what's violent? Violent is  
2 what we live with every day.

3 There's video that if -- if you don't mind  
4 to -- I won't watch it. This is what happened at a rally  
5 the day before the Valentine's Day March in Vancouver at an  
6 event called Shut Down Canada. We were standing in  
7 solidarity with what was happening in Australia to the  
8 Aboriginals who were being herded into tiny little areas or  
9 colonies in the middle of the dead heat. They were being  
10 cut off from food and water, and the women were being  
11 attacked. So here in Canada, we set up events across the  
12 country. We shut down Canada. We shut down the  
13 intersection leading to the port, get their attention. We  
14 can go to the art gallery, but how about we shut shit down  
15 and cost you money? Will that get your attention? How  
16 about we start reclaiming in ways that actually is  
17 effective and doesn't come at such a big expense?

18 So in this video, it's a small clip, and  
19 please, if you don't want to see it, please, turn away, or  
20 you can -- you -- you don't have to watch it. It will be  
21 played here, though. I'm not going to watch it, and  
22 it -- it's probably not going to look like much, and then  
23 there's photos of the -- of the injury that I had after,  
24 and I play this because after what the police and the RCMP

1 have done to the women in my family, that I have held them  
2 in the shower and sat in closets with them when they were  
3 working hard to not kill themselves because of what those  
4 men made them do as teenagers, I want the police to be seen  
5 for who they are. We have VPD Aboriginal liaisons. They  
6 never stood up for any of this. I called on the  
7 politicians who are -- the women -- the female politicians  
8 that I represented and I stood with. I called on them,  
9 stand with me; we need to call this out. It's going to  
10 cost us votes. I can't.

11 Women, a few women from my community came  
12 and stood with me. The VPD Aboriginal liaison in my  
13 community, Chief, council, community members, not one stood  
14 with me or said anything publicly about this that happened.  
15 So if you're -- you can play the video, then -- we'll just  
16 play it once.

17 (VIDEO PLAYED)

18 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: That was me standing  
19 quietly on the side while other women were singing and  
20 drumming. This was, as they call it, a peaceful protest,  
21 and we had -- they moved in. It was mothers, grandmothers,  
22 kids, women; and the police brought in 15 squad cars and  
23 unloaded -- last count was over 20, 25 individual huge  
24 cases of pepper spray. They had reopened the intersection

1 at this point. That's Matthew McKinnon, Constable Matthew  
2 McKinnon, proud VPD member. He was targeting me all day.  
3 What the police were doing, they -- when we were at the  
4 intersection -- because we were going intersection -- we  
5 were going with the lights through the intersection, not  
6 disrupting traffic because Lord knows we don't want to  
7 inconvenience people. We're just dying every day, that's  
8 all. He kept trying to shove us -- they were all shoving  
9 us into traffic, trying to shove us into oncoming traffic.

10 One of the number one tactics police use at  
11 rallies is they kettle you in and they hamstring you. I  
12 played sports my whole life. They -- they -- they hit you  
13 in the back of your calf, in the back of -- of -- of your  
14 thigh. They kidney-shot us. They knock our drums out of  
15 our hands. They stomp on our fingers. They knock us to  
16 the ground, and it's all on their videos, which we don't  
17 have access to, and they call us "squaw" and "princess"  
18 and -- they say, how you going -- how's it going with all  
19 your murdered and missing women? These are white officers,  
20 and they have all colours of officers, and they all stand  
21 by and allow this to happen.

22 So Constable McKinnon moved out from behind  
23 the barrier, and this -- this is where the playing  
24 sports -- he eyed me, he lined me up, and he made -- he

1       kept that eye contact. He dropped his shoulder, bam,  
2       picked his shoulder up, shoved my drum into my mouth.  
3       These are -- this is -- this happened on February 13th.  
4       The day after was the memorial march for our murdered and  
5       missing women in the Downtown Eastside. I had a cut lip.  
6       I had a huge bruise. My lip was swollen, my gum was cut,  
7       and I'm at the front of the march singing and drumming, and  
8       I was embarrassed and humiliated to be there. Police are  
9       invited to walk at the front, and everyone's so nice to  
10      them, and I couldn't stop crying during the march.

11                   I have extreme PTSD. I haven't been able to  
12      leave my house for huge periods of time since I was a  
13      little girl, and right after this happened, I -- I followed  
14      him because -- who I am and who I was raised to be -- it  
15      took ten days for this to heal completely. Who I am and  
16      who I was raised to be is you don't let shit like that  
17      happen. You go and you sort it out. I went up to him, and  
18      I was like, what the hell? And three other officers stepped  
19      in behind him and said, you deserved that, shut up, this is  
20      what you deserve, this is what you get when you stand here.

21                   Sergeant Harris (ph) -- this was the PSU  
22      public safety unit, safety. Sergeant Harris who was in  
23      charge, I said, what are you going to do? Look at what  
24      your cop just did. He said, I didn't see anything.



1 Constable McKinnon then, the one who did it, looked at me  
2 and said, you're making such a big deal about this. Do you  
3 want us to call an ambulance for you? Maybe you need some  
4 psychiatric care too.

5 They all watched and listened. This is  
6 nothing compared to what they did to the women that I love,  
7 the women that I have been forced to hold together while  
8 they couldn't hold themselves together, the women who still  
9 hurt themselves every day because of what they have been  
10 forced to live with, including my mom. My mom never  
11 actually cried or was angry about any of the things that  
12 happened to her. It's just the way it was.

13 So we went through internal investigations  
14 and went through OPCC. I was never granted access to my  
15 witnesses' statements, the video that was taken when I went  
16 in to give my statement. I wasn't granted access to any of  
17 the police statements or videos that were taken, and in the  
18 end, a year and a half, two years of the process, six times  
19 they made me send my pictures in, and the video, we didn't  
20 get it, we didn't get it, we didn't get it.

21 I was found -- I was found -- it -- it was  
22 decided that Constable McKinnon -- and also, I didn't  
23 include the photo, but two times before this, Constable  
24 McKinnon was put on desk duty according -- the police have

1        their own newsletter that they put out. The same officer  
2        who did this to me was put on desk duty because of abuse of  
3        authority and unnecessary violence, all Downtown Eastside  
4        stuff, so this man has a documented history of this, which  
5        was proven and undeniable according to their own methods.  
6        They had to put this out, and yet he's there on public  
7        safety. I ask, how do you pick these men? Oh, these are  
8        the ones who want to be here. Oh, I see. So these are the  
9        hunters. These are the predators. These are the  
10       justice-keepers for their side. And in the end, he was  
11       found not guilty of anything, and in fact, they had their  
12       own documented proof that even though I'd never seen this  
13       man before, and I've done a lot of rallies, almost any  
14       event that I would go to, I would have at least one with a  
15       camera and two other big ones with him follow me everywhere  
16       because apparently I'm a terrorist again, right?

17                    And I was -- they -- they -- in their  
18       decision, and I couldn't find any of the e-mails to share  
19       here, but again, we come back to the "ma." I have no  
20       interest in lying about this. I have no interest in  
21       portraying him to be anything other than what he is, and  
22       those who protect him and those who are silent, painted by  
23       the same brush, that I harassed him and I singled him out  
24       at rallies and events, and I tormented him until this was

1       unavoidable, and it was an accident. It's -- it's plain to  
2       see it was an accident, and I overreacted. Nothing done  
3       about the other officers who made their comments, nothing  
4       done about Seargent Harris, who still is working -- all  
5       these people still have these same jobs. Where is  
6       accountability? This was nothing. I've had injuries worse  
7       than this I don't know how many times, but yet nothing is  
8       done.

9                   I share this because we have some -- we  
10       finally have a video that shows a little bit of who the  
11       police are and what they do. We see evidence of this right  
12       now on Burnaby Mountain, the police and the RCMP, ten of  
13       them taking down one woman. The way our First Nations  
14       women are being treated up there right now is totally  
15       different from the way Elizabeth May is treated,  
16       Elizabeth May walking arm in arm with the RCMP while they  
17       arrest her, a symbolic arrest, which stops nothing.

18                   I'm serious about defending, and I'll use  
19       every tool in my belt. I come from a place of peace.  
20       Well, why is violence always enacted on me? I've never  
21       once enacted violence on another person to protect myself.  
22       I feel terrible that I've had to hurt other people. Why am  
23       I allowed to be hunted? Since I was 12 years old, I've  
24       been allowed to be hunted, and this is better than what my

1 mom lived. This is better than the -- what my peers have  
2 lived.

3 So now here we are at the time of the  
4 Inquiry. I've had a lot of media attention for the work  
5 that I do. I have been called a media whore. I have been  
6 called out by people who will say that we're on the same  
7 side. I never wanted to be in front of the media. Never  
8 want to be the face or voice of anything. It just seems to  
9 be my work, and I take it seriously, and I do my best, and  
10 when I'm left on my own to do things, and we have people  
11 who work with dark medicines and bad medicine to try to  
12 stop the progress we're making. It's the same as the  
13 Canadian Government. Why would a system that benefits from  
14 maintaining the status quo ever stop? The Canadian  
15 Government exists because of the most insidious methods  
16 used to clear the land. It's all about resources. It's  
17 all about a dollar sign. This is what commodification is  
18 about. We want to know where -- where we're headed here on  
19 this coast? Look at California. You want to know where  
20 we're headed in general as Canada? Look at what -- look at  
21 Russia. South Africa. No water. No water. That's a real  
22 thing. We're selling water and air. We're selling water  
23 and air, but we still have no value.

24 When I met Bernie and I saw all of her

1 T-shirts, now -- now I think in T-shirts and hash tags, and  
2 Bernie said, we are the red women rising, and I was like,  
3 yes. We are the red women rising because I'm here, because  
4 I have a voice, because now -- because of the -- the little  
5 bit of public knowledge of who I am keeps me safe from the  
6 police. Doesn't mean they don't follow me. Doesn't mean  
7 they don't harass me. It doesn't mean that I don't have  
8 extreme PTSD and terror. I don't want to be anywhere near  
9 them. Everyone want -- so many people want to be cozy with  
10 them and say that they're good guys. No. Until they stand  
11 up publicly and call each other out and hold each other  
12 accountable and say what you did, not only is it not  
13 acceptable, but we're going to bring the justice, and  
14 you're going to be out of that uniform.

15 (APPLAUSE)

16 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: Looking at the history of  
17 the police and the RCMP, the RCMP were created to quiet the  
18 Indian rebellions; again, access to land. The police were  
19 created to protect the colonial government's property.  
20 Yes, their job is to serve and protect, but nobody ever  
21 questions what or who. It's not me. It never will be me.  
22 My safety comes from these women. My safety comes from my  
23 ancestors. My safety comes because I am loyal to the  
24 teachings that the ones in the ground lived by, the -- the

1       proverb, they tried to bury us, but they didn't know we  
2       were seeds. Well, guess what? The garden's growing now.  
3       The seeds are sprouting. They can't stop us. There is no  
4       stopping us. The natural -- I said this the other day.  
5       Nature's balance for genocide, we're the fastest and  
6       youngest growing population in Canada for how many decades?  
7       Every little brown baby that's born isn't just hope. It's  
8       the -- that little brown baby is the future. Our  
9       teachings, having our medicine people, like, our cedar, the  
10      fact that we -- and I hate that we have been granted space  
11      to travel with our medicines. It's not their space to  
12      give. It's our space. We had protocols. What are now  
13      called protocols is simply just how we were, and they're  
14      all bastardized. It's like the King James version of the  
15      Bible. Look at the original ancient text the Bible comes  
16      from. Put things into context.

17                I share these things about what happened to  
18      me and what happened to my mom because in the big picture,  
19      I am one drop in an ocean full of suffering and agony and  
20      death, but we're still here. We're still here. My dad  
21      says where there's a breath of life, there's a hope, and we  
22      have a whole bunch of breath.

23                I've worked with Greenpeace campaigns around  
24      the world to bring a focus to the interconnectedness

1 between what happens here and what happens in Norway, what  
2 happens in South Africa, what happens in South America; and  
3 some days, it's just so hard because we're still dying.  
4 We're still being murdered. We're still being taken for  
5 drives. 14 years-old are being taken out and being forced  
6 to -- to have sex, give blow jobs to police officers. That  
7 panel of young women who sat up here, it broke my heart. I  
8 was a kid in care. My choice was -- I wanted to live on my  
9 own, and somebody reported me, and they said, go home or go  
10 into care. I'm like, hm, I don't really care. You can't  
11 make me anything. Yeah, they did. They put me in care.  
12 They moved me to Port Coquitlam, out of East Vancouver, out  
13 of my community, in a group home with girls -- with -- with  
14 five other girls who were so messed up and broken, and then  
15 I realized how lucky I was, and then I worked in that group  
16 home, and then I aged out. When I aged out, there was no  
17 support. There was no help. If I wouldn't -- because our  
18 band had money set aside for each of us. When I was 19, I  
19 got what they called a trust fund. If I didn't have that,  
20 I would have been homeless. I was in a relationship for  
21 12 years that when I finally looked at it in the end I  
22 realized was abusive, and a good part of that abuse in the  
23 middle of it, I played a part in. I was drunk and angry,  
24 and I acted in unbelievable ways, and I did my best to

1 apologize and to fix what I broke and hurt, and in the end,  
2 he was too broken. When I left that relationship, I left  
3 after being terrorized for six weeks, every day, because I  
4 couldn't afford to move. I couldn't move into my new home.  
5 He would sit in the dark waiting for me to come home. He  
6 unplugged all the lights. He put all my shit on the lawn  
7 and gave it away. He threatened to come and kill me and  
8 burn my house down. I had to have a police escort to come  
9 and go from my new home every day for weeks.

10 And then you put that together with what  
11 McKinnon did. Men have done really -- white men, I will  
12 specify. I wish -- I don't want to wish that. No. People  
13 say, well, you know, they -- we hear all -- we hear all  
14 the -- all the statistics that are thrown back at us that  
15 it's Native men who do this. It's not Native men alone.  
16 Any man who ever put his hand on me in a hurtful way was a  
17 white man, including McKinnon, including my ex, and I don't  
18 say his name because he has two daughters who I love and I  
19 helped raise for two years, and now I can't even have a  
20 relationship with them.

21 When I left that relationship, I had to -- I  
22 was at work, and I was talking to the social worker at the  
23 band office, and I said, this is what's happening, and I  
24 don't know what to do, and they said, holy shit. They



1 called in the VPD liaison, and they went to talk to him, my  
2 ex, and he did work in the Downtown Eastside, and he was  
3 protected by the police. They told me that I antagonized  
4 the situation by staying in the home. I said, why don't  
5 you make him control himself? He's a full-grown adult.  
6 And throughout the relationship, throwing keys at my head,  
7 shoving me, different things like that. Like, all of these  
8 little things that I overlooked because I loved him. I  
9 didn't -- until the last five years, I didn't know a love  
10 that didn't hurt, and what -- this is to mirror -- this is  
11 a smaller version of what my mom went through. I still had  
12 it better than she did.

13 And when I left that relationship, the day  
14 that I moved, I had to have a police escort, and he was  
15 told to leave the house. Well, as soon as the police  
16 escort left, he came back and he threw a 3-foot lead pipe  
17 at my head, and because it happened on St. Patty's Day  
18 weekend, there was never an investigation, and he was never  
19 charged. I documented because he's neighbours with my dad.  
20 My dad has a heart condition, and my little dog lived with  
21 my dad. I go and I visit my dad every day because I love  
22 him and I -- and I enjoy company with him, and it's my job  
23 to take care of him. I had to have friends come and go  
24 with me. The neighbours -- the entire community rallied

1       against me. I was drunk, and I was angry, and I said and I  
2       did things that I shouldn't have, and I don't -- I don't  
3       excuse it, but I did my best to try to make it right. I  
4       didn't just apologize with words. I apologized with  
5       actions, and I showed him, I saw -- I see the damage I did.  
6       Please let me fix it. Please work with me.

7                   And instead, I got punished, and when he  
8       would chase me down the sidewalk or he would be drunk  
9       waiting for me or he would stalk me -- and this went on for  
10      years -- the police again told me that I antagonized the  
11      situation and that I should stay away. One day, it  
12      escalated into a big fight in the backyard with my best  
13      friend, who was protecting me. The police were called, and  
14      I had my ex's hand marks on my throat, on my arms, and he  
15      kicked lawn furniture into my legs. The police wouldn't  
16      even let me make a statement or look at the idea that maybe  
17      there could be some charges laid here. They told me, don't  
18      come back here because it's too hard for him. He's a  
19      broken-hearted guy. He drinks, he misses you so much, and  
20      then I would get messages saying, well, if you apologize,  
21      he'll take you back. If I apologize, he'll take me back?  
22      People in the community would say, oh, he's such a broken  
23      guy now. Like, you really need to stop tormenting him.  
24      He's -- he's an alcoholic, and he can't even hold a job

1       anymore. No one asked me how I was. The neighbours -- the  
2       community rallied against me. This is my experience of  
3       what justice looks like in Canada, that no matter what I  
4       do, I am always to blame, no matter what happens to me.  
5       That cop hit me; I'm to blame. My ex hit me, terrorized  
6       me. I still have nightmares. I hear -- I hear him coming  
7       down the hall and coming into my room. How long until this  
8       shit's over? How long until we're safe?

9                   I deliver a message right to Trudeau. I  
10       know nothing's going to change until your women live how  
11       our women have, until it comes at your expense. The system  
12       that exists now in Canada can only feed on us for so long.  
13       When it starts to cannibalize itself, that's when things  
14       are going to change, and guess what? We're still going to  
15       be here.

16                                   **(APPLAUSE)**

17                   **MS. AUDREY SIEGL:** And in the pictures that  
18       I brought of my mom, I wanted people to see that she's  
19       beautiful and powerful, that she did her best -- that was  
20       just before she got pregnant with my sister -- that what  
21       was done to her, it will never be right. There is no way  
22       to make that right. I don't know what justice looks like  
23       for that. I -- we -- we have trauma all over the place. I  
24       can't -- my mom loved the Beatles. I've never liked the

1 Beatles. I was raised by hippies, and I've never -- that's  
2 the first time I saw my mom's (indiscernible) and look  
3 proud in my whole life. There was a canoe journey coming,  
4 and I didn't know what a canoe journey was, and she was  
5 standing there looking so proud and so tall, and she was  
6 sober.

7 That -- I have opportunities that other  
8 women have, and I'm going to make the best of them. That  
9 was on a Valentine's Day March. Years ago, my mom asked  
10 me, now that you're going to the march, come and sit with  
11 me, I want to talk to you, and she said, I can't go, I've  
12 lost too many friends. She was almost picked up by  
13 Pickton. I don't know how many times she's almost been  
14 murdered by men. She looked at the guy -- she -- her  
15 friend was working, and my mom looked at the guy, and he  
16 said, hey, come on, let's -- we're going to go party, we  
17 got a place and -- da-da-da. She looked at the guy, and  
18 she told her friend, don't go. That's the last time she  
19 saw her friend. She didn't get in the van, and my mom  
20 said, I can't go. I can't walk. I've lost too many. She  
21 said, I need more than all my fingers and toes four or five  
22 times to count how many women. I don't even know where  
23 some of them are. When you go, can you walk for me?

24 So that became my job, and that year, she

1 surprised me. She came out of -- she came out of -- she  
2 came out of one of the bars, and I saw -- she always  
3 had -- that was taken not long before she died. That was  
4 with Amy, and my mom came out of the -- out of the bar, and  
5 I saw her, and I'm -- I'm good at being strong, but when I  
6 saw her, I felt like a little girl, and I felt like she  
7 came to take care of me, and you see the size difference  
8 between us.

9 (LAUGHTER)

10 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: And it didn't help that I  
11 had on big shoes in my drum bag underneath, and she looked  
12 at me, and she'd never seen me in regalia. That's my mom  
13 walking down the street. That was, like, just a few months  
14 before she died, too, and she came, and she said, oh, my  
15 girl, look at you, and she cried, and she just looked at  
16 me, and she was so proud, and as much as I believed her  
17 when she said the ugly things, I also believed her when she  
18 said the nice things and that I got to know that she was  
19 proud of me.

20 She would say to me -- I took her to the  
21 Oppenheimer Tent City. She said, okay, I need you to take  
22 me and show me what's going on, and I'm like, oh, well, hm.  
23 You know, the park was taken over by 300 tents. There was  
24 a makeshift longhouse and a tepee, and it was a gong show,

1 and it was our gong show. We were fighting for houses, and  
2 we weren't leaving, and I drove -- I drove down the street,  
3 and as we neared the intersection, her eyes got huge, and  
4 she looked at me and she said, what have you done?

5 (LAUGHTER)

6 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: And all of a sudden, I  
7 had a second -- like, I second-guessed myself. I was like,  
8 did I do the right thing putting the long house here, make  
9 the big declaration? Because it was just after the -- that  
10 Tsilhqot'in case, so we were like -- we were like, okay,  
11 well, we're -- we're going to stand up, too, then.

12 And that I got know them, my mom was proud  
13 of me, and that -- now, the saddest statement is  
14 that -- because I was preparing for her to die since I was  
15 8 or be murdered or just say we haven't heard from her for  
16 a year or six months, I was crushed when the call came in,  
17 and then I -- I thought, well, why -- I couldn't figure out  
18 why -- why I was feeling anything. I thought I would be  
19 fine. So when it landed, I -- I -- wow, it felt extra  
20 heavy, and immediately, the very next thought was relief.  
21 Finally, she's safe. The only place our women can go to be  
22 safe is dead. That's huge.

23 We're sitting here now, doing this good  
24 work, taking care of each other, loving each other,

1 supporting each other, speaking truth, and what's happening  
2 out there? Serial killers have been -- it has been  
3 documented on the Highway of Tears of finding how many men  
4 driving up and down, pulled over by the police, with serial  
5 killer kits. Where -- where are -- where is the footage on  
6 the Highway of Tears from Transportation for the stops?

7 The Canadian entity is going to protect  
8 itself. I am a determined beast. I am not stopping until  
9 my women are safe. I'm not stopping until there is  
10 justice, not just for my mom but for everyone's mother and  
11 baby and brother and son. We haven't even touched on the  
12 men yet. Imagine being held captive and having to watch  
13 all this happen to your women? What does that do? And  
14 then the fingers pointed at the men for saying, well, you  
15 shouldn't do that. Well, what about the priests and all  
16 the other men who did it to them? Where's the  
17 accountability there? I'm big on accountability and people  
18 owning the good and bad that's theirs.

19 I wish I could say there's something good  
20 that this Canadian Government did for me. I see the good  
21 that the Canadian Government does do for people who are  
22 coming here from other situations, and I want them to keep  
23 doing that good for those people, but not at the expense of  
24 my people. They make us fight over who gets a bigger

1       dollar amount, a newcomer from a war-torn area or us?  
2       We're -- we're front lines. Third-world conditions, no  
3       water for -- for 30 years, starving to death, mould, Elders  
4       left on their own. By the time I was 12, I was taking care  
5       of my granny's prescriptions and -- and running my dad's  
6       house. Do you know how many times they almost killed my  
7       granny with -- by not cross-referencing? It didn't matter.

8               I have rheumatoid arthritis. You would  
9       never really know unless you notice a few little things  
10      like the way my pinky sits or how I move sometimes. My  
11      grandparents had arthritis. They got no medical attention.  
12      My grandpa carved until a couple months before he died, and  
13      my grandmother knit until a couple months before they died  
14      because their kids were unable to work and provide for  
15      themselves. They watched every one of their kids die  
16      before them. My grandparents lived to be in their 80s.  
17      The oldest one -- my mom's siblings started dying when they  
18      were 4, and my mom was the oldest one, and she made to it  
19      her early 60s. What happened in that generation that the  
20      oldest one was 20 years younger at death? What happened?  
21      We know what happened. I'm not counting on this  
22      Canadian -- it's why the Pope won't apologize because of  
23      the legal and financial obligations that are then  
24      pursuable.



1 I understand their systems. I've been a  
2 smart enough monkey to move through them and still try to  
3 challenge it. I ran for city council because my goal was  
4 to take it down from the knees, to break it apart from the  
5 inside, and then I realized, I'm shackled in there. My job  
6 is not there. Like, Bernie -- Bernie says her job is the  
7 front lines. My job is with the medicines. My job is  
8 loving and caring for people, things that I never had. I  
9 found my way, too, and they found me, and now I share it.  
10 I share it with everyone. I don't want anyone to hurt. I  
11 have no ideas of revenge, of retribution. That's not what  
12 justice means. Safety, peace, justice for all. Simple.  
13 Win/win only. That's where I come from.

14 We need our medicines, for my  
15 recommendations. We've heard it time and time again. Our  
16 centres for our healing lead by our people with our  
17 medicines on our land.

18 (APPLAUSE)

19 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: Not just accountability,  
20 but implementation. We hear about policies, the police,  
21 they've had sensitivity training and this and that. That  
22 means nothing to me. They're still killing us. Real  
23 account -- real accountability within the courts, within  
24 policing, law enforcement. We need the police to put their

1 men in check. We need --

2 (APPLAUSE)

3 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: We need -- and I  
4 will -- I will look at the men that are here, who are  
5 standing up and showing what good men are, and we need men  
6 to hold men accountable. It shouldn't be my job alone to  
7 keep me safe. The imbalance that has been allowed to exist  
8 again for the benefit and the bottom line and the dollars,  
9 got to go. There's no room for it. There's no space. I'm  
10 not planning on existing within the colonial structure. We  
11 are working to set up our own structures. The land  
12 sovereignty is the beginning. Food sovereignty. Our  
13 medicines. Our women taking care of our women and our men  
14 taking care of our men according to our laws and our  
15 traditional ways on our land which proved successful until  
16 about 200 years ago on this coast. Two hundred years ago,  
17 we lived a very different life here. I know it's not  
18 possible to move back to, but surely we can look at it and  
19 learn and bring ideas forward. I have no interest in  
20 compromising or negotiating. I don't really want any  
21 conversations with the Canadian Government. Trudeau can go  
22 talk to the elite (indiscernible) class that he has as his  
23 "yes" men, and they can make whatever decisions they want,  
24 but we are, as Bernie said, the red women rising, and we

1 will have what we need. We will be safe. We will take  
2 care of each other. We will lead the way once again to  
3 show, what do safety and justice look like? What does  
4 peace look like? I fought hard for the peace that I carry  
5 in me now. I ain't giving it up for nothing. It's mine,  
6 and I have it because of what countless generations before  
7 me sacrificed.

8 I put at the feet of Canada and those who  
9 choose to represent it everything I just put out. Like my  
10 mom and my aunty said, now it's theirs. It was never mine  
11 to carry for this long. The damage that I allowed it to do  
12 to me: No more. I -- I heal every day. I struggle every  
13 day, but I heal every day. It's my job to heal, and it's  
14 my job to lead in the ways that I lead, and we have to  
15 balance each other up. We have to hold each other up.  
16 This lateral violence bullshit, it's going to stop. We  
17 have to hold each other accountable. You love -- take  
18 someone aside and love them the way that they need to be  
19 loved until they come to balance and can come back and only  
20 bring love that doesn't hurt. We don't -- we never had  
21 exclusionary policies. If you got banished, you did  
22 something really terrible, not just said something about  
23 someone that, you know -- you know -- a lot of -- a lot of  
24 the men in organizations are nervous to have me around.

1       They -- they won't bring me in to talk unless they have  
2       dirty work that needs to be done, because I'll say what  
3       needs to be said, and I don't ever say it to hurt anybody.  
4       I don't ever say it -- I don't -- nothing -- nothing I ever  
5       do, I'm mortified now, after all the work I've done over  
6       the last 17 years, I don't want to hurt anyone ever. I'm  
7       so careful with people. I'm leading by example. I'm  
8       learning to love myself and take care of myself because  
9       none of the women before me -- and even after me, my nieces  
10      and their babies are still suffering and dying. We're  
11      still watching it. We're still witness to it.

12                    So what do we do? We go to the teachings.  
13      We go to the land. We lead with our ways. If that -- if  
14      these drums hadn't woken me up, where would I be? I'd be  
15      another drunk in the bar functioning in my everyday life,  
16      making good money, but trading it for my soul. I -- I'm a  
17      big believer in reclaiming, and I am reclaiming, and we've  
18      talked about it, my space. I -- I have made myself tiny  
19      and invisible and silent my whole life to accommodate  
20      others because they get uncomfortable if I rise, if I talk,  
21      if I make order. No more. I take up whatever space I  
22      need, and I don't apologize for it, and in that space, you  
23      are all welcome and comfortable, you are safe, and in  
24      return, I ask you do the same thing.

1 I'm carrying on the work that my mother  
2 never got to do, not just because I carry her name, but  
3 because without her, I wouldn't be here. Everything I do  
4 now isn't just to honour my ancestors, but it's to honour  
5 her: The chances she never had, the life that was stolen  
6 from her, the love that was stolen from her, the comfort  
7 that was stolen from her. I'm not just focusing on the  
8 brutality that she lived with every day of her life. I'm  
9 focusing on the fact that she still rose every day and  
10 carried on. She still found ways to -- to provide better  
11 for us. She still found ways to try to pass on anything  
12 good. How many people don't hold themselves to those  
13 standards even when they are receiving the benefits that we  
14 live without? I need everyone to step up.

15 (APPLAUSE)

16 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: I need you to not accept  
17 the benefits that come at my expense. I need you to hold  
18 Canada accountable. I need you to use your dollars to  
19 support what you believe in. I need you to be willing to  
20 be uncomfortable. I need you to be willing to stand beside  
21 me, behind me, in front of me. I need you to stand up when  
22 you see injustice. I need you to heal yourself. I need  
23 you to do your fucking work.

24 (LAUGHTER)

1 (APPLAUSE)

2 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: And I know it's hard. I  
3 can only ask because I'm doing my work. There are so few  
4 of us shouldering so much. Step up. Let us have a break.  
5 I'm tired, and if I'm this tired, how tired are the rest of  
6 you who've been doing this so much longer? I will step up  
7 and carry whatever I need to carry so they don't have to.  
8 They carried it long enough. What are you willing to do?  
9 What are you willing to stand up for? What are you willing  
10 to go without? How far are you willing to go to make sure  
11 that safety, justice, and peace for all is -- is a reality?

12 There are no limits to what I'll do. I'm  
13 following my ancestors' ways. They want to hurt this body,  
14 they want to take this body, fine. You set my spirit free.  
15 I'm trapped in here. I'm limited in here. I barely fit in  
16 here now, and that's a beautiful thing. I am strong  
17 because I know what it's like to suffer and be weak. I've  
18 had to take off all my armor and put down all my weapons  
19 and be open and raw and vulnerable in a time when we're  
20 being hunted still to do this work, and I don't like that  
21 some days, but I do it. I have been uncomfortable every  
22 day of my life, and now, I start to see real hope and light  
23 on the horizon.

24 I have -- I do a group every Friday in the

1 Downtown Eastside. A mother with a 3-week-old baby girl  
2 was crying when we were singing, and she said, I don't know  
3 how I'm going to keep her safe. How do you keep the light  
4 going in the midst of that? Stand up. Fight back. We'll  
5 stand around that little girl. We're not going to save  
6 them all. We can't. This has been proven for 500 years.  
7 The systems that are in place here are hyper-effective  
8 tools of destruction, but we have hyper-effective tools of  
9 medicine, and we have knowledges that enabled us to thrive  
10 for millennia.

11 We're not playing. We are done with  
12 conversations. We are reclaiming, and we are rising. I  
13 don't say this as a challenge or a warning. I let Canada  
14 know, we see you. We're coming. You can't stop us. This  
15 process provides me a space that I have worked my whole  
16 life to achieve, and like Bernie said, we'd have doors shut  
17 on us. We've had police put on us. I have had friends who  
18 have made stands because I wasn't allowed in a space, and  
19 they got arrested holding that space. I'm targeted. I'm  
20 not allowed in. They sat down and they said, I'm not  
21 leaving, and they get arrested. I can't be arrested  
22 because I don't know what they'll do to me. I'm terrified.  
23 I live in terror every day of my life. Why have I never  
24 been able to not be afraid? That's where the fear comes

1 from. The opposite side of that fear, sometimes I just  
2 don't care. It's fun, and I'm doing it. Fun, dangerous, I  
3 don't know. It's a fine line.

4 So I'm learning, and I'm growing, and I  
5 implore you all to do the same. I thank you beautiful  
6 women for sitting with me. I thank all of you for sitting  
7 here and listening. I thank all of who come here with your  
8 open hearts and your open minds and your light and your  
9 love, for sharing that, because you are the light posts in  
10 the dark when I can't get up.

11 I want you to leave knowing that, despite  
12 these heavy truths and ugliness, it's not just a matter  
13 that we're still here, but we're healing, and we're  
14 uniting. We have all colours and ages here. I don't like  
15 these -- these terms that -- that have been put on people,  
16 you know, straight or queer. We had people who -- we -- we  
17 have First Nations cultures who have, what, five, six,  
18 seven terms for -- for gender. We have First Nations  
19 cultures who have none. It's not my job to judge another  
20 person for who and where they find their comfort. I won't  
21 be divided from my people. I won't be divided from women.  
22 I won't be divided from another person who's experienced  
23 suffering.

24 I work with immigrant and refugee



1       committees. The therapist that I worked with, that the  
2       level of trauma that I'm working out of is at the same  
3       level as women coming from war-torn countries like Bosnia.  
4       I was devastated because I watched on the news what  
5       happened there, and I thought, what? If that's not an  
6       indication that this is a front line and we are under  
7       attack and the war has been called on us, I don't know what  
8       is.

9                So now we heal. Now we unite. Now we rise.  
10       Now we keep doing our work, and we keep bringing our love.  
11       We don't have weapons. We have medicine. You know,  
12       the -- the picture, we have peace pipes, not pipelines. I  
13       connect what happens to the land to what happens to the  
14       women to each of us.

15               I'm grateful and I'm humbled not just to be  
16       here today but to be here every day. I wasn't sure I would  
17       be able to do this today, and I thank you, each of you, for  
18       taking your time and sharing your love and magic and  
19       energy, for supporting, for being a witness. I'm not  
20       looking at this as an inquiry. This is what witnessing  
21       looks like. You may be called on to clarify something that  
22       happened here in the future. You're now a witness. You've  
23       been a witness all along. Now we're just putting a label  
24       on it and defining expectations and needs, and I raise my

1 hands, and I say [speaking in Musqueam] to each of you for  
2 being here, for sharing, and again, I remind you: Stand  
3 up. Share your love. Take off your armor and put down  
4 your weapons and pick up your medicines. [speaking in  
5 Musqueam].

6 (APPLAUSE)

7 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: I think we need a song.  
8 If you know me at all.

9 (LAUGHTER)

10 MS. AUDREY SIEGL: And really, like,  
11 [speaking in Musqueam] to each of you. You helped me heal.

12 COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Whoa.

13 MS. CECELIA POINT: Our dear sister Audrey  
14 from Musqueam, I'm also from Musqueam, and Cecelia Point,  
15 (indiscernible) Musqueam. We -- we -- I just want to sing  
16 our Paddle Song because our -- our Paddle Song we sing to  
17 welcome people who have been coming to our territory, but  
18 we also sing it to send people on their journey, so I want  
19 to -- I want to take Audrey's lifetime of trauma, memories,  
20 joy, family, community, our relationship, I want to -- I  
21 want to send all those memories on their journey now,  
22 hopefully sending all the pain -- I always tell people, go  
23 down and see the river while you're here. It's very close  
24 to this place. Put all your -- your trauma on the river

1 and send it -- send it out into the ocean, so I'll sing our  
2 Paddle Song. If anyone knows it, please sing it with me.  
3 [speaking in Musqueam].

4 (SINGING)

5 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** We'll adjourn this hearing.  
6 We'll resume in 30 minutes. I encourage whatever needs to  
7 happen next to happen.

8 -- Exhibits (code: P01P15P0504)


9 **Exhibit 1:** Folder containing 19 digital images  
10 displayed during the public testimony of Audrey Siegl.

11 **Exhibit 2:** Video clip (11 seconds, 3.07 MB, MP4  
12 format).

13 --- Upon adjourning at 2:12 p.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Jenessa Leriger, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jenessa Leriger", is written over a horizontal line.

Jenessa Leriger

April 12, 2018