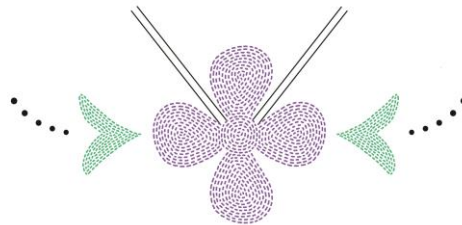


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 Statement Gathering  
Sheraton Airport Hotel  
Metro Vancouver (Richmond), British Columbia**



**PUBLIC**

**Friday April 6, 2018**

**Statement - Volume 353**

**Darlene Shackelly,  
In relation to Vera Charlotte Garseth & Lu-ann Garseth**

**Statement gathered by Kerrie Reay**

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## II

### NOTE

Where not required by other statute, redactions to this public transcript have been made pursuant to Rule 55 of the Commission's *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, which provides for "the discretion to redact private information of a sensitive nature where it is not material to the evidence to be given before distributing the information to the Parties. The National Inquiry will consider the public interest in releasing this type of information against the potential harmful impact on the individual whose personal information is at issue."

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**List of documents provided by witness:**

- Item 1. Black-and-white photograph of Vera Garseth (nee Wilson) approximately 19- 20 years of age
  
- Item 2. Women's right to be safe; booklet from The Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC (64 pages)

1 Richmond, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Friday, April 6, 2018

3 at 1:15 p.m.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay, Darlene. So as I  
5 explained, I will go on to the record and then I will  
6 invite you to share your truth today, and feel free to  
7 start when you're ready, okay?

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Thank you.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: So this is Kerrie Reay.  
10 I'm a statement-taker with the National Inquiry into the  
11 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We are in  
12 Richmond, B.C., and today is April the 6th, 2018, and the  
13 time is 1:15 p.m.

14 Today I am speaking with Darlene Shackelly  
15 of the Kingcome Inlet Nation, First Nation, and who resides  
16 in North Vancouver, B.C. Darlene here is here to tell her  
17 truth for her mother, Vera Charlotte Garseth -- G as in  
18 George, a-r-s as in Sam, e-t-h. Her maiden name was Wilson  
19 -- who was murdered on March 31st, 1967 at Comox, B.C.

20 [One sentence redacted - Rule 55].

21 Also present in the room is Darryl  
22 Shackelly, Darlene's son, and Darryl is D-a-r-r-y-l, and  
23 Monica Shackelly, who is Darlene's daughter. Monica is M-  
24 o-n-i-c-a, okay?

25 And for the record, Darlene, you are here

1 voluntarily, and you understand that we are videotaping and  
2 audiotaping your truth today, and we have reviewed the  
3 consent form and the information in the document, and you  
4 have a copy of that document, and today you have indicated  
5 that the Inquiry may disclose information that could  
6 identify you.

7 Okay. So for the record I'll just get you  
8 to initial for that. And so that this will be a public  
9 statement.

10 So Darlene, as I said, this is your space  
11 and your time, and I invite you to start, and if you would  
12 also -- I also invite people, if they like to start in  
13 their own language, to please feel free to do so, so the  
14 time is yours.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Thank you.  
16 Actually, I'm here -- my decision to actually give my  
17 testimony is because of my grandmother, because my mother  
18 had died in 1967, the -- sorry, it's the -- there was a  
19 discrepancy on the -- all the people involved on whether in  
20 fact that she took her own life, or -- and my grandmother  
21 was insistent that she was actually -- she was shot with a  
22 rifle by her live-in boyfriend, and my grandmother lived  
23 another 30-some-odd years after the death of my mother,  
24 insistent that she was actually murdered.

25 The testimony of the police at the time

1 was that she -- my grandmother questioned was my mother was  
2 left-handed, and the trajectory of the rifle did not match  
3 a left-handed person, so -- and she also questioned the  
4 person, her boyfriend, that the response time, because they  
5 lived in a small cabin with no telephone, that his response  
6 time to go get help was questionable, so she was adamant  
7 about that.

8                   The police didn't, in my opinion and her  
9 opinion, really care whether in fact it needed further  
10 investigation, because within at least two weeks there was  
11 a small little article in the newspaper that she died of a  
12 fatal accident, I think it was said, so the investigation  
13 really was not as much as my grandmother -- her name is  
14 Ethel -- was adamant that the investigation was not done  
15 properly, and it was because that she was a First Nations  
16 woman.

17                   MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. You referenced  
18 your grandmother. Ethel?

19                   MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Ethel.

20                   MS. KERRIE REAY: E-t-h-e-l? And her last  
21 name?

22                   MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Pearson.

23                   MS. KERRIE REAY: Pearson? P-e-a-r-s-o-n?

24                   MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

25                   Okay. Just at the beginning is, I'm the

1 oldest of five children. My mother was with my biological  
2 father, had my brother and I, and they were never married,  
3 legally married, because he was already married to someone  
4 in the Maritimes when they were together, even though he  
5 had been separated from her, his first wife.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: When she was 20  
8 she married -- his name was [Husband 1]. He was from  
9 Norway. His name is [Husband 1], and that's -- when she  
10 died she had his name. From the time I remember my  
11 childhood, he's the one that's in it. My father was still  
12 in my life, but he was the one who was raising -- came in  
13 and took an immediate family, of my brother and I. They  
14 had two other girls and a boy. The middle daughter is gone  
15 now. She's also passed away. So there was five of us,  
16 five children.

17 And since the time I'm four, I have  
18 memories of the violence of -- sorry --

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Take your time.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- him. Didn't  
21 think I was going to do that.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Deep breath.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Thanks for that.  
24 Sorry.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: No. Deep breath.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: We lived in a  
2 small auto court (ph).

3 I'm usually stronger than this, but I was  
4 looking out the window, and it was late at night, and I saw  
5 him. She was laying on the ground, and he was kicking her  
6 really violently, and the next day -- I mean, I was  
7 extremely scared. [Crying] Sorry.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: No. Would you like us  
9 to stop?

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Just for a second.  
11 --- Recording is paused.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So we are back on  
13 the record. It is 1:26. We went off at about 1:24, and I  
14 am just going to put this back on. Okay, Darlene. When  
15 you're ready.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Okay. Throughout  
17 my childhood the -- with five children in the very low-  
18 income family, my mother had lost her status because she  
19 had married him, so she did lose her connection to her  
20 Nation people. The town of Courtenay is, at its time,  
21 where we lived, was a resource town. It was a forestry and  
22 fisheries, Air Force base as well, so the actual community  
23 itself, Native people, although they were from the Comox  
24 reserve, were in residential school. So she wasn't -- she  
25 didn't have a lot of support except our family.



1                   Our family owned a -- my grandmother and  
2 her husband owned a house in Comox, so she had no support  
3 systems except our grandmother and her siblings. So my  
4 mother had started developing a severe drinking problem as  
5 a result of the, what I think is the violence of her  
6 husband, and it resulted in years of trauma for us as  
7 children and herself, because I started to see her  
8 deteriorate in her -- because she's a very beautiful woman.  
9 She was a very beautiful woman, and well-loved by her  
10 community. She spoke her own language. She was a -- she  
11 was raised in Alert Bay for a few years as a child, so she  
12 had the knowledge of her culture and where she came from.  
13 Even though we lived in an urban setting, I would often  
14 hear her speak her own language.

15                   But as she got older -- as she started to  
16 get older and the children, we're now five, in a little  
17 two-bedroom house, her drinking and the violence towards  
18 her by him increased, and it was extreme violence.

19                   As she was -- I think it was 12, we were  
20 living in a home where she had made up her mind that she  
21 was going to leave him, so we were in a home. We moved  
22 again. We moved quite often in the Courtenay area. We  
23 were alone with the five children and her, and I don't have  
24 much memory of her actually being around, and we were in --  
25 really in poverty then.

1                   There was no food to eat. There was -- so  
2 I called him to say, 'You have to come and do something  
3 about your children,' and he was, 'Well, I can't leave my  
4 job,' and I remember yelling at him on the phone, saying,  
5 'Your children are starving to death. If you don't come  
6 and get them, I'm going to call the police,' and he showed  
7 up, and he had them removed. The Ministry had them -- he  
8 got Ministry -- welfare was called at the time, and he  
9 removed them, and they ended in two separate foster homes.  
10 The oldest sister and the brother were in one, and the  
11 youngest one, she was three at the time, was in a separate  
12 foster home.

13                   We moved again to a little home on the  
14 Comox -- near the Comox reserve. A little shack is what it  
15 was, my brother and I and her, and watching her  
16 deteriorate, her drinking, and she by now was in a  
17 relationship with the man who has been accused of murdering  
18 her, and --

19                   MS. KERRIE REAY: His name?

20                   MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: [Partner 1].

21                   MS. KERRIE REAY: [Partner 1]?

22                   MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: [*Spells name*].

23 And it's my watching it, because you leave your husband in  
24 those days, you have no income, children are gone now, her  
25 three who are in foster care, and that leaves my brother

1 and I there, so for two more years we are in -- near --  
2 going to school in Comox, before my father came with papers  
3 to have my brother and I removed.

4 I didn't -- although I certainly  
5 understood why my dad had to remove us, and it took him a  
6 long time to finally get there, I really was afraid to  
7 leave her, because I could see that she was not going to  
8 survive. She was really fragile by this time, and her  
9 alcohol addiction by this time was really bad, but when my  
10 dad came to get me, she was -- I came home from school --  
11 she was sober, she was dressed really nice, her hair was  
12 done, she -- and I was thinking, there's something wrong,  
13 because she's -- something's -- she's home, is what I was  
14 thinking, and then I saw on the table the papers for my  
15 brother and I to be removed, and I said -- and she says,  
16 'I'm going to have to sign these papers. Your dad's going  
17 to take you away,' and I was really adamant, 'No, I'm not  
18 going to leave you,' and she said, 'It's for the best that  
19 you go,' so my brother and I were in foster care in the  
20 same home in Courtenay now.

21 Courtenay and Comox are only three miles  
22 apart, but they're different schools. Loving foster  
23 parents, except my brother did not fit in well, had issues  
24 with one of the foster children, and he ended up going to  
25 live with my dad in Gold River, which was a little bit

1 distance away, so I was left there by myself, and I'm 14  
2 now, and my -- I'm angry, because I'm there by myself, but  
3 I'm surrounded by a loving foster mother and father, so I'm  
4 there for two years, and on my birthday -- the day before  
5 my birthday, my mother called me and said she wanted to  
6 take me out for lunch, because I was now going to be 16,  
7 and at the time I remember the call, thinking, 'Oh, yeah,  
8 you won't even show up,' and I said, 'Yeah, sure. Okay.  
9 I'll have lunch with you,' which at the time was extremely  
10 hard, because when the welfare woman -- her name was Mrs.  
11 [W.] I remember her very vividly saying, 'You are not to -  
12 - you and your brother are not to have any contact with  
13 your Indian relatives, because if I find out you have been,  
14 I will put you both in reform school,' and I was saying to  
15 my brother at the time, 'What is reform school? Like, that  
16 must be prison or something.' I didn't know, which for me  
17 was an extremely -- and him -- for all of us, extremely  
18 hard thing to do, because a small town, the likelihood of  
19 you running into them was high, and I used to see them,  
20 like, especially my grandmother and all that, and be  
21 driving by or walking in the streets of Courtenay, and  
22 having to ignore them was really hard, was really hard, and  
23 I'm sure my grandmother thought that I was doing it on  
24 purpose. She didn't know 'til later on what the welfare  
25 agent had said to us.





1 murdered by him, I have a responsibility to tell my story  
2 from my grandmother's lens, because she was so heartbroken  
3 of my mother's loss, because she used to tell me that she  
4 was more of a -- 'She wasn't just my daughter. She was my  
5 best friend.' She used to say that quite often.

6                   And because we were in foster care, it was  
7 an extremely hard detachment to reconcile with my, quote,  
8 Indian relatives, to come back in, because now I'm of age,  
9 I'm -- I quit -- I switched to a different foster home, and  
10 I'm in grade 12, and I'm belligerent as hell, and I ran  
11 away from home. I ran away from the second foster home.

12                   I ended up in Hazelton -- yeah, I was  
13 really adamant I wasn't going back, because my grandmother  
14 had, without me realizing it, had confronted me around what  
15 a horrible daughter I was, I wasn't there when she died,  
16 and I didn't have any -- I didn't have the record -- I  
17 wasn't told that she was there. She didn't know that the  
18 welfare agent said I wasn't allowed to have any contact  
19 with them.

20                   So it was a -- I was really angry at the  
21 time, and I thought, I'm never coming back to this town,  
22 I'm never going to speak to my grandmother, I'm never going  
23 to have anything to do with this community ever again, but  
24 my brother and sisters were still there, so my -- what was  
25 unfortunate is my sister that passed away was molested by

1 her foster father, ended up on the streets, Downtown  
2 Eastside. She's -- she -- a lot of the affidavits was she  
3 sued the foster parent, and at the time the Ministry was  
4 responsible for children in care. Well, it's the foster  
5 care now, but at the time it was the Ministry who was  
6 responsible for placing children in care, legally  
7 responsible, so my sister, when she sued them, there was  
8 boxes of files in my younger sister's home, and she didn't  
9 really want to have anything to do with them, because it  
10 pains her to relive the stories of our childhood, and --  
11 but I went through the files myself and looked at them and  
12 saw affidavits of -- or medical -- counselling sessions,  
13 marriage counselling sessions to do with my mother and him,  
14 and started to see the pattern from the doctor's testimony  
15 of severe depression, taking anti-depressant medication,  
16 and it was there that she had said -- he said, 'I wish you  
17 would' -- she wouldn't drink so much, and she said, 'I go  
18 there to what was the local hotel and drink because that's  
19 where I get to see my family and my friends,' like, the  
20 fishermen and the people that came from the villages, like,  
21 Alert Bay, Kingcome Inlet, all the places on the coast used  
22 to kind of converge in Courtenay. So her rationale was  
23 that because she had no friends and she was lonely for her  
24 own people, this is what gave her comfort, and what was the  
25 development of the addiction, alcohol addiction, for her,



1 and now the fact that she's extremely young still, and  
2 she's lost all her children, was the rationale for some  
3 that she committed suicide.

4                   And although logical as that is, to me  
5 it's the -- she was heading down a path of -- that she was  
6 going to die anyway because of the abuse of her husband,  
7 that in fact both of them killed her, the husband and the  
8 boyfriend, you know. It's like when it came to the end she  
9 was gone anyway. It was that depression that caused the,  
10 in my opinion -- what else did she have to live for?

11                   So that was the -- so the police in their  
12 investigation, in my opinion, thought, they know who she  
13 is, they know what she's had to endure, because they were  
14 there on the domestic-violence side. Nothing was done  
15 there, that it was a very easy open-and-closed case. So  
16 that was the -- in my opinion, the police didn't really put  
17 that much stock into the facts, another First Nations woman  
18 is gone, and there was no -- as far as I know, there was  
19 never any follow-up by the police to see if -- otherwise.  
20 So that was -- that's her story.

21                   MS. KERRIE REAY: It takes a lot of  
22 courage to come and share that truth, and I can see the  
23 pain that it brings you today.

24                   In terms of some of the questions that I  
25 have, you talked about a hospital where you read the X-ray

1 cards. What hospital was that?

2 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Comox General.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Comox General? You  
4 talked about -- sorry?

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: No, I was going to  
6 say, also in the corner of the card it had

7 "DOA".

8 So that even looking at that, I recall  
9 just a burning anger of loss of a person who had to endure  
10 such --

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- violence.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: And trauma.

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And trauma.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: And you talked about  
16 boxes of information that related to what the services, and  
17 I say

18 "the services",

19 in terms of hospital services. You  
20 talked about the doctor's reports, and that was part of  
21 your sister's suit against the government. Has that  
22 information -- where is that information, those --

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Those files?

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Well, my sister

1 had them. I'm not sure what happened to them, because the  
2 foster parents paid my sister not to move -- not to move  
3 forward with the case.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: So they settled in sort  
5 of a civil way as opposed to a criminal way? Is that --

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- is that what I'm  
8 hearing?

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Which is the worst  
10 thing for someone with an addiction issue like my sister  
11 did have, was to give them money.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: And your sister's name?  
13 Would you --

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Lu-Ann.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Lu-Ann?

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, Lu-Ann  
17 Garseth.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: And would that be L-o-u  
19 --

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: U.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- a-n-n-e?

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: L-u, hyphen, A-n-  
23 n.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: And you talked about the  
25 addiction took her to the Downtown Eastside in Vancouver?

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: And --

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Many times.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: And you said that she's  
5 passed on?

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: And can you share with  
8 the Commission what took her life and how old she was?

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Her -- yeah,  
10 because of the -- it's many years of drug addiction -- her  
11 system shut down. She had -- I think she went, like, into  
12 a coma.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: She died in the  
15 Victoria General Hospital.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: And what year was that?  
17 Or how old was she?

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: She was in her  
19 mid-40s.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mid-40s. Very young.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Very young. Never  
22 had children.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: And was she the youngest  
24 sibling of the five?

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: No, she was the

1 oldest of the --

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: With Lu --

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- of him and --

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: There was Lu-Ann,  
8 [Brother 1], and [Sister]. [Brother 1] is the son. He  
9 lives in Norway.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: And how has he survived  
11 since?

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Well, [Brother 1]  
13 was the one that was within the same family as my sister.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: [Sister].

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Lu-Ann.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, with Lu-Ann.

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Lu-Ann and  
18 [Brother 1] lived in the same foster home. [Sister] lived  
19 by herself. She was three. She was in a separate foster  
20 home.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: [Brother 1] would  
23 not discuss, completely shut down, and when my sister would  
24 talk about their foster parent, he tried not to believe it,  
25 because they were -- he felt that they were kind when you

1 needed parents the most, to then condemn their -- but it  
2 was the foster father --

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- who molested my  
5 sister. The foster mother did not know that at the time,  
6 and found out. When it was disclosed, she actually left  
7 him, because she did believe Lu-Ann, so there was a, almost  
8 an ownership of what had happened from the foster mother's  
9 point of view.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: But that didn't help Lu-  
11 Ann.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: It didn't help Lu-  
13 Ann, because people with addiction, if you just give them  
14 money, it just -- more addiction.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: It's more drugs,  
17 more -- yes, so she used to disappear. We used to just not  
18 see her for periods of time when she was really bad, and  
19 then she would get clean, clean, and we would see her  
20 again. She would be around for a while. I thought for a  
21 while that she -- because she had lived with me a number of  
22 times -- that it became longer, the stay, that I thought  
23 maybe she had it licked, but the draw to go back to the  
24 downtown east side was so -- and this was right at the  
25 heart of the Pickton -- when women were missing. They

1 hadn't -- they hadn't identified Pickton then, so she was  
2 right in the heart of that, and she used -- she used to say  
3 that the women were -- believed it was a police officer  
4 that was killing these women.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And before it was  
7 disclosed that it was Pickton, so --

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: So this was sort of the  
9 late '80s, 'early '90s?

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, yeah, so  
11 very cautious, and she was very -- what do you call it?  
12 Street-smart.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: She was a very  
15 kind, sweet girl. She was someone who would make you  
16 laugh, because -- and she was highly intelligent. I always  
17 used to say that she -- I told her, she dropped -- she  
18 dropped out of school at the -- grade eight or nine. She  
19 ended up in Burnaby Children Detention. Like, she had a  
20 real history of getting in trouble, and it's all before she  
21 disclosed about the father, the foster parent, and I told  
22 her, 'You have to go get your GED,' and she said, 'I have  
23 grade-nine education.' I said, 'Lu-Ann, you're the  
24 smartest girl I know. Just go down to the Indian  
25 Friendship -- or the Indian Education Society and just

1 write it, and if you fail, then you can study and get it,'  
2 and she reluctantly went down there and aced everything and  
3 got her GED. It was like -- so things like that were --  
4 came easy --

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- to her, and her  
7 life was -- I thought she believed that she would survive  
8 all the -- this.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And I think for  
11 her to have died like this so young, I think probably even  
12 surprised her, that her -- like, right at the end, I don't  
13 think she believed it was going to be bad enough that she  
14 would die.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm. And that is  
16 something that I've heard, is that the Downtown Eastside  
17 itself is addicting. You used the word "draw," and I've  
18 heard that many times, that just the Downtown Eastside in  
19 and of itself is addictive in nature to people. They try  
20 to leave, but it just --

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- draws them back in.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: So when you said that  
25 she came to stay with you, were you living now in North



1 Vancouver, or where -- because you had mentioned you had  
2 gone to Hazelton.

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes, it's when I  
4 returned from -- when I came back, and my aunt came and  
5 found me in Hazelton, and said, 'You've got to come home.'  
6 Of course, I'm saying, 'No, I'm not ever going back there,'  
7 stuff --

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: And when would've that  
9 been?

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: 1971.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: I guess, because  
13 the law of being an adult changed from 21 to 19 just as I  
14 turned 19.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So they had no  
17 legal --

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: So you were born in --

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- there was --

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- '51?

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: '51, yeah.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So there was no --  
24 my father had called the police to try to find me, and he  
25 said, 'Sorry, she's an adult.'

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: And so you were in  
2 Hazelton for a few years?

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Oh, seven months.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Seven months?

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah. I met a  
6 First Nations girl, and we became friends in Victoria,  
7 where I ran away to Victoria.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And she was -- it  
10 was Easter break, and she says -- she says, 'I'm going home  
11 for the Easter holidays, if you want to come with me,' and  
12 we ended up there for seven months. That's her hometown.  
13 She got married, and now I'm like, 'Well, now I don't want  
14 to be here in Hazelton. It's not my community.'

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Very tight-knit  
17 First Nations community. Just by sheer luck my aunt  
18 knocked -- my aunt is -- was from -- a teacher was teaching  
19 in Ontario, got her licence to teach, so I hadn't seen her  
20 in many years, when she came knocking on the door, and very  
21 outspoken, my aunt, and said, 'Pack your bags. You're  
22 coming with me,' and I said --

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Very firm.

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- I said, 'I'm  
25 not going anywhere with you.' She goes, 'Oh, I think I'm

1 going to have to take this from a different lens,' and she  
2 was working for the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs at the  
3 time, and she told me that they were looking for a  
4 receptionist for their office and asked me if I would  
5 consider working for them. That's how she lured me into  
6 Vancouver, and how I started working there, and I'm the  
7 executive director for the Native Courtworker and  
8 Counselling Association.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So I've worked  
11 there for 35 years.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh.

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And in the field  
14 of justice, and I have a strong suspicion that the field of  
15 justice is a direct result of my family, my mother, that  
16 somehow injustice is going to be something I'm always  
17 constantly trying to address, especially violence against  
18 women.

19 My -- I have three women -- safety guides  
20 for women on how to be safe, and they're just -- it's just  
21 a guide on the -- they're guides on the circumstances  
22 you're in, nothing to do with domestic violence, that's not  
23 that, it's more of, you work alone, you travel alone, be  
24 safe, you're in university, be safe, you're an elder, be  
25 safe. Very -- 25,000 of them are in circulation.



1 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

2 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And I was --

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: You came from pain, but  
4 you --

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- came from a --

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- different place. You  
9 found different resources --

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: A different --

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- within yourself.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah. Strongly  
13 independent, running away from home. I mean, it was, I was  
14 going to survive, in my mind --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- without the  
17 help of anyone, and that was the -- my catalyst, I think,  
18 for --

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- for the work I  
21 do.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: And these -- what you  
23 have in circulation, like, are they big books, or are they  
24 pamphlets, or --

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Well, I have one.

1 I can give you --

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: I'm just wondering if  
3 you would like to, as part of the documentation that goes  
4 to the Commissioners, to make that part of your --

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Sure.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- truth today, because  
7 I think it's a testament to the work that is already going  
8 on in the community and has been for some time, so, yeah.

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Sure.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah, that would be  
11 wonderful. That would be wonderful.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: If I could just  
13 say one more thing.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: The -- in my  
16 family the Minister of Justice, Jody Wilson-Raybould, is my  
17 first cousin.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Her father is my  
20 mother's brother, and this is why I'm actually testifying  
21 here. He was interviewed by a reporter. He's --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, I did, I saw that.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, he's -- I am  
24 not a fan of his. I haven't spoken to him in probably 20  
25 years, because he's -- when it comes to women, he -- I

1 mean, that's another question, but in your family, there  
2 are people who support your family, and he's not one of  
3 them, but he was -- he's actually drawn into the news  
4 because he happens to be Jody's father, and he was a  
5 politician back in the day of when Trudeau, Pierre Trudeau,  
6 Justin Trudeau's father --

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So that's well-  
9 known, documented.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: But when he was  
12 interviewed about a month ago by Maclean's magazine or  
13 somewhere, he was asked about the Missing and Murdered  
14 Women Inquiry, which, I don't know why they would ask a man  
15 about the Inquiry. I guess because his daughter is a --

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Minister.

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- federal cabinet  
18 -- yes, and he says that he had a vested interest because  
19 his sister was murdered, and that was the catalyst of why,  
20 that how dare he use my mother's death as a promotion for  
21 his -- what he's --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: His agenda?

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: His agenda, and  
24 otherwise I wouldn't be here. I wouldn't have done this if  
25 he hadn't have done that. It's like, you're not going to

1 say statements like that in the national cross-Canada  
2 without some clarification on her life.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So -- and I know  
5 that's his sister, but at the same time, he was not around.  
6 I think he was in school, in university, at the time, so he  
7 wasn't in the community, so to me it's always the watching  
8 people's comments of -- that promotes their own agenda.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So...

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: And I guess I -- with  
12 what you shared, sort of for me to step back, I see a lot  
13 of government systems that played an integral role in  
14 particularly the child welfare and what happened with your  
15 family, and the lack of support services, at a time, as  
16 you've said, you know, we have legislation, and domestic  
17 violence has been -- has been highlighted as a serious  
18 affront to women and girls --

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- and that type of  
21 violence, and the police, doctors, it sounds like your mom  
22 had all of those government institutions, if I can refer to  
23 that, and yet there didn't seem to be services that were  
24 needed to protect her.

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: That's right.



1 MS. KERRIE REAY: But can I just -- can I  
2 just step back in terms of, was there -- your family came  
3 from the north end of Vancouver Island?

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Originally, my  
5 grandmother, yes.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: And were your family --  
9 were the children in residential school? Like, is there  
10 any history of your family members attending residential  
11 school, that you're aware of?

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: My grandmother was  
13 married three times. My -- so her first husband, they had  
14 a daughter. She was in residential school, [Aunt 1], her  
15 name was.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: He passed away.  
18 He drowned. She married Charles Wilson, which is my  
19 grandfather. He was very well -- what do you call it? He  
20 was like a businessman. He was the First Nations from Cape  
21 Mudge.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: And where is that,  
23 sorry? What was the name?

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Across Cape Mudge.  
25 He's from -- across from Campbell River.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

2 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: On Quadra Island.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: The reserve there  
5 is called -- it was Cape Mudge reserve.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Because he was  
8 strong and independent, they owned a house in -- they  
9 bought a house in Comox, him and my grandmother. He had  
10 had a family already. He was married and divorced of a  
11 woman from Lemming (ph), so there's seven children from --

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Lemming in the States?

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- reserve --  
14 yeah.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: He had married --  
17 her name was Sarah -- and had seven children from her.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: He divorced her,  
20 he married my grandmother, and had five more, so --

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, and the  
23 oldest is my mother.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. So your mother  
25 was the oldest of five.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Of the five, yeah.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. And of those  
3 five children, were any taken to residential school?

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: No, I think my  
5 mother was in Alert Bay, where there is a residential  
6 school there. I see pictures of her in front of the  
7 residential school, but I'm not quite sure she actually  
8 attended them -- attended one, yet she spoke her language  
9 fluently.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmm.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And I think that  
12 was the influence of Alert Bay family, so I'm not sure.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Because many who did  
14 attend residential school lost the language.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, and she  
16 maintained hers, because I used to watch her and my  
17 grandmother speak to each other, especially if they were  
18 saying things that they didn't want children to hear.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. Right. Right.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: It was quite  
21 funny, actually, to watch. So --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: And did your grandfather  
23 pass away and then your grandmother remarried?

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, he passed  
25 away. He was 61. He died of diabetic -- went into

1 diabetic coma.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And he's the --  
4 what do you call it? When he passed away, she married Fred  
5 Pearson, his name was. He was a non-Native man. But she  
6 was with him 'til she passed away.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: For many years.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: If I remember correctly,  
10 when she married him she lost her status?

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: She did, yeah.  
12 Yeah, and she fought hard. She was -- my grandmother was,  
13 like, on the council of the Assembly First Nations --

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: And what was your --

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- elder council -  
16 -

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- grandmother's name?

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Ethel Pearson.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Ethel, Ethel, right.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, Effrey,  
21 actually, is what she's known as.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: As...

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: E-f-f-r-e-y.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Effrey?

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Effrey. That's

1 what people knew her as.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: A very strong --

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: So she was a very strong  
5 advocate.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Strong  
7 traditionally. She was --

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- she came from  
10 strong -- she was -- in her lifetime had five potlatches,  
11 which is unheard for from a woman. She comes from really  
12 hierarchy structure from Kingcome Inlet. So she's well-  
13 known from her community.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: But she -- when  
16 she lost her status when she married Fred, she would travel  
17 to Ottawa, and they were fighting the legislation, that it  
18 was discriminatory, and was really involved. I've got news  
19 articles of her comment about how, you know, Native women  
20 lose their status but non-Native women gain --

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Gain status.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- status, so she  
23 was quite -- so in '85 when the law changed she was -- she  
24 regained her status, yeah.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Quite a victory.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: It was, yeah,  
2 yeah.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: That hard work to --

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: It was hard work  
5 done, yeah.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: And so she sounds very  
7 traditional --

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- in her culture. And  
10 for yourself -- and I'm not asking you to go back and  
11 relive and share what it was like, but in a big picture,  
12 where you are today, and having been pulled into a foster-  
13 care system, is there -- has there been a sense of loss for  
14 you, in terms of your own culture? Are you okay, or  
15 content with where you're at? I think what I'm looking for  
16 is, having a grandmother who is steeped in your traditional  
17 culture, and I understand your father --

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: My biological  
19 father?

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- your biological  
21 father was not Norwegian.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: No, he was from  
23 Nova Scotia.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: He was from Nova Scotia.  
25 Right.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: So not Indigenous, or...

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, not  
4 Indigenous.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. If you'd like to  
6 share how you've reconciled, or if you haven't been able to  
7 reconcile, or just, what are you...

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: About three years  
9 ago -- I have a friend in Ottawa, Stephanie, she works with  
10 Department of Justice, she had told me that there was a  
11 woman that is a friend of hers who is a spiritual healer,  
12 and at the time I was going to Ottawa for business, and she  
13 says, 'If you'd like her to read your -- read for you.'

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And at the time I  
16 never really believed this stuff. I thought it was more  
17 entertainment than it was --

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- was any fact-  
20 based, so she was like an hour outside of Ottawa, and we  
21 went to see her, and her name was Carol, and she says,  
22 'Your mother is here.' Well, I almost fell off the couch,  
23 because I thought, 'What?'

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And she says,

1 'What do you want to ask her?' And she's not looking at  
2 me. She's looking away. She's looking at something else.  
3 And I just said, 'Why?' And she actually showed me what  
4 she was seeing of her death, and she says, 'You have to  
5 forgive your mother,' and at the time, my whole life, I had  
6 not forgiven my mother for leaving us, and she says, 'You  
7 have to scream, yell, break something, do whatever you got  
8 to do. You have to forgive her for leaving you, because  
9 what you -- the pain you have now, and the anger you have  
10 now, you will carry into your next life.' I was taken  
11 back, really. Like, I couldn't believe she had actually  
12 said that, and she said, 'Your mother left. Well, what did  
13 she have to live for,' she said to me. She didn't know me  
14 from anyone when she said that, and it was like, 'She lost  
15 -- you have brothers and sisters. I see that. And she --  
16 they're all gone. What else did she have to live for?'

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmm.

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So she says, 'I  
19 want you to go home, and I want you to start writing your  
20 life. It's therapeutic, and it actually then unburdens you  
21 from the carrying all this,' so that's what I did. I  
22 started to write my own life about two years ago. Yeah, it  
23 was two years ago. And it was the most therapeutic thing I  
24 ever did. It's like, whatever forgiveness I had for my  
25 mother, I -- it's not that I had to forgive her, it's just



1 I had to stop being anger -- angry towards her, and it's --  
2 really, it's helped. If I was still angry at her, I would  
3 not be here today. I wouldn't do this. But it's almost  
4 therapy that if you forgive someone for leaving you,  
5 whether it's of their own -- their own position to leave or  
6 someone has taken their life, the fact is they're still  
7 gone, and so -- and being in foster care at the time, I was  
8 abandoned, in my mind, that --

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- so that's what  
11 I did. I wrote my story. And it has been really helpful,  
12 extremely helpful. And she says, 'Don't talk to anyone,  
13 not your siblings, not your family. Your words only. Even  
14 -- it's your memory. Even if the figures are wrong, like,  
15 the circumstances may be wrong, it's your life, it's your  
16 story.'

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: And that's what the  
18 Commission has talked about: Your truth.

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: My truth.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: This is your truth as  
21 you see it, as you felt it, as you lived it.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, and I highly  
23 recommend to anyone who was carrying trauma and who  
24 believes that they're alone in what the burden they're  
25 carrying, is if -- that they actually document this. It

1 really, really helps. I mean, you know, you don't have to  
2 keep it, you don't --

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- have to do  
5 anything with it, but it's yours to own.

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. Right.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So before I came  
8 here I did go back and review, and I had actually forgotten  
9 some of the things that I brought up today that I was so  
10 glad that I had documented it, because I had forgotten,  
11 like, the things around the index cards and --

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- and that, yeah,  
14 so, yeah, that would be my recommendation, of --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- for your own  
17 healing.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: And it's a journey of  
19 healing, right? When you come from a place of such trauma,  
20 to find and to strive for healing, to unburden.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: And that journey is  
23 different for everyone, and you found ways, and --

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- that's, you know, a

1 recommendation, you know, going forward for the Commission,  
2 to hear how you have become a survivor as well, but --

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- you've raised a  
5 family, and --

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes, I was  
7 actually going to say that, because I have two wonderful  
8 children. I'm so lucky. And beautiful grandchildren.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: As a result of  
11 that. One of the things, though, that does happen is, I  
12 was married to their father, and I divorced ten years later  
13 from him, and it's this -- you carry because of what  
14 happened to you this burden without realizing it, is, I  
15 don't trust you, I don't believe that you actually are a  
16 caring man. I don't believe you, that somehow you're going  
17 to hurt me. I don't believe you, and he's, like, the  
18 nicest man in the world, but I'd already gone into a  
19 marriage going, I know at any time I'm going to bail,  
20 because I don't -- the trust factor around relationships is  
21 extremely hard, and the woman I had mentioned, when she did  
22 the reading, she goes -- she said, 'You sabotage your own  
23 relationships.' She said, 'If you wanted to remarry,' she  
24 said, 'have you ever thought about remarrying?' I went,  
25 'Uh, yeah, umm, well, maybe,' and she goes, 'No, you don't,

1 because you don't allow anyone in. You don't trust  
2 anyone.' She said, 'So your relationships are not going to  
3 be -- like, you see the, you know, stand in front of a  
4 minister, get married, and live happily ever after.'

5 That's -- that is my own -- I know that in myself, that --

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- and I've had  
8 the opportunity to marry, like, very nice men -- other men  
9 that I had in my life, and I will find any reason not to  
10 trust them or -- of course, as soon as they ask you to  
11 marry them, then it's like, 'Well, it's over now. I told  
12 you I was never going to get married again.'

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmm.

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So I've had this -  
15 - that's my burden to carry, is my life. I know it. I  
16 love my life, I love my job, I love my family, my children,  
17 and my grandchildren especially, you know --

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: And it's a safe place  
19 for you.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And it's safe. So  
21 --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: And did you find that  
23 that difficulty of trusting or that difficulty, because you  
24 talk about the strength that you have as being independent,  
25 what about your relationship with your children? Have you

1 let them in? Have you -- as they were growing up, what was  
2 that like for you?

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: I think I shared  
4 more with my daughter than I did my son.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Just because he  
7 was -- I wasn't -- he knew a lot. In fact, both of them  
8 probably learned more today than they have ever learned  
9 about the --

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- but I've  
12 confided in Monica a lot more than I ever did Darryl about  
13 my life. It's probably because she's female.

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: And in terms of the  
15 experience you had with your mom's dependency on alcohol,  
16 how did that affect your choices in adulthood?

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: In -- choices of  
18 what?

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Of consuming alcohol  
20 or...

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, no, I drank  
22 during the -- when I was -- and also, I was single, though.  
23 I was -- through the marriage, that was fine, but once the  
24 marriage ended I was independent, single, you know, had my  
25 own friends -- friendship circle of people that used to

1 like to go out and -- not so much any more, because now  
2 that I'm older it's -- that's not a consideration any more,  
3 but it was -- we used to, you know, drink a lot, but always  
4 to the point that I always was clear about my own --

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. And --

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- safety.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- the reason --

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, repeating  
9 the --

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- so I'm trying -- that  
11 intergenerational --

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- as we see that it  
14 becomes a coping mechanism and --

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- so I -- exploring  
17 whether that had been a challenge for you or not.

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, no, I was --  
19 I think in the back of my mind I was always afraid of any  
20 kind of social activity, even though it's -- you trust your  
21 friends around you, there's a really distrust of --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- someone's going  
24 to hurt you. That's always been my --

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: And that's where you had

1 the strength to be taken care of yourself.

2 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: To take care of yourself  
4 you need that clear mind as well.

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, and never --  
6 and, you know, analyzing to death --

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- whether a man's  
9 motive is -- he could be the most caring person in the  
10 world.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: It's like -- but  
13 the trust, to trust someone --

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: And watching Lu-Ann too.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: And having her in your  
17 home and watching --

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: And your older brother,  
20 how is he?

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: My brother, he's  
22 actually younger than I am. He's --

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, right. You're the  
24 oldest.

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: I'm the oldest,

1 yeah. He's a year and a half or -- younger than I am. He  
2 lives on the island. I did explain to him that I was going  
3 to do this, and he was -- I love my brother, but he was  
4 like, I think, like, he will deflect any type of, 'Oh,  
5 yeah, well, way to go, sis, yeah, yeah, you do that, yeah,'  
6 you know, that --

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- no  
9 recommendations. I took him by surprise when I said it.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And he's a very  
12 social -- he's a very loving brother. He's really caring.  
13 He's loud and boisterous and he's -- in a way he's kind of  
14 the same as I am. He's very detached. He's divorced. He  
15 has a son. He never remarried. He also has a trust  
16 factor. I think we share --

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- this non-trust  
19 without ever talking --

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- about it --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- of why we never  
24 --

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: And he actually went to



1 live with your biological father, didn't he?

2 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes.

4 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, so he was  
7 quite far away from me, so when I saw him it was like two  
8 or three years had passed, so one of the things too, and I  
9 had said this to my youngest sister when I called her the  
10 next day, is -- like, I talked to my brother, and I said,  
11 'Now I have to phone [Sister],' and my sister [Sister] is  
12 married to a very nice man, lives in the Comox Valley. She  
13 never left the Comox Valley. And I said, 'That's the one  
14 that's -- I'm going to, like, really have to get some  
15 backbone to call her,' because I wasn't quite sure what she  
16 was going to say to me, because she's the one who has no  
17 memory of a mother.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: She was so young.

19 Three?

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Three. Yeah, so  
21 she's a -- she only knows what she's been told.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And she, of  
24 anyone, could have been our mother's -- as a young person.  
25 She looks so much like our mother, and people who -- my

1 mother is still, after all these years, is still actually -  
2 - people know her and talk about her, especially in the  
3 communities of the, like, Alert Bay and people like that.  
4 When you say who you are, they go, 'Oh,' because they know  
5 her name was, like, her name was Shadow. That was her --  
6 what she was known from, not Vera. She was known as  
7 Shadow.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And she was -- so  
10 when -- it really upset my sister when people would go,  
11 'Oh, you look so much like your mother,' and that really  
12 hurts her, like, and it --

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Creates --

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- makes her --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- that sense of loss.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah. Yeah, for  
17 her. So I called her two days ago to tell her I was doing  
18 this, and she burst out in tears, and then she called me  
19 this -- like, yesterday morning on the way to work in the  
20 car, and she was sitting outside her job. She works for  
21 the Credit Union. Crying, because she goes, in her mind  
22 this little cubbyhole of which our mother is in, memory,  
23 always opens, always opens, and that bothers her immensely,  
24 is, like, because we can never put it to rest, because the  
25 community won't let her put it to rest, family won't let

1 her put it to rest, as I mentioned about her brother. It's  
2 always -- once in a while it will raise itself when you  
3 least expect it, so --

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. And catch you a  
5 little off-guard.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, that's -- to  
7 not being -- we were at -- we mentioned Jody Wilson-  
8 Raybould.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: They had a big  
11 event for her at the Squamish Nation hall, and a woman from  
12 -- I think she was from Alert Bay -- came up to us, and the  
13 very first thing she said to [Sister] was, 'Oh, you look so  
14 much like your mother,' and she gets unnerved by it,  
15 because she's -- she has no warning when that is said,  
16 right? And then she starts to talk about our mother, and  
17 to me, I know why they're talking about her. It's -- it  
18 comforts them to know that her children have survived,  
19 right?

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: But with [Sister],  
22 it's yet another constant reminder of her, and want --  
23 really would wish to have had some memories of her, but she  
24 says, 'I have no memory. I don't know what she looks  
25 like.' So --

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: And how is [Sister]  
2 doing?

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Oh, she's doing  
4 really well. She was brought up with foster parents who  
5 were, like, older foster parents, from the time she was  
6 three, so she has a different personality of -- like, she's  
7 an old soul, almost.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmm, yes, yes, yes.

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah. Yeah, and  
10 she tried to reach out to my -- to our grandmother at the  
11 time to ask her about our mother, and my grandmother shut  
12 down. She wouldn't talk to her about it, so --

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Your grandmother had her  
14 own pain.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And that made  
16 [Sister] even more upset, because she goes, 'I'm the one  
17 that's left alone in foster.' Like, she's alone. Like,  
18 everyone is separated --

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- in foster care,  
21 but, no, no one will give her answers, no one will talk  
22 about it. Like, it's just too much for our grandmother to  
23 share -- share that.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: And if I can, because I  
25 want to come back to that comment. I was just wondering.

1 You had said your brother [Brother 1] was in Norway, and  
2 how is he doing?

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: He's doing all  
4 right. I haven't seen him in years.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: He just recently  
7 got married. He was born in 1960, I remember that, so he -  
8 - it was a lot later on in life.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmm.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: He's -- in my  
11 opinion, he's -- he's one who never came to terms with her  
12 -- with his own life, I think is it, and I think going to  
13 Norway was his way of getting out of the drama, or trauma,  
14 of --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- this. He  
17 rarely -- he's very soft-spoken and wouldn't actually ever,  
18 ever ask a question of what happened, you know.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: And maybe linked with  
20 the experience for him in foster care, that was quite  
21 different to your sister Lu-Ann's and --

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- the inability, from  
24 what you've said, for him to reconcile how things could be  
25 so different in the same home.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yes.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: And --

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- so one of the things  
5 that upset me -- I shouldn't have said that, sorry. One of  
6 the things that flagged for me was when you spoke of Mrs.  
7 [W.], who made it very clear to you that you were not to  
8 have any contact with your Indian family.

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Can you speak a little  
11 bit to that and the impact for your family to be cut off  
12 from your relations due to a government structural form of  
13 -- I don't want to use the word "violence," but a  
14 structural form of -- somebody drew a line in the sand for  
15 you to make a choice between your life and your family --

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- based on your  
18 culture, and what kind of impact that had for you as a  
19 family of five children who'd lost their mother, and  
20 staying connected with your family.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, it was  
22 extremely hard, because at the time [Brother 2] and I were  
23 in the same foster home. We had just arrived there when  
24 she came to -- and I remember her vividly. She was -- she  
25 was a true welfare agent. She was like this mean woman who

1 was, like, going to do her job properly, and at the time I  
2 wasn't even sure who she was until she says -- until she  
3 said who she was, and the reaction of -- and that's all she  
4 said, that, 'You are not to have any contact with your  
5 Indian relatives.' Those were her words. And that,  
6 'You'll go to reform school if you do -- if I find out that  
7 you had contact,' and stuff, so it was later -- it was  
8 later on that day I asked [Brother 2], 'What is reform  
9 school?' And I thought it was a prison, like, a jail for  
10 young people, and it scared the heck out of both of us,  
11 right --

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you think your three  
13 younger siblings were given the same message?

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Probably. I'm  
15 guessing. She probably had the same file.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: So the disconnect that  
17 I'm wondering, because you spoke of your grandmother's  
18 anger towards you, with the loss of -- the loss of your  
19 mom, did you -- out of fear did you stay away from your  
20 family?

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, I did. I  
22 did what she said. Once in a -- on my birthday --

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- and I don't  
25 remember if it was Christmas, they would actually -- they

1 would actually come into the yard of the foster home, so  
2 they would not go inside. This was my mother and my  
3 grandmother. They would not go into the home, even though  
4 my foster mother invited them, they wouldn't go in, and I  
5 recall a birthday cake on the roof of my grandmother's car,  
6 so it was the very extreme detachment of the -- of that,  
7 and I didn't say anything to them 'til later on, when my  
8 grandmother was yelling at me, that -- about the foster --  
9 the welfare agent, what she had said to me, and -- but my  
10 grandmother wasn't aware of it at the time, so I think  
11 there was a true shame factor that her children were in  
12 care.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And my grandmother  
15 was there to obviously support my mother --

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- for that, but  
18 it was around the welfare system, was fear-based. I was  
19 truly afraid of what welfare was at its time, which was  
20 strange, because two years later, when the -- my foster  
21 parents moved to Osoyoos, I lived with another family.  
22 That's where -- when I ran away.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: When I was -- so I  
25 never saw Mrs. W. again. I thought for sure she was going



1 to come and give me the same riot act with these foster  
2 parents as she did with the original ones.

3 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm. And did -- in  
4 your conversations with your grandmother, I was just  
5 wondering if any of the social services may have had a  
6 similar conversation with your family, with your  
7 grandmother, about trying to make any attempts to see her  
8 grandchildren.

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: I don't know. She  
10 never said --

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: You never had that  
12 conversation?

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: No. No. If it  
14 did, it was -- she kept it -- I think my grandmother would  
15 have said --

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mmm.

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- if she was  
18 particularly confronted.

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Because she became a  
20 very huge advocate for rights of women --

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- in your community.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, and she was  
24 really well-known in the Comox area as --

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- being a strong,  
2 independent woman. If the welfare had told my mother, my  
3 mother never mentioned it.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: To her grandmother -- to  
5 her mother.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: To me, that --

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- why she  
9 couldn't see me, was the -- and I never -- I never thought,  
10 'Why haven't you come to see me?' I never thought that. I  
11 just assumed that she wasn't allowed to.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, and I was  
14 telling Darryl just the other day, when I was a teenager I  
15 worked in a local playground as a playground supervisor  
16 during the summer, and when I was in care -- I was 15, I  
17 guess. I was 15. I shouldn't say that. Because it was on  
18 the main street of the town of Courtenay, and my mother and  
19 her boyfriend kind of pulled up and got out of the car to  
20 see me and talk to me, and it was really -- a really -- it  
21 was a really nice visit. She was -- but it was like  
22 looking at a stranger, really. She was trying to be nice.  
23 She was being very friendly, and she goes, 'I know it was  
24 your -- I know it was your birthday that just passed. I'm  
25 sorry that I didn't buy you anything yet,' because she had

1 no money, right?

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And she was  
4 wearing this ring, and she pulled it off her finger, and  
5 she gave it to me, and --

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Is that the ring you're  
7 wearing?

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: That's the ring --  
9 that's the only thing I have of -- of --

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's beautiful.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, because she  
12 --

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: I was admiring it  
14 earlier.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: In February, she  
16 was born in February 11th, so -- and she gave it to me, and  
17 it was -- of course, at the time it was -- it fits me now.  
18 It didn't fit me then. But --

19 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- so when I went  
21 back to my foster -- when I -- at the end of the day, when  
22 I went home, I said to the foster mother, I said, 'This is  
23 what my mother gave me,' and she was really upset. She  
24 said, 'She shouldn't have done that. You should give it  
25 back,' and I said, 'I'm not giving it back. Why should I

1 give it back?' And she goes, 'I just think it's  
2 inappropriate,' and I said, 'Well, I don't. It belongs to  
3 me. It's mine. She gave it to me.' And the fact that I  
4 held on to it for such a long time --

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Beautiful.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah. Thanks.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: And in your role of all  
10 these years working with domestic violence, any thoughts  
11 about what you're seeing with the families today in child  
12 welfare that's occurring for Indigenous families?

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Oh, just change.  
14 There's -- what I'm seeing, it's slow, but the Indigenous  
15 leadership is trying to change it, that the family is still  
16 a part of a child, even if a child is in care.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: To keep their  
19 heredity and their culture as being a priority, because  
20 most foster parents are still Non-Indigenous homes.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: There aren't  
23 enough Indigenous foster parents there. So there's still  
24 that big gap there, and to actually -- that the child, even  
25 though it's separate from their parents, still has that

1 cultural --

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- upbringing, and  
4 the shame factor of why they're there needs to be  
5 constantly be paramount to the child's welfare --

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Can --

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- the more  
8 connection they are to their biological parents, no matter  
9 how bad their parents are, if they are dealing with  
10 addiction and trauma themselves, the connection is, they're  
11 still their parents, and --

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- they will  
14 search them out --

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah, and --

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- no matter how -  
17 -

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- because you've used  
19 the word "shame" a few times as you've spoken, so I'm just  
20 wondering if you could speak a little bit more about what  
21 that means for you in terms of shame and families.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Well, the shame  
23 of, that your parent may have addiction issues.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh.

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: May have -- is

1 that shame, is -- and do people in your community know it,  
2 so you are a product of the -- of what it is your parents  
3 and your family is, is that shame, because you carry it,  
4 and mine comes from the fact that I'm in a Non-Indigenous  
5 community where most of my cousins are in residential  
6 school.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So we are the very  
9 few -- my brother and I -- there was very few First Nations  
10 children in the public school system.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. Yeah.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So that by its own  
13 nature was a -- full of racism, because there was -- there  
14 wasn't a lot of First Nations children in the public school  
15 system.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: But my brother, as  
18 nice as he is, he was also defiant that no one was going to  
19 say anything bad towards me or him, so he got into many  
20 fights as a young person, and -- but it's the -- so the  
21 shame factor is that -- is that you carry that, but it's  
22 also the fact that I won't allow anyone to do that to me,  
23 because it's -- I think it's because I'm the oldest.

24 I was telling Darryl yesterday that -- or  
25 day before, when I was in foster care, one of the sons of

1 the foster parents, him and I hated each other, just --  
2 just hated each other immensely. Of course, I'm 14, he's  
3 14 or 15, and we're in the house, and he's -- I don't know  
4 why, in the kitchen, and he's walking by me, and I think he  
5 called me a dirty squaw as he walked by me, because he  
6 didn't want, what he said, dirty Indians living in his  
7 home, and the son, he was adopted, and he was -- he had  
8 vision problems, so he had a number of operations on his  
9 eyes to correct them, so when he walked by and said that to  
10 me, I just -- he said

11 "dirty squaw",  
12 and I said  
13 "cross-eyed pig".

14 He was so angry, his face turned, like,  
15 beet red. I thought he was going to hit me. But he walked  
16 up the stairs to his bedroom, and he never spoke to me  
17 again, and it's like, in my mind it was like, you're not  
18 going to ever do that to me again, so I have a defiance of,  
19 even though the shame -- the shame sometimes shows in my --  
20 what was my health issues --

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- because when I  
23 went into foster care, I had, like, 21 cavities, I was  
24 malnourished, I was --

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- so I had health  
2 things, I had -- at one time I had sties, I had boils, I  
3 had every disease of -- that had to do with neglect.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: And malnourishment?

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And  
6 malnourishment.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: So my foster  
9 mother is correcting all of this, making me go to the  
10 dentist's, making me -- you know, 'You have to bath every  
11 day,' so I had to relearn that at 14, and it was -- that's  
12 shame. Like, I didn't know that. You know, she never --  
13 she was never cruel. She never said anything. She just  
14 said, 'This is what you have to do,' and she was very  
15 caring about my hygiene and my -- the way I dressed, and  
16 all that. She didn't want me to have the stigma of being,  
17 you know, poor, dirty, you know, that, so she went out of  
18 her way to do that on my behalf. I didn't know it at the  
19 time, that's what was happening around the shame, until  
20 years later.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: And that gives you so  
22 much, a wealth of experience and a wealth of knowledge.  
23 Any thoughts or recommendations that, given what you've  
24 experienced, the Inquiry, that you think is important for  
25 the Commissioners to hear, in terms of the child welfare



1 system? We've seen, as we've talked about, we saw the  
2 residential school, the Sixties Scoop, the foster care, you  
3 know. Is there anything missing or, you know, looking to  
4 the future for Indigenous children? Any thoughts,  
5 recommendations, to taking care and ensuring their better  
6 overall wellness?

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, I've always  
8 believed that the -- trying to keep a family together is  
9 paramount.

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: If the parents are  
12 dealing with addiction issues, they themselves have to be  
13 well, and they should be, in my opinion, part of the order:  
14 If you want your children, if you want to be a family,  
15 you're going to have to go to treatment, you're going to  
16 have to do this, and that's community-owned, that the  
17 community itself supports that. We will support you, we  
18 will keep your children here. When you're ready we will  
19 reunite the --

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- transition with  
22 your children. I don't believe abandoning children, having  
23 them end up in the foster-care system and end up with  
24 provincial corrections, federal corrections --

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- federal  
2 corrections has lots of high numbers of Indigenous women in  
3 there who have been --

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Almost 50 per cent in  
5 the province of British Columbia.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, and 60 per  
7 cent of them have children, so it's just another form of  
8 residential school, so it's like, the connection to keep  
9 families together should be the number-one priority of the  
10 Ministry.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: And I ask this question  
12 because of your experience in what you've spoken about,  
13 both experiencing it as a young woman and then in your role  
14 in advocacy, and as the executive director of an  
15 organization that is there to keep Indigenous women and  
16 girls safe.

17 Thoughts about, when you talk about the  
18 addictions and we talk about the intergenerational trauma  
19 that -- if you're in a place of those addictions, and it's  
20 that continuation of that intergenerational trauma, how do  
21 you -- I'm just trying to -- how do you weave that together  
22 to do in families where that's occurring, the trauma, the  
23 violence, and then try to encourage them to get free from  
24 their addictions by saying you have to go to treatment?

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

1 MS. KERRIE REAY: How do you reconcile  
2 those two? Any thoughts? You know, that's probably --

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, I think  
4 that's why it's community -- things are community-led, is  
5 there are other family members --

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- of these  
8 children who could step up, and do step up. I'm not saying  
9 they don't --

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- that step up to  
12 actually say, 'While you're getting better we will care for  
13 your children.' We should never go into a regular foster-  
14 care system, and that's still prevalent, in my opinion, is  
15 used -- the Ministry now, I think, sees is children at a  
16 higher rate than ever before, based on their fear of, that  
17 they're -- they may fail --

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: May. They may fail.

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- the child's,  
20 yeah, welfare, so instead of actually looking, and they've  
21 got -- and I know that social workers have huge files of --

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- children that  
24 are in care, to actually plan something like that, I think  
25 they're just going through the motions to try to -- and

1 that whole Ministry, although they're -- they are doing --  
2 with John's (ph) report, they are trying to restructure  
3 that, because generationally the, in my opinion, Indigenous  
4 children are the first generation away from residential  
5 school, and they have no idea who their parents are --

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- because their  
8 parents were never parents. They are -- so you have this  
9 constant -- we're in a generation now of, in my opinion,  
10 very angry young females and males of -- don't know who  
11 they are.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And this recouping  
14 of their culture is, I think, is really paramount, is this  
15 pride of who they are.

16 MS. KERRIE REAY: Is there a role for your  
17 elected councils? Is there a role -- a bigger role for  
18 your elected officials in your communities?

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: To understand  
20 that?

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Well, to advocate for --  
22 to advocate for what you're suggesting, in terms of taking  
23 on a more advocacy role and keeping families together in  
24 the indigenous communities?

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, I think

1 communities themselves -- I know they're overwhelmed,  
2 because they're dealing with not just children, they're  
3 dealing with -- if you're talking about First Nations  
4 communities --

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- yeah --

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Sorry.

8 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- they're deal --  
9 yeah, they're dealing with everything, social development  
10 and land claims and fisheries and whatever --

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yes.

12 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- it is, the  
13 children is one large --

14 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

15 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- part of it, but  
16 it's a huge part that they themselves have to decide, and I  
17 know a lot of communities do that. Children are their  
18 priorities, and that's their -- because that is truly their  
19 -- who's their next generation --

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- coming up. One  
22 of the things that I notice is First Nations bands are  
23 starting to rotate the -- their councils for much younger  
24 people. Squamish Nation is one, a huge one, where the  
25 people who are replacing the ones that were senior are now

1 in their 20s.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Tsawwassen is  
4 another one.

5 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: I think over the  
7 next ten years you're going to start to see councils being  
8 made up of younger generations who want change, and they  
9 want change fast, because this is technology --

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's a different time.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- generation.

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: It's a different time.

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: A different time.

14 These are not your parents. These are -- these are people  
15 who want change, and they want it quickly and at their --  
16 and they want them -- they want change faster than the  
17 generation of, like, where I came from, like -- yeah. So  
18 it's -- that strategy I think you start to see is going to  
19 be even more impactful --

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- as they get  
22 older, and around the child welfare, I hope, is going to  
23 change, that -- from a younger person's point of view is,  
24 there's a strategy to have -- keep their own generation,  
25 their own culture, their own traditions, which I see is a

1 lot stronger today than it was when I was young.

2 MS. KERRIE REAY: Is there anything else  
3 that you would -- I want to make sure that you've said  
4 everything that you wanted to say, and that you don't leave  
5 here feeling that you forgot to say something. Is there  
6 anything else that comes to mind that you would like to  
7 share with the Commissioners or anything else, in terms of  
8 your own strength and resiliency, or to commemorate your  
9 mother as...

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah, no, my --  
11 and I didn't talk about it to any length, but is the -- is  
12 the issue of police.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

14 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: If police are in  
15 violent -- or watching violence within a home and do  
16 nothing about it, and it escalates to a point where the  
17 final outcome is the death of someone, that their position  
18 is not to take the -- take it seriously, to not fully  
19 investigate, did in fact she die of her own hands, or did  
20 she actually die at the hands of someone else, because in  
21 my opinion what comes after all of this is the other -- is  
22 family members, and who come back with different  
23 interpretations.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

25 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: About three years

1 ago I had -- my mother's first cousin lives in Prince  
2 George. Her name is [Cousin] -- sent me an envelope with  
3 my mother's picture of when she married him. She was a  
4 bridesmaid there, and she said to me, 'I was with your  
5 mother the day she died. We were having lunch at the  
6 Lauren (ph) Hotel,' which is in Comox, 'and your mother  
7 said, I have to leave now, because I have to go make  
8 [Partner 1] his lunch,' or something, and it was mid-  
9 afternoon, and she goes, 'Your mother was so happy -- was  
10 so happy that day. For her to take her own life, I don't  
11 believe it,' and this -- she's been dead since 1967, so, I  
12 mean, it keeps coming up, and I said, 'Well, you know,  
13 [Cousin], sometimes they say people who are going to take  
14 their lives look happy, because they're coming to a  
15 resolution that it's going to be now over, right?' And she  
16 was very mad at me for saying that. She goes, 'I will  
17 never believe that she took her own life. It was not in  
18 her nature to do that,' and I said, '[Cousin], I don't know  
19 what to say to you, because it was so long ago,' and she  
20 said, 'It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. The family  
21 needs to know that she didn't do that.' So you got the  
22 hurt feelings of a --

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- after all these  
25 years of a -- of her first cousin, right?



1 MS. KERRIE REAY: And one wonders, you  
2 know, the burden that she's carried, the possible guilt  
3 that she has maybe carried all this time, if she was there  
4 --

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Should have had --

6 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- that day.

7 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Should have gone  
8 with her, should have, should have.

9 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

10 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Always the  
11 "should have".

12 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

13 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Is that, and I do  
14 feel really bad, but it's shocking to me how often every  
15 once in a while her image or her name comes up, who she is  
16 as a person, and I think too, dying at 36 --

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: Mm-hmm.

18 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- is such a young  
19 age to die, because --

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: And --

21 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- we're all old.

22 MS. KERRIE REAY: Yeah.

23 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: We're all older.

24 MS. KERRIE REAY: And you've brought a  
25 picture that you've held here, you have on the table. I'm

1 just wondering if you'd like to hold the picture up for me  
2 to zoom in with the video camera, so that --

3 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Sure.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- the Commission can  
5 see your beautiful mother.

6 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And that's her  
7 nickname there, you see.

8 MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, Shadow?

9 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY:

10 "All my love, Shadow".

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. I'm just going to  
12 move this out of the way a little bit, and -- oh, she has a  
13 beautiful smile. Okay. Right. Let's -- just going to  
14 zoom in. I -- just to do that I also have to adjust the  
15 camera a little bit here. And I'm just getting a close-up  
16 of the picture of your --

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Mm-hmm.

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: -- beautiful mom. Thank  
19 you. Okay.

20 Is there anything else, Darlene, that  
21 you'd like to -- that you'd like to say or...

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Did I miss  
23 anything? I think I said everything. No, I think -- thank  
24 you.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: I really think  
2 anything that the Commission can learn from this -- I  
3 support the Inquiry. It was a long time coming.

4 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

5 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: And I wish you  
6 luck with what remains.

7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Thank you. Okay. So  
8 I'll turn this off. And I will then turn off the tape  
9 recorder.

10 --- Recording is paused.

11 MS. KERRIE REAY: I have the tape recorder  
12 back on, and I'll just put the video back on as well, and  
13 just for the record, we had finished the videotape at 2:55.  
14 We are going back on the record at 3:02 to invite Darlene  
15 to share with the Commission the book that she is going to  
16 provide the Commission on the work she has done.

17 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: This is the third  
18 of three Women's Safety Guides. The guides are done from  
19 the point of view of a young person right up to an elder.  
20 It tries to incorporate everything where a young woman or  
21 any woman may need helpful hints on how to be safe, whether  
22 they're travelling, whether in university, whether they're  
23 a young person. It's also resources for anyone needing  
24 them.

25 To me, I wrote it because of the -- what

1 was happening at the time with the Highway of Tears  
2 Inquiry, is, what can we actually do to help support women  
3 when -- not the Inquiry, sorry, there was a huge meeting  
4 going on in Prince George at the time, and I was trying to  
5 figure out, how is it that we can support women with a --  
6 in a -- without revictimizing them by talking about, you  
7 know, like, not from the lens of victim services, but more  
8 around helpful hints to consider, because -- and along with  
9 it now comes a series of workshops to help women, and it's  
10 all women, to actually write their own personal safety  
11 plans, so that's going on right now as well to accompany  
12 this.

13 MS. KERRIE REAY: And I notice the title  
14 of the book is -- it's

15 "A Woman's Right to be Safe".

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

17 MS. KERRIE REAY: And this is put out --  
18 put together by yourself in your role with the Native  
19 Courtworkers Association and Counselling Services.

20 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: That's right.

21 MS. KERRIE REAY: B.C.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: That's right.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: Good, good. Okay.

24 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: That's right.

25 MS. KERRIE REAY: Anything else that...

1 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: No, it was kind of  
2 hard to write about whether in fact a woman should be  
3 physical towards her attacker. That probably took a week  
4 to determine whether in fact I should actually say that,  
5 right? So we actually had a position that we -- that the  
6 person should position themselves with their feet to push  
7 as hard as they can and then run, versus punch the person  
8 in the -- or try to kick them or try to do anything that's  
9 non-violent to get out of the circumstance --

10 MS. KERRIE REAY: And to keep them safe.

11 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: -- versus -- yeah.  
12 I didn't want to give any kind of recommendations on, you  
13 should try to hurt the other person as much as you can and  
14 then take off.

15 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

16 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: I didn't think  
17 that was appropriate, so...

18 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Good.

19 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Yeah.

20 MS. KERRIE REAY: Well, thank you for  
21 coming back on the record.

22 MS. DARLENE SHACKELLY: Thank you.

23 MS. KERRIE REAY: And it is 3:05, and we  
24 will conclude.

25 --- Whereupon the statement concluded at 3:05 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I have, to the best  
of my skill and ability,  
accurately transcribed from a pre-existing  
recording  
the foregoing proceeding..



Andrea Kovats, Certified Court Reporter