

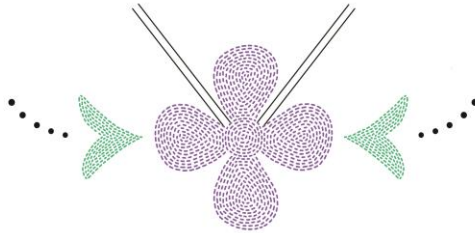
National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 1 Public Hearings
Hotel North Two, Conference Room**

Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland-and-Labrador



PUBLIC

Thursday March 8, 2018

**Public Volume 55:
Amena Evans Harlick, In relation to Mary Evans Harlick**

Heard by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson

Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.

II

APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Jeremy Kolodziej (Legal Counsel)
Eastern Door Indigenous Women's Association	Non-appearance
Government of Canada	Tania Tooke (Paralegal)
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador	Brian Harvey (Representative)
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami	Elizabeth Zarpa (Legal Counsel)
Naskapi Nation of Kawawachi- kamach	Non-appearance
Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network	Odelle Pike (Representative)
Newfoundland Native Women's Association	Non-appearance
Nunatsiavut Government	Kaila de Boer, Michelle Kinney, Tracey Evans Rice (Representatives)
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada & AnânauKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association (ATRIWA)	Beth Symes (Legal Counsel for Pauktuutit & ATRIWA) Anita Pokiak (Representative for Pauktuutit)

III
LIST OF EXHIBITS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
Witness: Amena Evans Harlick		
Exhibits (code: P01P12P0201)		
1	Folder of seven digital images displayed during Amena Evans Harlick's public testimony	9
2	CBC News article "Gauthier to serve 17 years without parole" posted August 21, 2006 1:31 PM NT, last updated August 21, 2006 1:30 PM NT (sic)	5

IV

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Public Volume 55	1
Witness: Amena Evans Harlick	
In Relation to Mary Evans Harlick	
Heard by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson	
 Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe	
Grandmothers, Elders and Knowledge-keepers: Charlotte Wolfrey, Sarah Ponniuk, Odelle Pike, Amelia Reimer, Paul Pike, Kenneth Mesher, Louise Haulli, Audrey Siegl, Kathleen Nuna, Celeste Anderson, Tracy Denniston, Evelyn Winters	
Clerk: Maryiam Khoury	
Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And do you want --
2 is it okay to say -- isn't it?

3 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Yeah.

4 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Okay. So you now
5 know who that was, between hearing from your family, and
6 talking with your family, and doing your own research, you
7 now know his name and it's -- it's in that article. Can
8 you share what you now know about what happened after he
9 murdered your mom?

10 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I don't really
11 know how to say it.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** It's all right. So,
13 maybe, that -- that wasn't a great question. Let me try
14 again. He went to trial. Was he convicted?

15 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Yes.

16 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Okay. And was he
17 sentenced for the murder of your mom?

18 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** He was sentenced
19 to 17 years with -- without a chance of parole.

20 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** But again, this is
21 all stuff that you only learned after the fact. So you
22 can't really speak to, necessarily, the justice system, or
23 how it treated your family, other than what you heard from
24 your family. Did your family ever share with you anything
25 about that process?

1 my grandmother told me that she dressed up as Mother Nature
2 for Halloween, or just for fun, and, yeah.

3 And this was -- oh, what beach is that? I
4 think it's Northern Bay Sands, and it was a big family
5 outing. So it was me, my mom, my brother, and my dad, my
6 grandparents, I think, my great grandmother was there.

7 That's us eating tarts. They're my
8 favourite tarts. I don't remember the occasion. I think
9 our -- my baby cousin was born that day, and we celebrated
10 with eating tarts and looking at the baby.

11 This was my mom and my dad's wedding day.
12 And that's the -- that little blob is me.

13 And this is one of our birthdays. It was
14 either my brother's or mine. And you can see the two of us
15 devouring the cake. And my grandmother is the one in the
16 middle up there. Yeah.

17 This was the best Christmas ever. We had
18 lit candles, we opened up a bunch of gifts, and I remember
19 walking around the house with the stroller and the toy baby
20 that I was given. And it -- it was just a lot of fun.

21 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** How old were
22 you? How old were you in this picture?

23 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Oh, God, maybe
24 four or five.

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you for

1 sharing those memories with us. I know that as you've,
2 like, decided to come here and share your story -- leading
3 up to this, you had an opportunity to go to the pre-
4 Inquiry. And that was really, kind of, the first time you
5 publicly spoke about your mom --

6 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Yeah.

7 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** -- and shared about
8 your mom. And your own interest in doing research, other
9 than the fact that your mother was murdered, has made you a
10 bit of an advocate and, you know, a role model with young
11 women your age. Can you tell us a little bit about why
12 it's important to advocate about these issues?
13 Particularly, given your age, and what kind of voice you
14 want to bring to the issues?

15 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I think it's
16 really important. I am very young, and when I went to the
17 Toronto meeting, I -- me and Samantha here, were the
18 youngest people there, I'm pretty sure. But I think it's
19 important to have a -- a voice so young because there are
20 other girl -- little girls and young women who are growing
21 up who may have gone through a similar situation as mine,
22 and they feel alone because for the longest time, I -- I
23 felt alone. And just knowing that maybe someone else out
24 there will, you know, see me talking about this, or
25 anything, will -- will help them know that they aren't

1 going through this alone. And that they -- they can voice
2 their opinion, and they can have a voice because they --
3 their -- their voices shouldn't go unheard.

4 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** *Oui.*

5 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** We -- we talked
6 about some impacts -- some impacts you experienced. And we
7 see the pictures and how much love was in the family. And
8 we know, because you've shared, that you -- you lost her at
9 such a young age. Can you tell us about the impacts of
10 losing your mother at the age of 6 has had overall? The
11 impact and effect it's been in your life?

12 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I've gone through
13 a lot of milestones in my life. And it would have been
14 nice to have my mom there. Like, graduating from
15 elementary school, and then going into junior high. And
16 then graduating from junior high and then going to high
17 school, and being at my prom, and everything. It would
18 have been nice to have my mom there, you know, getting
19 ready with me for these graduations, and cheering me on in
20 the -- on the sidelines. And it -- it would have been nice
21 to have that. And I know growing up that it was difficult
22 for my family because, you know, my -- my dad was also very
23 young when this had all happened. And he was able to raise
24 both me and my brother on his own, and be strong through
25 the whole time. And I don't give him enough credit because

1 that man is the strongest man that I know. And I -- I
2 can't thank him enough for the childhood and everything
3 that he gave me.

4 He used to go on fishing trips in the
5 summer, once a year, with his friend for a week. And I
6 used to go up to my nan's and a family friend's house
7 during that week. And my nan has said that my -- myself
8 and my brother would cry before we would go to sleep
9 because we were scared that our father wouldn't come home.
10 And knowing that we had lost one parent, and we were scared
11 of losing another one. And I -- I even remember whenever I
12 would spend one night away from home, and my dad would be
13 home alone, or something, I was scared that something would
14 happen to him. And it -- it's just -- it -- it's been a
15 lot knowing and -- knowing and being scared of losing him
16 as well.

17 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And one of the --
18 one of the other things we talked about is how uncannily
19 you look like your mom. Where there's some pictures that
20 you -- you look like you could be the same person. And how
21 does that impact you as a young Indigenous -- beautiful
22 Indigenous woman? Knowing what happened to your mom, and
23 how does that impact you when you're out in the world? Or,
24 what are your fears? What are your -- how do you feel
25 knowing that you also have risks based on the fact of who

1 you are?

2 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I get scared.
3 I -- I like to go for walks by myself and -- and have me-
4 time, of course. But I -- I do really get scared,
5 and -- and sometimes I think that someone is going to be
6 right behind me, and so I start running from wherever I am.
7 And just keep running until I feel safe again. I just have
8 a thought, but I can't remember it. Sorry.

9 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** It's okay. Take
10 your time.

11 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I don't know where
12 I was going with that. I just -- I don't like feeling
13 scared. I shouldn't have to feel scared. And a lot of the
14 times when I'm out walking by myself, I just think -- and,
15 like, when I -- when I get these feelings of being scared,
16 I -- I feel like I'm just going to be another statistic.
17 And that's something that worries me all the time because I
18 don't want to be another statistic.

19 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Can you tell me --
20 tell us a little bit about the impact it has -- like,
21 you're -- we had this conversation. I understand your mom
22 was adopted out as an infant. So we did talk -- if you
23 could talk a little bit about the disconnect, but the
24 reality that you walk in an Inuit appearance and face every
25 day. So what -- what type of discrimination or barriers do

1 is not taught in schools. We are
2 briefed about basic culture in early
3 grade school of smudging, drum circles
4 and the extinction of the Beothuk
5 people."

6 It is not -- it is not -- what?

7 "It was not until I had met Amena at a
8 age 16, that I had even -- that I was
9 even aware about the missing and --"

10 Sorry, I'm really bad at reading.

11 "It was not until I met Amena at age
12 16, that I was even aware missing and
13 murdered Indigenous women and girls was
14 a problem in Canada. We cannot have
15 justice for our loved ones if we're not
16 even being given the option to be
17 educated properly about it. We read --
18 we need this information in our schools
19 and for our children to be aware, so
20 they do not become ignorant to these
21 issues like I was. If there was no
22 room for this type of education,
23 there -- then there is no room for
24 change to occur."

25 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And having attended

1 school and -- and growing up in a non-Inuit or Indigenous
2 family, what did you remember learning about Inuit or
3 Indigenous people in class?

4 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I don't remember a
5 whole lot. I -- I remember, you know, sitting down and it
6 would be one day of class where we just learn about the
7 different types of Indigenous people, so Inuit, and Innu,
8 Mi'kmaq, and then we would talk about the Beothuks. And
9 then we would watch a movie or something like that. But
10 the culture was -- was never really taught, and the history
11 behind everything. It -- it was just never spoken about.
12 And I -- I think that's unfair because I -- I find the
13 culture so, so beautiful.

14 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Have you ever felt,
15 like -- have you felt disconnected? I know you said you --
16 you didn't get the culture, but how -- what was that like
17 for your identity growing up as a youth?

18 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I mean, people
19 still ask me now if I know any of the language. If I -- if
20 I know anything cool, and -- and I -- I don't know what
21 they would -- yeah, I don't know. But people still ask me
22 that kind of stuff, and I just don't know how to answer it
23 besides I wasn't taught it growing up, and, yeah.

24 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** But that's one of
25 the things, I think. Is it fair to say, like, in your

1 continuing healing journey, one of the things that you
2 really want to do is learn more, and do more with your
3 culture?

4 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Yeah.

5 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And do you think
6 that's going to be something that will help you? I mean,
7 obviously, nothing ever brings back your mother. But what
8 are the types of things that -- that you think you and
9 youth -- because you're still really close to youth, can do
10 to cope and to heal through these types of situations?

11 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I think the best
12 thing anyone could ever do in a situation like mine, is to
13 continue to talk about it. And continue to bring awareness
14 to it because it -- it -- sometimes it feels like it's just
15 being shoved underneath a rug or something like that. And
16 it -- it needs to be talked about. And it -- it helps with
17 the healing to talk about your feelings and the anger, the
18 sadness, and the grief. It -- it needs to be something to
19 be worked on.

20 To be able to -- and, like, one thing that I
21 found helpful when I went to Toronto for the pre-Inquiry
22 meeting was smudging. And I real -- I really enjoyed that.
23 And if -- if we could -- if there was a way to teach more
24 people about different types of healing and the different
25 types of culture, I think it would help a lot of people

1 because in a -- in non-Indigenous cultures, it's just,
2 like, hey, talk about your feelings, and -- and like, take
3 a bubble bath or something like that. And it -- and -- and
4 you don't really get the same effect as when you're doing
5 something that helps clean your heart, and clean your head,
6 and make -- make sure that you're feeling okay and in a
7 better spot until you move on.

8 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Now, in terms of,
9 like, justice. Your thoughts on justice, or -- or justice
10 for murdered and missing Indigenous women? We know that
11 your mother's murderer was convicted, but you didn't have a
12 big role in understanding the process because of your age.
13 What kind of role do you think you should be able to have
14 in any processes moving forward in relation to the
15 convicted killer?

16 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I didn't know that
17 I would be able to have a say in his parole. That was
18 brought to my attention very recently. And being able to
19 have a say in that and make sure that he never walks out of
20 that jail ever again would -- it would ease my mind a whole
21 lot.

22 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** But has anyone ever
23 contacted you from Victim Services, or from a Crown's
24 office, or from any service, to inform you what type of
25 participation you could have in those processes?

1 MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK: They haven't
2 contacted me personally, no.

3 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Do you think it
4 would be helpful if there was more information, or a way
5 that you could understand how the process works?

6 MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK: Yeah.

7 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Do you have any
8 other things that you want to speak about in relation to
9 the -- the justice system, or how it impacts missing and
10 murdered Indigenous women and girls?

11 MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK: We can totally
12 come back to it.

13 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Just wanted to make
14 sure (indiscernible). Did you get a chance to think about
15 some recommendations? (Indiscernible)?

16 MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK: Okay. Yeah.

17 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Please feel free to
18 share. I understand you did make some notes because you
19 wanted to remember the important things you wanted to
20 share. And you're welcome to share these with the
21 Commissioner, or read them. Whatever you're more
22 comfortable doing.

23 MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK: Okay. I -- I just
24 wrote down a few little suggestions and stuff like that.
25 I -- I was talking on the phone with my nan last night to

1 get more of an idea of what can be made available for --
2 for a -- after situations like this. And she said that, in
3 general, counselling service made available for the
4 families. After this had happened and -- there was no
5 counselling services for myself and my brother, which I'm
6 sure we could have used at that age to help process it and
7 come to terms with it. And then, I guess, counselling as
8 you're growing up because it's -- it -- it doesn't just go
9 away.

10 And I already touched the -- the education
11 thing. Educating more people about the culture and about
12 what we're talking about here today. And, yeah, that's
13 what I have written down.

14 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And you had said
15 earlier, your mother was an artist. And one of the -- the
16 things is, you didn't get a chance to, maybe, learn from
17 her some of the art skills that she could have passed to
18 you. Are there other types of programs that you could --
19 think could be made available to youth about culture that
20 would help heal in these circumstances?

21 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I'm not sure. I
22 haven't really thought about that. I find art therapy is
23 really helpful. I mean, you sit down and you paint for
24 hours and you feel better afterwards. You get to express
25 your -- yourself and your emotions while you're painting,

1 and drawing, and doing all that kind of fun stuff. So I
2 think that would be good too.

3 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** In terms of --
4 you're 21, and I know that you're often on your -- I -- I
5 don't even know all of the things, I know like, Snapchat
6 and Instagram, but what are ways you can advocate using,
7 like, technology or increase youth and Indigenous voices
8 around this? Do you have some creative ideas on that? Or
9 do you think it's important to keep spreading the word, not
10 just in sessions like this, but through technology?

11 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Yeah. I -- I try
12 my best to talk about it as much as I can. When I was in
13 Calgary, there was red dresses, and red shirts, and red
14 everything hung around the University of Calgary. And I
15 made sure to post those pictures and show that, you know,
16 this is a problem and there are people talking about it,
17 and we should continue talking about it.

18 I've -- since -- since I've known about
19 coming here for this trip, I've been posting on Snapchat,
20 and Instagram, and all those social medias, that I was
21 coming here. And that we -- we should be speaking about
22 this because it's extremely, extremely important. And
23 it -- it would be helpful for more youth to be talking
24 about it, and more people my age and younger even, because
25 we're going to be the next generation. We're going to be

1 trying to change the world and do something good for the
2 world. And if -- if we all just kept talking about it and
3 keep it alive, then, you know, there will be more justice,
4 and awareness, and everything like that. Yeah.

5 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Do you think that
6 there's more people becoming aware, in particular youth,
7 becoming aware of the issues? That we can talk more now
8 than we did in the past?

9 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I sure hope so.
10 I've seen -- I've seen on Facebook more and more that
11 people are sharing the REDress Project, and more people are
12 talking about the Inquiry, and more people are lending
13 their voices. And even just sharing a post, it's bringing
14 awareness.

15 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Am I missing
16 anything? Like, what else do you want to talk about? So
17 you're doing great. I just want to make sure we didn't
18 miss anything, that you (indiscernible). All right. Yeah.
19 Okay. I'm going to ask you the strength question. You
20 obviously (indiscernible). So thank you so much for
21 sharing. I know it wasn't -- I know it wasn't easy today
22 to actually describe the circumstance, or how you learned
23 of your mother's murder. I'm so impressed that at your
24 young age, you've -- you've got so much to share with us.
25 One of the things though, you know, we've been talking

1 about how we can talk about this more, and how it's
2 important. And, you know, I -- I wanted to ask you, you
3 know, how do you find the strength? Like, how did you get
4 the courage to stand up here today and talk? I know you
5 think that talking's important, but what are you tapping
6 into, that inner strength; what is it?

7 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Okay. So I've
8 written it all down so my thoughts are in one complete
9 place. I found the strength through support of my family.
10 They've been patient with me through rough times. They let
11 me know my self-worth, show me that I can be strong through
12 whatever life throws at me, and let me know that it's
13 important to voice my opinion and let my voice be heard.
14 They have gone above and beyond to give me a great
15 childhood, even with a big tragedy that potentially turned
16 our world upside down for a little while. And again, I
17 have to say a -- say thank you so much to my father because
18 he -- he's just been great, and he's been strong, and he's
19 shown me what strength is because -- and as me and my
20 brother were going through a tough time, I'm sure he was
21 going through a tougher time. And I'd -- I admire him for
22 that. And being able to raise me and him on his own, and
23 still be an awesome dad.

24 I found strength through my friends, who
25 have given me a shoulder to cry, and a person to vent to.

1 And being able to laugh until we're crying because we're --
2 because of silly jokes. Through therapeutic late-night
3 drives, and talks, and then letting me break out of my
4 shell and feel comfortable in my own skin. And the endless
5 love they continue to show me on a regular basis,
6 especially on the bad days. Thank you.

7 I found strength through myself. Learning
8 to love myself, know my self-worth, being brave through
9 tough times, even if it's just getting out of bed in the
10 morning. And knowing that I've had an extremely hard life,
11 and I'm still kicking around. And knowing that every hard
12 time in my life will pass by as well.

13 Lastly, and the most important event that
14 helped me build the courage to attend this event today was
15 the pre-Inquiry meeting. That it -- it really opened up my
16 eyes. It was the first place I openly talked about my
17 mother to a bunch of people who I didn't know. I was
18 able -- able to share her story and make sure her name
19 would never be forgotten, and feel as if I was making her
20 proud of me.

21 Since that day, my goal was to make sure her
22 story was told all -- along with every other loved one's
23 story. Make sure that these incredible women and girls
24 wouldn't be forgotten. Every mother, sister, daughter,
25 grandmother, aunt, best friend and niece who we've lost

1 over the years deserve to be remembered. We are here to
2 honour our loved ones today. We are here to speak up and
3 make sure that we are heard. And we are here to give back
4 the voices that were stolen from our loved ones. And my
5 hope is that you will now hear them loud and clear.

6 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Wow.

7 **(APPLAUSE)**

8 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you. I don't
9 have any more questions. I want to make sure we haven't
10 missed anything before the Commissioner has an opportunity
11 to ask questions or make comments.

12 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Me already?

13 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** Oh, can I say one
14 thing before you get started?

15 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Yes, please.

16 **MS. AMENA EVANS HARLICK:** I just wanted to
17 say, happy International Women's Day to all these women --
18 beautiful, beautiful women who have had the courage to be
19 here today and to, you know, pull themselves together and
20 be loud, and clear, and strong through this really, really
21 hard event. And, you know, to all the women who are
22 watch -- potentially watching, and to these beautiful women
23 who have offered help, and it's just incredible. It's just
24 absolutely incredible. So, yeah, happy International
25 Women's Day everyone.

1 (APPLAUSE)

2 COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: Happy
3 International Women's Day to you too, you phenomenal woman.
4 I don't have questions. I -- I want to acknowledge you,
5 and I want to acknowledge your mom, Mary. And we're not
6 far from where she came from, North West River. Or, I
7 might be pointing in the wrong direction. It's over there.
8 And I'm really honoured to be in her territory, in your
9 territory with you.

10 The -- you are paving a road for other
11 little girls to become women, and to -- to take that torch
12 and run with it too. And I just want to -- (speaking
13 Native Language), I'm so -- I feel overwhelming pride and
14 admiration. So I'm going to leave it at that. I want your
15 words to be the last words. So (speaking Native Language).

16 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: There's some gifts
17 too.

18 COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: I have
19 presents for you.

20 --- Exhibits (code: P01P12P0201)

21 **Exhibit 1:** Folder of seven digital images displayed
22 during Amena Evans Harlick's public
23 testimony

24 **Exhibit 2:** CBC News article "Gauthier to serve 17 years
25 without parole" posted August 21, 2006 1:31

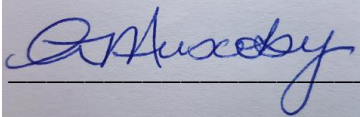
1 PM NT, last updated August 21, 2006 1:30 PM

2 NT (sic)

3 --- Upon adjourning at 10:36 a.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Amanda Muscoby, 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.



Amanda Muscoby

March 24, 2018