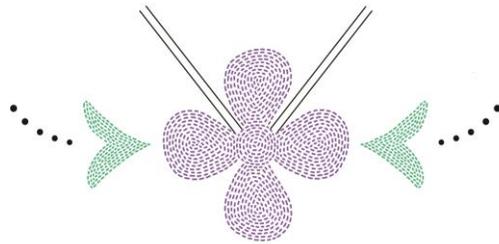


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**Wednesday March 7, 2018
Public Volume 51
Dionne Ward-Young,
In relation to Ann Maria Lucas**

**Heard by Commissioner Brian Eyolfson
Commission Counsel: Meredith Porter**

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Assembly of First Nations	Jeremy Kolodziej (Counsel)
Eastern Door Indigenous Women's Association	Non-appearance
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Naskapi Nation of Kawawachi- kamach	Non-appearance
Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network	Odelle Pike (Representative)
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1 Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 3:04

3 p.m.

4 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** Okay. Good afternoon,
5 Commissioner Eyolfson. I'm here with Dionne Ward-Young and
6 her husband, Alan (phonetic) Young, and we are going to be
7 hearing today about Dionne's mother, Ann Lucas.

8 Before we get started, though, I did want to
9 do two things. I wanted to introduce myself. I'm Meredith
10 Porter. I'm Commission counsel with the National Inquiry.
11 And I also wanted to ask the members of the audience to
12 just double-check their cellphones prior to getting started
13 to make sure that they're either on vibrate or silent prior
14 to the witness proceeding with her evidence. So thank you
15 very much, and I'll now pass the mic and ask them to
16 introduce themselves.

17 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** Hi. I'm Dionne
18 Ward-Young, here today to testify on behalf of my mother
19 who is no longer with us, cannot speak for herself.

20 **MR. ALAN YOUNG:** Hi. I'm Alan Young,
21 husband of Dionne.

22 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** Thank you. And just
23 before we get started, I will ask from the Registrar to
24 come and promise-in the witness.

25 **MR. REGISTRAR:** Okay. Hi, Dionne.

1 **DIONNE WARD-YOUNG, Affirmed:**

2 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** Thank you. And so I
3 will now ask Dionne to proceed with what she's come here to
4 talk about today.

5 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** Good afternoon,
6 everyone. In opening, I just want to give you a brief
7 background. I don't really feel a need to go into any
8 major detail. The information is out there on-line, but
9 just want to focus on the main point of the development of
10 the Inquiry.

11 My mother, Ann Marie Lucas, was murdered by
12 her estranged boyfriend on September 21st, 2003. Eight
13 blows to the head with a metal bar ended the life of a
14 wonderful mother, daughter, grandmother and friend. It
15 ended the esteemed career of a nursing assistant, personal
16 care worker of 37 years, and it took a dedicated worker
17 from a nursing home where she loved her job and was much
18 loved by her patients and her work family.

19 Today I really want to focus on the Parole
20 Board. There's a few things, but firstly the Parole Board.
21 Personally I feel there's a major breakdown in the Parole
22 Board decision-making tools and communication. When an
23 inmate has been charged with the heinous crime of murder,
24 the sentencing set by the judge in the Provincial Court
25 should be honoured. Also the parole file should include

1 pictures, which sometimes it does and, it's my
2 understanding, sometimes it doesn't. These pictures and
3 the summary should be taken more seriously. I feel the
4 Parole Board members are looking solely at the behaviours
5 of the inmate once incarcerated only. Institution
6 behaviour can be extremely deceiving. Anyone can behave
7 for short periods of time and conduct themselves in good
8 manner and can behave appropriately when the audience has
9 the ability to set them free. The psychiatric assessment
10 can also be falsely scored in a closed environment. Words
11 can fool even the most educated people. Tools such as the
12 Hare Psychopathy Checklist, HCR-20 assessing risk for
13 violence, SARA forms, SIR scale, MCMI, they're all
14 cookie-cutter assessment forms that have a broad spectrum
15 that can misinform the user.

16 After only 12 years of committing
17 premeditated murder, this inmate has hoodwinked the entire
18 parole system into allowing 48 ETAs for a one-year period,
19 also a two-day pass to travel from Nova Scotia to
20 Newfoundland for compassionate leave.

21 The Board has also sent me a report on
22 December 12th, 2015, outlining the decision process. I
23 wrote a victim statement to the Board, and this is how much
24 acknowledgement it received from my words, and I quote:

25 Victim impact statements describe the ongoing and

1 negative effects that your criminal offending has had
2 upon them.

3 That's it, no further discussion.

4 We need broader minds and sharper tools when
5 assessing these inmates. When a life is maliciously taken
6 from the world, a few church sessions, AA meetings and
7 community service does not change a hardened criminal. The
8 inmate was 64 at the time he committed murder and has
9 already spent 36 approximately of those years in and out of
10 incarceration before that. This is a career criminal.
11 Career criminals are being released and are not capable of
12 life changes at this point. Therefore, they recommit and
13 the crimes escalate each time, and obviously this time it
14 did. This person will certainly, I feel in my opinion,
15 re-offend to some degree, and it's on the Parole Board when
16 that happens.

17 In regard to her sentencing, my mother's
18 murderer was initially charged with first-degree murder.
19 This was reduced to second degree. As it was explained to
20 me by the RCMP corporal and Crown attorney, it was safer to
21 go with a guilty plea to second than a non-guilty guilty
22 plea to first. It also avoided a full-blown trial. There
23 was a week-long court process which neatly ended with him
24 walking out with his sunglasses on at a second-degree life
25 sentence, and I -- I use the life sentence term loosely.

1 Because -- because of the parole decisions, life sentences
2 are never completed. They never finish a life sentence.
3 And he is eligible for parole in 18 years. It's my
4 understanding that he's going to be out for parole in
5 September, and this is only after 15 years.

6 There should be no parole, no getting out.
7 You put a human life in the ground. Therefore, you should
8 be incarcerated for life. A life sentence for a life, very
9 simple.

10 My mother did have a restraining order
11 against him at the time. It's my opinion that restraining
12 orders do not work. There needs to be more stringent rules
13 and regulations regarding these. Written guidelines on
14 paper is not enough. Paper does not save lives. Anyone
15 caught disobeying an order should be incarcerated. This
16 will increase the mindset, in my opinion, that this is not
17 an acceptable behaviour. There are very little
18 repercussions these days to these -- these restraining
19 orders.

20 Right now regarding education and especially
21 once you're incarcerated, they have benefits of schooling.
22 Where am I? I know he has -- this inmate has had the same
23 schooling that I myself am paying thousands of dollars for.
24 I just don't understand why these programs, these monies
25 are being spent when an inmate is incarcerated like right

1 now being 70-plus years old. Where are you going with an
2 office degree? It doesn't make any sense to me. Why are
3 these monies being spent and not being better spent
4 on -- like there's tonnes of other places that these monies
5 can be spent. All these programs that are being offered
6 inside -- I know the point is to rehabilitate inmates so
7 they don't come out and re-offend. It's not -- in my
8 opinion that's not happening.

9 And for our younger generations, schools are
10 not focusing enough on mental health, culture and wellness
11 classes. Full-page arithmetic is not getting anyone any
12 further in life if they are sitting in a classroom all day
13 focused on how difficult it is, getting anxious, building
14 animosity and hate. Life skills need to be taught to our
15 youth so they grow up to be well-rounded well-structured
16 adults. Repercussions for decisions and actions and social
17 skills and healthy minds are topics that need to be
18 discussed and taught in schools.

19 We cannot change the past. We must focus on
20 the present and the future. Let's start with our youth in
21 ways of education, counselling, personal development,
22 social and financial aid.

23 I know there are a lot of families who had
24 some issues with police response and the judicial system.
25 We were fortunate we did not have that. In my mother's

1 case, we didn't have any trouble with response time or the
2 handling of the case. The RNC and RCMP were -- were great,
3 but families who do have trouble obtaining information,
4 updates, not being taken seriously and sometimes
5 unfortunately outright ignored, this is something that I
6 feel also needs to be addressed. Please listen to these
7 families closely. Families need more information on these
8 limited case files.

9 And back to the inmate benefits again, there
10 have been communications outlining education,
11 communications to me 'cause I am on the victim list. These
12 things are all for free. You know, like I said, someone
13 like myself, you know, we have to struggle and make ends
14 meet and pay for these education costs. We have youth.
15 You know, tuition costs are coming up, but these -- these
16 courses are being offered to inmates where those monies
17 could be restructured and reduce education costs for the
18 youth today.

19 I know in May of 2015, the inmate that
20 murdered my mother was approved 48 full-day passes and each
21 year after. It -- there's 48 full-day passes, like I said
22 earlier, to attend AA and church-related activities up to a
23 duration of eight hours a day including travel to various
24 locations, and an escort is also paid and approved to
25 attend, and I think it's my understanding that lately there

1 are some unescorted day passes that have been happening.

2 He's also been moved to a new facility.

3 It's still on the Dorchester grounds. It's -- it was
4 called Westmorland facility. It's a residential style of
5 living I think is what the paperwork told me it was called.
6 Since I think there's been some controversy and they've
7 changed the name back to Dorchester min., so minimum
8 security, so he was only ever in a medium, and I feel for
9 crime of that magnitude, it should be maximum security
10 only. There should be no -- don't take it as lightly. And
11 the elderly in our communities do not have accommodations
12 as high a standard and as good a care as this Westmorland
13 facility, in my understanding, has.

14 My darling mother, who worked her entire
15 life trying to make each day a delight for those under her
16 and most often did, she wished she could but could never
17 come up with the means to travel and see the world, while
18 on December 16th to the 18th of 2015, this inmate was
19 approved a 48-hour ETA for compassionate purposes to travel
20 from Dorchester, Nova Scotia, to Flat Bay, Newfoundland.

21 I seriously cannot believe that our
22 government will actually pay for a convict to travel along
23 with his escort province to province. Haven't we paid
24 enough, not to mention the nonmonetary price of her family
25 and friends losing her, the tax-paying dollars for his

1 accommodations, education, medical, food, shelter. No one
2 offered to pay for her funeral, but I bet you'll pay for
3 his.

4 Equal rights. It should not matter what
5 your ethnic background or social status. All Canadians
6 should be treated equal. Minority groups such as ourselves
7 are feeling like they are not being taken seriously when
8 reporting crimes and following up on convictions. In the
9 past, aboriginal citizens were schooled and treated
10 differently. This made the aboriginal natives hard, and
11 crime escalated. This seems like an ongoing issue.
12 Stereotypic behaviours are still rampant in our provinces
13 and that contain reserves. Financing, health care, medical
14 care, mental health and addictions, counselling and aid are
15 not as available on reserves as throughout the remainder of
16 the provinces. Educate and counsel our youth through our
17 communities so we're not raising criminals, substance
18 abusers, etc.

19 I really feel mental health is a big issue.
20 Mental health is an extremely misunderstood and complex
21 topic. It is on the rise, and education and aid is at an
22 utmost high in terms of need. Lack of resources,
23 counselling and aid is contributing to the uprise. Stress
24 due to the impact on survivors of murder victims, missing
25 family members and victims of abuse can extend beyond

1 primary survivors. Siblings, parents, grandparents,
2 cousins, step relations and friends can also be greatly
3 affected by the tragedies. It would be greatly beneficial
4 if there were more support groups, healing seminars and
5 meetings.

6 I think that's pretty much it. Unless you
7 needed to prompt me on anything else, I --

8 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** I do, yeah.

9 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** You do want to
10 prompt me?

11 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** So thank you very
12 much, and that was very informative, and my understanding
13 is is that those issues that you've spoken to all weave
14 throughout the circumstances preceding your mother's murder
15 and afterwards, and so some of the questions that I have I
16 think will probably help make some of those links as to why
17 you are obviously very so passionate about all of those
18 issues.

19 You mentioned that you were on a victims
20 list. Can you give a little bit more detail about what
21 that entails and some of your concerns around the way that
22 victims are treated who are on that list or who aren't on
23 that list?

24 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** Yes. Yes. Like she
25 said, I am on a victim list. There are some things I don't

1 feel that I need to know. I understand that he has some
2 confidentiality issues as well. Like you know, he has some
3 confidentiality rights, whether I might like that or not,
4 but being on the list, I'm informed of everything. I'm
5 informed if he goes on a day pass, the date, the vicinity
6 but not the confidential information, but I've also had
7 letters where there -- it's listed out what education he
8 has done. I mentioned that earlier. I wish there was a
9 way that we could filter exactly what information we're
10 privy to because I did call victim services at one point
11 and I asked them can you send less letters, spend less
12 money? I don't need to know all that stuff. You know,
13 just send me the important details like if he's released,
14 if he's on an ETA to Newfoundland or if he passes away.
15 Those are the only three things I want to know. I really
16 don't care if he has education or if he's going out on ETA,
17 if he's going to church or AA or any of that stuff. That
18 only aggravates me to get letters weekly. Like every week
19 there's letters coming to me, so that's a lot of time and
20 manpower, and -- and, you know, the cost of a letter, you
21 know, it's probably not much, but I would -- I wish that it
22 could be filtered, and when I did call victim services,
23 they said, No, you're on the list or you're off the list,
24 there's no way to just filter it. So I would like to see
25 it filtered for families 'cause, you know, getting multiple

1 letters is just salt in the wound type thing. Give us the
2 important pertinent information. That's all.

3 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** Okay. Thank you. And
4 just to get -- if it's all right to ask some of the
5 details, I guess, to -- to give a bit more context to what
6 exactly the circumstances again prior to your mother's
7 death and the actual night that she was killed. You had
8 mentioned that this individual who killed your mother had a
9 history of violence, that this wasn't the first time that
10 he had assaulted, well, your mother or -- and I was
11 wondering if you could just speak a little bit about, you
12 know, their -- their relationship prior to the time when
13 she was killed.

14 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** Well, to my
15 knowledge, they were together for seven years, and then
16 they were separated for about -- roughly a year. I don't
17 really remember the exact dates or details, but it wasn't
18 always a healthy relationship. It was a very controlling
19 relationship. She was always a very happy, outgoing
20 person, but during those seven years, I saw a decline in
21 her mental health. She was withdrawn, and she -- she
22 didn't -- just didn't act herself. She -- she kind of
23 didn't go places she probably would have liked to have
24 gone. It was more -- it wasn't -- she didn't directly say
25 she needed permission or anything, but I -- I could get

1 that vibe because I knew her more -- I knew her better than
2 anybody did, so, yeah, there was -- there was certain
3 things that, you know, I could pick up on.

4 So during that seven years, I did see a
5 decline in her -- her well-being, her happiness. When she
6 was -- when he -- when they were split up and he moved
7 away, it was after an assault on her where he tried to
8 strangle her in her apartment, and she did get away, and he
9 was charged, and there was an assault on another lady at
10 the same time. I'm not positive of the details of that,
11 but I know it was a neighbour of mine, and she had been
12 assaulted and needed some corrective surgery on her face.
13 In total for those two crimes, he served approximately
14 seven months.

15 So they were apart. She -- I saw a major
16 uprising in her happiness and her well-being, and then I
17 don't know what surrounded the circumstances of them
18 becoming -- talking again. I don't know; manipulation, I
19 can -- I can assume, but they did to my understanding start
20 seeing each other again, not living together or nothing
21 open. It was a hidden thing, and -- and then she did try
22 to end it with him again, and the -- the murder was the
23 result.

24 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** Okay. Thank you. And
25 you did mention that there had been a restraining order at

1 one point put into place, but there -- you didn't feel
2 there was very much protective value to it. Can you give
3 any more details about any efforts either on behalf
4 of -- of yourself as family or your mother or the RCMP
5 to -- to keep her safe or any -- any efforts made prior to
6 the night that she was killed?

7 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** While that
8 restraining order was in place, I know there were a couple
9 of incidences where she was in a certain area. I know the
10 restriction was for him not to be anywhere that -- where
11 she was present, that he should be the one to leave
12 or -- yeah, that he would be, but there was a few
13 incidences that she did report to the RCMP where he didn't
14 leave, and I know she did keep a couple of notes on those
15 things that we found after she was gone, found an envelope
16 with a few write-ups about those things, and we did submit
17 it. It didn't make any -- any impact then, of course, but
18 like there was a couple of incidences where she went for a
19 walk and he drove his car back and forth, and she was in a
20 restaurant, and he didn't leave so she felt she had to
21 leave, but -- so she reported it, but she was pretty much
22 told, well, we can't stop him from driving up and down a
23 road. You know, we can write it down. I don't know if
24 they even spoke to him about it or mentioned it to parole,
25 but -- 'cause she did -- it was the RCMP she contacted, and

1 they said, You know, we can't stop him from going places,
2 living life or whatever, but, yeah, I don't feel that
3 they're effective.

4 I wish I had a solution to make them more
5 effective. I know they've been looking at them lately,
6 looking more stringent at restraining orders, but I don't
7 know what the details -- you know, what that would entail,
8 but I know that for her, the few times she did report it,
9 there was -- they just told her there was nothing really
10 they could do.

11 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** Okay. Thank you. And
12 you had also mentioned that it's your belief that
13 his -- his release from custody is -- is forthcoming, is
14 imminent. How does that for you -- in your day-to-day how
15 does it make you feel? You've spoken a little bit about
16 that, and have you -- if he's released back into a
17 community, your community or nearby, does that -- how does
18 that impact you? Have you taken any measures?

19 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** Well, we do have an
20 enhanced security system installed in our home. I didn't
21 receive any direct threats at this point, but I do feel
22 that it could -- it could potentially be something that
23 could happen. I don't feel that inmates of crime of that
24 magnitude should be allowed back in the same community with
25 the family members and, you know, in the same place that

1 they -- you know, that they murdered someone. Like how can
2 you go back there? I feel he -- he would be brazen enough
3 to -- to want to come back to that area 'cause he does have
4 some family there as well. I don't know what the family
5 connections are, the dynamic is, but I just really strongly
6 feel that he should not be released into the same
7 community.

8 **MR. ALAN YOUNG:** Be released at all.

9 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** There's -- he
10 shouldn't be released at all, correct, not at all because,
11 you know, a life for a life type thing and I mean a life
12 sentence. I mean I'm -- I don't know how I feel on capital
13 punishment and it's not even an issue here, but a life
14 sentence at least for a life, and if they do get released
15 on this -- on parole, on the faint hope clause, I feel they
16 should be -- they should be away from the family, and it's
17 my understanding that if I want to have a restraining order
18 in place, it's on me to get it. It's not a blanket
19 statement when he's released that he has to stay away from
20 all the family. It's my understanding that each family
21 member has to apply.

22 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** Okay. Thank you very
23 much. Commissioner Eyolfson, do you have any comments or
24 questions for the witness?

25 **COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:** I don't have

1 any specific questions. I just wonder if you have any
2 recommendations in addition to the ones you've made that
3 you'd like to bring forward for the Inquiry as we're
4 carrying out our mandate of looking at, you know, ways
5 to -- what are the underlying factors that make women and
6 girls vulnerable to violence and what are things that can
7 increase safety and if you have anything related to that or
8 other things you would like to recommend that you want to
9 share.

10 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** I don't think I have
11 anything additional beyond what I did say. Maybe mental
12 health programs will create stronger women and even
13 stronger men that are grown up and could potentially do
14 these crimes. The Parole Board needs to be stronger, the
15 sentences need to be adhered to and just protection against
16 the families when these inmates are released.

17 **COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:** Thank you.

18 **MS. DIONNE WARD-YOUNG:** Okay.

19 **COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:** So if
20 there -- if there aren't any other questions or anything
21 else, we can adjourn, but before we do, I just want to
22 thank you very much for coming and sharing your -- your
23 story with us and your -- your thoughts and
24 recommendations, and we have a few small gifts for you on
25 behalf of the Inquiry for coming and sharing. In addition,

1 we have a couple of gifts as well from Newfoundland
2 Aboriginal Women's Network and from Pauktuutit that they've
3 provided to -- for us to share with people that are coming
4 and sharing with us, so I just want to give those to you
5 before you leave, okay? Thank you very much.

6 **MS. MEREDITH PORTER:** And with that, we're
7 adjourned, and I believe we're going to reconvene at 5:00
8 back in the hearing room. Thank you.

9 **--- Exhibits (code: P01P120103)**

10 **Exhibit 1:** Folder of three digital images displayed
11 during Dionne Ward-Young's public testimony

12 **---** Upon adjourning at 3:32 p.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Shawn Hurd, 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.

Shawn Hurd.

Shawn Hurd

March 25, 2018