National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Membertou First Nation
Unama’ki (Cape Breton Island), Nova Scotia

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Bonnie Polchies & Valentino Polchies, In relation to Beverly Polchies
Statement gathered by Daria Boyarchuk

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Witnesses: Bonnie Polchies & Valentino Polchies
Statement gatherer: Daria Boyarchuk

Testimony of Bonnie & Valentino Polchies. . . . . . . . . . 1
Reporter’s certification . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 54

List of documents provided by witnesses
1. Maine State Police unsolved homicides report (1 page)
2. Color photograph (1 original)
III

NOTE

The use of square brackets [ ] in this transcript indicates that amendments have been made to the certified transcript in order to replace information deemed inaudible or indecipherable by the original transcriptionist. Amendments were completed by listening to the source audio recording of the proceeding and were made by Bryana Bouchir, Public Inquiry Clerk with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ, July 31st 2018 at Vancouver, BC.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Good afternoon. This is Daria Boyarchuk speaking on behalf of the National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It is 11:38 in the morning and we’re currently in Membertou, Nova Scotia. I’m here in the presence of Valentino Polchies and Bonnie Polchies. They have come here to speak about their lost loved one. Valentino Polchies will be giving a statement about his sister, Beverly Polchies, and this is Bonnie’s sister-in-law. And we are also accompanied by our wonderful health support worker. Could you just --

MS. JADE HARPER: Jade Harper (ph).

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Thank you. And I would -- Valentino and Bonnie, could you please note let us know that you have voluntarily agreed to give this statement recorded on a video?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yes, I volunteered.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yes. Yes.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Thank you. So Valentino, Bonnie, you have come here from New Brunswick as I understand --

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yes.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: -- to share your story with us about your lost loved one. What would you like us to know about her?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: (Indiscernible)

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: This is Beverly Marie Polchies. This is my sister-in-law. She was born January 27th, 1959. And she was murdered on October 3rd, 1984. And to this day, we do not know the circumstances around her murder. The family has been left in the dark. We’ve never gotten answers. And so I just want to give you a little bit about what we know that happened that weekend.

We both reside on the Woodstock First Nation. And there’s a street behind our house, Valentino’s mother and father lived and Beverly lived on Woodstock First Nation. On Friday, October 12th, she left the community with three other friends to go down to old -- Old Town, Maine – Bangor, Maine for a weekend of partying. And she was 25 years old. She had left on Friday, and the next thing we know, on Sunday afternoon Val (ph) was out mowing the lawn, and the cops from the reserve came and asked Val some questions and asked us if we knew if his sister had any tattoos. And Val says, “Oh, yes. Yes.”

And then they proceeded to tell us, the reserve police, that they found a girl in Bangor, Maine that was left at the hospital and she had died, and they
think it might be Beverly. And so Val went in the house and called his brother Terry (ph). Terry lives in Bangor, Maine, so he was going to run down to the hospital and see if -- if he could see if that was Beverly or not. So his brother went down and probably about an hour later he called us back and he said, “Yes, it’s Beverly. I went and identified her body.”

So now when [Val and] I jumped in the car to go to the street behind our house and went to go tell his mother because his father passed away the year before so --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- so we went and told his mom, well, it was his step-mother actually. And ‘cause if -- Beverly’s his half-sister, that Beverly had been killed from what we understood that she was hit by a car. And so that she’s laying in morgue in hospital in Bangor. Well, she didn’t believe us. She was, you know, she was in shock. So she asked us to take her to Bangor so that she can go and see for herself if it was her daughter or not.

Well Val and I jumped in the car, took her down to Bangor, took -- two-hour drive. And I remember going into the morgue and pulled the drape down over her face and it was Beverly. And she was beat very badly. You could see the bruises. We could see pieces of her -- her head missing, dented in and all -- it was bloody. So we
left there, and we went to her -- his brother’s house and we decided -- the mother decided they want to bring her home. So he brought her -- we arranged for the funeral home to bring --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- her back to the Woodstock First Nation, so that we could have her body in the house. Her mother wanted her back home, so we got her body back home. And she laid to rest for three days in the -- in her house, her room, and then we took her to Houlton, Maine to be buried because that’s where her little brother was and that’s where family was. Because we were only ten minutes from the border, Val has family on both sides.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know? So -- and he grew up in Houlton, Maine, so that’s -- that’s family over there. So a lot of the family’s buried in Houlton, so we took her to Houlton, Maine. So as of this day, you know, all we were ever told is that she was hit by a car, thrown off a vehicle. Val left it in his brother’s hands. Terry lived right in Bangor that he would contact the police and make arrangements and find out what we could and what actually happened to her. And we never got any answers. And -- and his brother never got any answers. The family to this day does not know what happened to her.
Now, for years I’ve been trying to get Beverly’s name added to the Murdered and Missing Women. I’ve been an advocate for all my life for Native women. And because I was told she was killed in Maine, two hours from her home, that she’s not allowed to be included on the list. You know, I’ve contacted (indiscernible) [NWAC] the Native Women’s, I tried it over the years to get her recognized. And that’s why we made it a point to come to these hearings so that evidence may be had [Beverly’s name be added].

She was a Native woman. And -- and you -- you can’t forget her. So -- but as of today, we really don’t know what happened to her. And last fall --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- I got a call. His brother passed away in October. Come November, because his brother’s obituary happened to be in the main (indiscernible) [Bangor Daily News] in the news, the Attorney General’s office had contacted the family. They knew Valentino was the last surviving member that had stayed in Woodstock First Nation. Well, somewhere in the State of Maine they must have contacted the Woodstock First Nations. I happened to be their counsellor at the time and they tracked it down to me and the phone call stating, “We would like to have a picture of Beverly. You know, it’s
getting close to her anniversary of her date of death and we don’t have a picture for the unsolved murder.” So then I said, “What do you mean unsolved murders? You -- all we were ever told is you know, like, somebody threw her off a car or she was hit by a car and she was just dropped off.”

So I sent -- I sent the Attorney General’s office a picture. And then I went on to the website and I wanted to read into. This is the only information that we know about. Now it’s on -- well, it’s a unsolved homicide in the States.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Bonnie, I’m sorry to interrupt. Could you please state the date of this document and show it to the commissioners where --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Okay.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: -- exactly you found it?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: This -- this I printed off on October 25th, 2017. And it is from the Maine State government. It’s Maine State Police.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Thank you.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: And I wanted to read, because this is -- this is the only knowledge that we have. It said, “On October 13th, 1984, Beverly Polchies was picked up in Old Town by an Old Town Police department for being intoxicated. They contacted Indian Island Police
Department who picked her up and took her to the 
reservation. At approximately 8:30 p.m. she was dropped 
off on route 2 in Milford by Indian Island Police 
department. At approximately 10 p.m. a small white vehicle 
pulled into Eastern Maine Medical Centre ER with Beverly 
Polchies. The driver immediately left the emergency room 
area. Driver was described as a white male, slender, 5'6” 
to 5'8”, approximately 30 to 35 years of age. 
Approximately 50 -- 150 to 160 pounds. Medical Examiner 
office ruled the death a homicide.”

So when I read that --

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK**: M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES**: -- and Valentino and I 
had a discussion. We said, “How did it end up being that?”
You know we -- we kind of had an idea it was something 
going on because the people that she was with that weekend, 
her friends would never speak, would never say what 
happened that weekend.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK**: M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES**: They were all together 
at one point. When did they get separated? Valentino 
received phone calls in the middle of the night shortly 
after this would have happened and it saying, “Welcome to 
your sister’s death. Welcome to your sister’s death.” And 
yet we could never get answers, you know? And then it’s
just, we’ve never gotten answers of what happened, so you know, I had asked the Attorney General like, “I’d like to -- to meet -- meet with the detectives. Meet with anybody so Valentino and I would drive to anywheres to Bangor or (indiscernible), wherever so we could get answers to find out what happened.”

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yes.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: To this day we’ve never seen an autopsy report. We’ve never seen nothing. This is the only information that we’ve ever gotten. And it’s just, you know, Valentino’s the last surviving member of his family. To this date we don’t know what ever happened to her.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know? And it’s something we’d like to -- to find out before you know, he passes away, you know? We tried. I mean, it’s like, you know, we’re not -- we’re not getting any answers, but you know, she’s you know, just another dead Indian girl, you know? And that’s what happens to our women, right? And it’s, and it is -- it is just shitty. The whole -- I said -- like I said, I’ve been fighting for years to get her recognized on Murdered and Missing Women’s list, you know? I did receive a call about a month ago.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.
MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Maybe two months ago, from the -- one of the detectives from the Cold Case Squad in Bangor. And I talked on the phone for probably a good hour.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: It’s the first time that they actually contacted the family.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So this was very recently?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So it’s already been (indiscernible) [registered]?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Like, two -- two months ago, so you know, it was like, 1st of September.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: End of August. Yeah. And it’s -- it’s like, why are you contacting us now? You -- you -- you guys should have contacted us back then, you know? And we’ve left messages. We’ve never got a response from them. I said, “All we want to know is -- just sit down and tell us the -- you know, results of autopsy. Like, what happened to her?” You know? You know, ‘cause we have -- we have so many questions, you know?

She -- Beverly had a hard life. She -- she got pregnant young and she was in a very abusive
relationship. And because of this, her husband got the
two children that she had. They were young. She had
two children under the age of ten. And you know, he got
custody of them. So those -- those kids -- those kids are
a mess, you know? Not knowing what ever happened to their
mother, you know? Two of them are -- are -- have
intellectual difficulties and things, and not being able to
comprehend a lot of stuff, but, you know, they ask the
questions what ever happened to their mom. And -- and
nobody ever knows, you know? And -- and it’s a shame, you
know?

We lost contact with them for many years,
and we just found her only daughter probably about six
months ago. And we were hoping to meet up with her soon if
we had some answers, you know? Because I was going to be
asked, and you know, I’d like to give her some -- some
information. But right now, we can’t. You know, we have
nothing to tell her children, you know? And you know,
that’s something that we’re going to have to face in the
future here ‘cause we promised one of his -- one -- her --
her daughter that we would come up and see her.

But I know we’re going to be asked, you
know? We can’t share the knowledge that we have about
what her mother was like, but you know, her mother was
going through some stuff to try and get out of that
situation, domestic violence and stuff. And it was hard for her, you know? But then he ends up getting custody of them which is --

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** -- so heaven knows what those kids face, you know? So we feel guilty about that too, right? So there’s -- there’s a lot of guilt.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So you said that you feel guilt.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** M’hm.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay. Could you elaborate on it?

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Well, the biggest guilt I think we feel is that we never found out what happened to her. We didn’t fight hard enough. We left it to you know, Val’s brother to try and you know, find out the answers. And -- and because of the Old Town Police, that reserve down there, Val’s sister-in-law has family there. So there was something going on with his brother’s wife. And I don’t know if it was her family members were involved, but they should not have picked her up and dropped her off on the highway. Because that’s you know, that’s where you know, we thought she got hit by a car or whatever had happened.

You know, why do we [you] dump our Native
women out on the streets? You know, it’s -- it just doesn’t matter where -- where it is. And it’s -- it’s a fact a lot of our -- our women are found like this, you know? And I know it’s just -- I -- I feel guilty because we didn’t fight hard enough and dig. I know we had -- we had family, we had kids. Val was working. You know, there’s a lot of things going on in our lives and it’s -- we just didn’t get no answers. Like I feel guilty that we didn’t work hard enough to get this solved, you know? Mind it was two hours away from our home. But that’s -- that’s a big guilt for me.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm. (Indiscernible) [Valentino] would you like to share your, exploring your memories about your sister?

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** Basically I -- all the information that she didn’t mention this -- why I received from this (Indiscernible) [whole incident]. You know, all these questions that we -- I -- I mentioned earlier like about -- after this deal from [I’ve carried this guilt for] the last 33 years. And why wouldn’t we -- I’m her brother, why wasn’t I there to -- to uncover what had happened and when, and all the stuff like that?

And I’ve been (indiscernible) [carrying this guilt around] ever since she had passed, you know? And it -- it’s hard. I don’t want to go to grave with this guilt
in my -- and after Terry had known this, [I have to carry] and so it -- money is not a help in reference to me to come this far enough. Then we would go find out what’s really happened to her, you know? Or told us in Bangor what -- and no autopsy report. No police report, no nothing you know? Why am I just (indiscernible) [forget about it] and -- and my (indiscernible) [my impression was] as well?

We had talked to him on the phone. Whether she got him on the phone. I thought, what [they gonna do] Bonnie, just say hey look] the hell are you (indiscernible), don’t go back to (indiscernible) [Bonnie Polchies]. Just let it slide and put it behind us, to which it won’t come up again (indiscernible). [Just let it go, let it ride]. Just (indiscernible) [another Indian] the lady’s gone. Just forget about her. So just -- just let it go, you know? Tell them don’t pressure [push it]. Just tell them, sir you know, (indiscernible) or whatever, (indiscernible) [let it die] that was my thoughts anyway, that she’s (indiscernible) [an Indian girl]. You know, she’s -- she’s gone, but just let her (indiscernible). Don’t forget the (indiscernible). It’ll go away. That -- that was my father [thought] in the whole thing, you know?

And -- and like I say, (indiscernible) [along with the] guilt that’s -- that’s -- that’s my -- my -- my comment and that was [in reference] to what happened.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: And I said (indiscernible) together all the hearings that never heard you. That gives me (indiscernible) besides [more guilt because] they -- they’re family going to -- going after whatever they (indiscernible) you know, same thing. And that’s (indiscernible) knows what -- what (indiscernible) [where was I] you know?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Were you close with your sister?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Pardon?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Were you close with your sister?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Quite close, yeah. Yeah. I was closer than my -- my younger [older] brother, yeah. It was --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: And when was the last time you saw her?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: That week was the -- the party and whatever they went, was the last week I seen her. When [They] lived in (indiscernible) [back of us] where our -- where our house was, we had one street up -- and (indiscernible) [I’d go up every now and then and visit her] with her mother -- rest (indiscernible) [my stepmother] her mother and her, but we weren’t strangers.
We -- we -- we met of course --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- family you know?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: I mean, we had dinners together and stuff like that, eh?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Even if they don’t see each other. How many times you tried to go up there and get in the middle of her and her husband.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: But she would always stick up for her husband.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yeah.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know? But that’s -- that’s -- that’s domestic violence, right?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So in the time of -- of this murder, was she living with her apartment -- with her husband?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: No, they were apart.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: They were apart?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yeah.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: She lived in - she lived in (indiscernible) [Maine] there.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: And then (indiscernible) [they were separated she moved back] she goes back towards that reserve, you know? And she kind of was estranged from her husband I guess there.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: I might -- I’m not saying, like, he should have been part of this, but I -- I erased him out completely because a few times I lived in (indiscernible) for a short period. Then she’d come up, she would climb [come] up there [to] [m’y] brother’s (indiscernible) [office] she -- she was the head officer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in -- in -- in Maine. And I said (indiscernible) him? She (indiscernible) all bruised and pregnant and black eye and busted lip and that was from him. ‘Cause then me and my buddy [brother] finally decided we should teach him a lesson, you know? (indiscernible) [he wants to be roughing up women, but then -- (indiscernible) [Beverly got wind of it] when I was young (indiscernible) [leave him alone, leave him alone]. It -- it’s not his fault, it’s not his [my] fault. You kind of get the blame, you know that? [She kinda took the blame].

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: For him kicking the
hell out of her (indiscernible). She [So we] just backed off and (indiscernible) [we seen them once] after that and we didn’t want [give him a warning, if we hear anything more] (indiscernible) about this. [Forget about it, his name was [M.], forget about it [M.], you’re warned.] She didn’t want anything with [M.]. “Do you know about [M.]?” “No.” I says, “You know me.” (indiscernible) no -- no -- no -- no talking about, just [go] called -- (indiscernible). And that’s the last contact I had with her husband] at the time. But that was my -- my -- my whole thing I referenced to getting (indiscernible) [information on Beverly] ‘cause I thought she met him. My brother’s wife, she had relatives on the (indiscernible) [Old Town] police force.

And I don’t know, maybe I -- maybe I (indiscernible) [that hindered] my brother. Go a little bit [Don’t go any] further, but I don’t know, shouldn’t be (indiscernible). See my brother [and his wife] knows as much as (indiscernible) [don’t say a word about it cuz, whatever her name was, or their name was]. That’s -- (indiscernible) was there family was that had come up. So this -- that [let it die] type of thing. So I don’t know. I don’t know where it went from there, you know? I’m not sure (indiscernible) She was a good lady. She used to babysit for me and my (indiscernible). I was married too
before Bonnie. She’d come babysit for us all the time. We
thought it was (indiscernible) things like that had -- had
no time with him.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So then -- then when
this happened, she -- she was living as a -- she was a
single mom living with her children, correct?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: No, she didn’t have
her children with her. No.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: No. Something
happened in -- in (indiscernible) where her and her husband
-- I don’t know what happened there.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: He wouldn’t -- she
wanted to leave, and she wasn’t allowed to take the
children.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: So --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So when they separated
she --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: They --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: -- she already did not
have custody of -- of her children?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: No. No.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: All right.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: No, it wasn’t --
Mr. Valentino Polchies: Custody (indiscernible). (Indiscernible) [to] her husband’s mother, I just (indiscernible) [I guess relatives yeah].

Ms. Bonnie Polchies: Yeah. Yeah. ‘Cause when she first left, she was -- she left and she wasn’t allowed to take the kids, so she came to her mother and father’s house. And --

Mr. Valentino Polchies: Yeah.

Ms. Bonnie Polchies: -- and then she was trying to fight for custody.

Ms. Daria Boyarchuk: M’hm.

Ms. Bonnie Polchies: But for some reason she didn’t get it.

Mr. Valentino Polchies: (Indiscernible) [on two occasions] the -- the father, I guess the -- his mother had custody of the children. His mother had the custody --

Ms. Daria Boyarchuk: M’hm.

Mr. Valentino Polchies: -- and she’s [call and say] (indiscernible). Well, she -- you know, the [if you want to see] kids, you know? You need to -- (indiscernible) [we’ll meet you at McDonald’s, we’ll meet you at somewhere] some friend that give her the chance to (indiscernible) [meet with them and talk with them and] so on and so forth. (Indiscernible) too crazy to that if [on two occasions that] I recall, and then after that they [we]
don’t know where they went there.

   MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: That one -- it was

back then too, she -- when she first left, she had the kids
with her.

   MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: No, she didn’t.

   MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: And then she took them
over to visit their father.

   MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

   MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: And back then, people
didn’t have custody of their kids, right? Mothers and
fathers automatically --

   MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: (Indiscernible)

   MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- assumed ‘cause
you’re on the birth certificate that you’re both -- and it
just got to the point where he wouldn’t let her take the
kids, leave. He says, “No. You leave.” Right? And it’s
like, and there’s people out there, [if you go to the]
police, ‘cause we know with her -- with her daughter we had
the same thing. You have to go to court and get custody of
your own kids.

   MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm. M’hm.

   MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know? And back
then this was in the 80s when all this started --

   MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: M’hm.

   MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- started in. [with
her]. So she needed to get herself well. She would get
over the domestic violence part before she could --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- apply to get her
kids. And she was willing to work --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- on that.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So when she was living
alone, Bonnie, do you know, have you spoken to her, did she
ever talk about what she was doing? What like, do you know
anything about the -- if like, she was working at that time
or?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: She wasn’t working at the time when she moved back to Woodstock First Nation.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: It was -- it was
cleaning up her -- cleaning up her act.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Like, she -- as she
would call it. She did, she found another man that she was
dating.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: She tried to move on
with her life, and in fact he was one of the ones that they
went away on that weekend. The -- it was -- it was her
boyfriend, and another couple from the community.

    MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

    MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Another man and another woman were going to go down 'cause they had relatives out Indian Island, go down there and party for the weekend. But she moved on with her life. And she [did] didn't have another -- she had a boyfriend.

    MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

    MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: And he was -- he was going that weekend.

    MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. So do you know if she was -- if it was his -- her boyfriend, sorry, and that couple on the night when it happened?

    MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: You can’t really say they were together. They went down together, [to Bangor, Maine, went to do their partying but] but then when we went to --

    MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

    MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- (indiscernible).

    MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

    MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: You can’t actually say that so and so here and so and so --

    MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Right.

    MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- we don’t -- we don’t have that information from the police or nothing.
There’s no report.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** But they all left together.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** All four of them left --

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** But all four.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** -- from the Woodstock First Nation.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** (Indiscernible) to dump her, just (indiscernible).

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** They never --

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** -- they never talked about what happened that night.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay. And --

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** That’s because they were (indiscernible). [They could never face us].

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** So whether they knew something or how [not] they all died around the [early] age. There’s none of them left. So --

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm. And Bonnie, I think you mentioned earlier that after -- after the incident that someone was calling you and telling you, “Go,
go find out what happened. Go find out what happened.”

Who was it?

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Val would receive phone calls --

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** Yeah.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** -- in the middle of the night.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Yeah.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** Yeah.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay. And who -- who would this phone calls come from?

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** The -- they would be saying -- that time ([indiscernible] [they didn’t have] call --

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Ideas. [ID, yes].

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** -- ([indiscernible]) Val yeah. “I know what happened to your sister, so I’d check it out if I was you.”

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** And she was inebriated, that girl [quite drunk], whatever. But there was a female. When I check it all out it doesn’t say nothing. Who is it for? Well, ([indiscernible]) and she just hung up.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Oh, okay.
MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: This happened on two maybe three occasions that we get a call like that. And I get a call like that.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: It was always 2 or 3 o’clock in the morning.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yeah.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. So it could be her friends, it could be, you can’t tell?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Hmmm, yeah. We don’t know.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yeah, the -- the -- in my mind she was with two -- two guys and this other lady, right?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: The men must have been her -- with her, and I can’t really say for certain but, but I assumed at the time.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: And these phone calls, did they continue for a -- or a long time? Did they stop (indiscernible)?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: No, she (indiscernible). Tonight?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.
MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Maybe a week later.
No -- no, we got no (indiscernible).

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Now we do. And the same thing (indiscernible) I -- I always thought -- and I always thought that (indiscernible) with helping [keep checking it out what’s happened to] your sister. But not, I -- I need to know more (indiscernible) [What do you mean] you know? Not prove that it happened. [They hung up you know].

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: And we pretty much --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: (Indiscernible)

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- yeah, then it was pretty much the same phone call would come – come a month later. Two, three months later. Just out of the blue. Just sitting there and watching T.V. and the phone rings. Yeah, I would say, and then shut T.V. off and (indiscernible) things on silent, you know?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Next day (indiscernible) I didn’t, as this went on, someone from the community called and, “Oh, I’ve seen your sister last night.” “Oh, you seen my sister?” “Yeah. She’s on
that -- the -- the who is on the T.V.?" I says, "Oh,
that’s all [unsolved] mystery. That’s all [unsolved]--"

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Oh.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: “-- that’s all
[unsolved] murders or something like that.” He goes,
“(Indiscernible) with.” I say, “Yeah. It was last night
early, about 10 o’clock,” (indiscernible) and all that
stuff. If I was (indiscernible) find out, eh? And I don’t
know if that’s where she (indiscernible). This message we
received taking that (indiscernible) [came from that
broadcast] and certainly (indiscernible).

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: You know? There
was -- was on there, (indiscernible) the show goes on.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Did you ever try to
contact authorities? Tried to find out what happened to
her? I know that Bonnie was saying that you were an
advocate, you are an advocate for women. What kind of plan
-- efforts have you done to make sure to -- to find
something, what happened to her?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: It -- just calls to
Maine State Police and things like that, but they never,
ever retuned your call. Never. And like I said, I know
several times we felt [called] we never got -- oh, we’ll
get somebody to call you back.
MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yeah.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Nobody ever calls you back. And it’s just you know, on going you know?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Give us the phone (indiscernible).

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah. It’s just -- in the end we -- we -- we had four kids ourselves. We -- we just couldn’t just jump in the car and go down and -- and see, it’s just nobody ever returned your calls. You know, it’s just -- like I said, I always felt like [you know, just another dead Indian woman] they’re not just about identity (indiscernible) failed.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: They don’t care. They don’t. You know, one last person I have to worry about.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: With (indiscernible) [The way] I thought too at that time as -- the -- they’ll (indiscernible), just leave it all. Some -- (indiscernible) detectives, let it go. Just don’t respond, just let it go, and it will go away. We won’t have to worry about it no more. She’s gone, she’s dead, she’s been dead [an Indian] so forget about it. That was my thoughts and this day, still my thoughts --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- as of today.
MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah. Because I mean, the last phone call we got was two months ago, and a detective, it’s the first time he’s ever talked to a family. He said, (indiscernible) and I said, “You know, we’ll come down there,” and nobody really knows [all we really want to know is] the autopsy, how did it go from her being hit by a car or flying off a car to unsolved murder? I said, “We want to meet with you. With Attorney General, meet with anybody down there who gets an answer [to get some answers].” You know, and, “Yeah. I’ll get back to you. Give me a week or two.” Well it’s been two months. And still nothing.

So it’s like -- but I’ve reached out to the Family Information (indiscernible) [Liaison] Unit and they signed the papers, keep sending papers about (indiscernible) to get (indiscernible) free access. [consent papers Val and I signed with Stephanie Francis] And I’m hoping maybe some pressure from that department, you know, can get us a meeting. The -- the big things out there.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: If you think that I got my dear [can get our government here in] Canada to --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- try and postpone [correspond back and forth] (indiscernible) to that -- that
(indiscernible) [government over there, whether it’s a]
municipality [or whatever it is] (indiscernible) you know?
[What’s going on there with] This case is 33 years old,
going nowhere. There’s nothing. [Where are you going with
it, what happened?]

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: We’ve
(indiscernible) families are concerned. Nothing. I don’t
know (indiscernible) [she’s working on that now] right now.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: So okay, you --
you’re (indiscernible).

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: They can help us with
the --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: What do you think the
commission -- and how do you hope the commission to help
you? What would you like to see the commission do?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: I’d like to see the
commission come up with recommendations and trying to fix
the justice system, because it’s severely broken.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Not just -- and
work with other nations. Like, you know, the United States
(indiscernible) where our people are, you know?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Hmmm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: And if they have a
killed First Nation women in Indonesia that we don’t know about what -- you know, let’s all start working together to get this thing solved. Like, (indiscernible) [get to the root of it] and so hope that they’ll [hopefully it won’t] continue or --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Right. ‘Cause I consider -- we have to follow legislation in place. We have (indiscernible) [to live under the] Indian Act. I’ve lived my whole life under the Indian Act. We are wards of the government. Well, when one of our girls goes missing, why aren’t they doing something to find out what’s going on? Right? That’s what this legislation is, we’re to be protected. From the time we are born and the time we die, they control all aspect of our life.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Right? But why is it when our -- our women are missing that we have to go through -- jump through hoops, go through all the stuff? Our girls are being murdered, and nobody seems to care. I just hope that they can make some recommendations and -- and get -- get things changed. Like, our -- our -- our people you know, are suffered so much, you know?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: And it’s -- I just -- I have faith. I have -- like I said, I’ve been wanting to
advocate for this National Inquiry for three [many] years, right? I’m just hoping that they have recommendations and it’s acted on. Right? I mean, it’s -- it’s these barriers that are up, you know? And -- and the justice, and -- and the way police handle things, and you know what I mean? And cultural sensitivity is a huge issue. Like, cultural competency should be a must for all police forces and you know, there’s so much that can be done, you know?

That is just you know, this mentality, you know, the -- that some people still continue, “Oh, it’s just another dead of Indian girl.” Like, you know? You know, that’s somebody’s -- somebody’s daughter, that’s somebody’s sister that you have got [somebody’s Auntie], you know? It’s -- it’s all -- it’s all the relatives. But we need to start treating people with respect. And -- and the way we’re having to be -- have to handle the court systems and -- and you know, the -- and you know, I like what happens here in Nova Scotia, where they do have the court support workers. Every province should have that.

You know, there shouldn’t be a Native person going into that court room without having a support person. And that I’d love to see in every province and territory. Our people should not be going into these court rooms, into these justice’s that aren’t even ours, but we have to face, right? In this. And I’d just like to see some changes in
there, you know? There -- there’s a lot that needs to be done. I have this [just] hope that the recommendations that come down here are enacted on, you know? I -- I have a little bit of faith in the Liberal government, you know?

Justin Trudeau put down -- I was at the AFN meetings when he made the statement of there will be a National Inquiry.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** I cried. You know? I cried. ‘Cause our women and girls deserve that. We are [and our] two-spirited people. We only have this and we’re [we have missing men] out there, and boys can’t be left out either, you know? I just hope that you know, the -- and -- and people are treated with respect with like I said, with these processes. And sure, you don’t have to tell families all what’s going on on the file, but keep them up to date. Keep them aware, you know? That they want -- our people that are been murdered or missing, validate it, right? Because they’re not -- we’re not -- we’re not treated as equal.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** You know, and I just hope that through all the years [hearings], and everything going through, the recommendations that come down are -- are enacted. That they listen to families, and try to fix
the wrongs that we face for years.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** What about you on a personal level would you like the commission to help you with?

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** I personally -- I’ve had my struggles too. You know? I’ve -- my father went to residential school. (Indiscernible) [and we] all know what the horrors of that was like, but when my father left residential school, he went straight into the Canadian Forces. And he met my mom and they ended up having six kids. Well, he got out of the Armed Forces anyway to (indiscernible) [and went to the States] as most Native people on the Atlantic coast. We all go together to either Boston or somewhere for work.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** You know? So we -- we had gone down to -- to Connecticut for a while, and my father was very abusive, you know? And he’d -- my mother got to the point she said and like, -- she was tired of it; that she left. She went out for a walk [milk] one night and never came back. So here’s my father sitting with six kids. He says, “I’ve got to go back home to New Brunswick to my reserve where I have support.” So he took us six kids to Woodstock First Nation. Once that’s -- I was nine years old when I first even knew I was Native. You know, I
Bonnie & Valention Polchies
(Beverly Polchies)

didn’t even know that I was Native, because he didn’t, you
know, he didn’t know -- he didn’t want us to learn our
culture. Didn’t want us to learn our language.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know? He was not
proud of who he was. But he never spoke of the residential
school. Never. Yeah. He brought us down to Shubi (ph)
one year, and he took us there to the school and said,
“This is where they take the really [you when you are]
bad.” So you keep back [acting], and I was the one that
was always the trouble maker of the kids. I was the one,
because I just -- I was a fighter. I always was.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: He said, “This is
where you’re going to end up.” Looks at me, “Okay. No big
deal.” I didn’t even know about it.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Well, I was
(indiscernible) then [I didn’t know what it was or
anything], right? Like I said, I was nine years old. And
my mother ended up sneaking up from Connecticut when my
father was in the hospital and she took two of the babies.
So she said, “I couldn’t take on [all] six of you. I could
only take two of you,” so the four oldest ones I said
(indiscernible) [my siblings, there was]. Seven, eight,
nine and ten years old in the hospital (indiscernible) [us
four stayed with] my father. The next thing you know --
“You know how abusive he is and stuff, and you’d leave your
kids behind though?”

I was angry at her for a long time, you
know? But I took a brunt, a lot of brunt of -- of the
abuse from him because I was the one that was the fighter
[defiant]. I was the one that you know, he always said
that I was a milkman’s daughter. I know why though ‘cause
I looked a little bit different than my other
(indiscernible) maybe it’s true, I don’t know, but I was
the one that was always acting up, you know? He said, “You
can’t fight city hall.” I heard it all my life, “You can’t
fight city hall.” Yeah. ‘Cause I said, “How -- you know,
how can being on reserve life be like this?” You know, so
much abuse going on. I was molested on that reserve, you
know?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: I -- I would damn near
break sometimes [was damn near raped one time]. I told my
father, I said, “You know your best friend tried to rape
me? I was 14 years old.” “My friend wouldn’t do that.”
You know, he didn’t believe me. So I just continued and
oh, I tried -- tried to sneak into the language class and I
would be beat. I would try to make baskets,
(indiscernible) baskets. Bring them home, I’m so proud. We were [he would burn them] you know, he said, “You don’t need to -- you don’t need to know your culture.” That’s where we began [only going to bring you down].

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So do you think this sort of behavior, this sort of treatment and denial of Indian culture was an effect of residential school (indiscernible)?

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Oh, I know it was. I know it was. Because when I was 15, my older sister had gotten married.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** And my grandmother said, “Come on, we have to pack up her stuff.” I says, “Why?” I said, “Yeah. She getting married, but I didn’t think she’s moving out.” She says, “No. She’s no longer Native.” I said, “What do you mean she’s no longer Native?” “She married a non-Native guy so she doesn’t --”

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** “-- have no more Native in her.” I said, “What?” And that’s when I first found out [about the Indian Act] I said, “That’s not right.” And I -- I know how (indiscernible) [I hollered at] my father I said, “What is this Indian Act and why --
why do we have to follow it?” And you know, and I -- and I said, “That’s it.” And I had taken enough abuse. I have taken enough of everything built up that I left home. I quit school. I left home. You know, I was so (indiscernible) [sofa surfing] and I was out on the street for two years. You know, of all faces of the stuff that you had to do for a place to sleep, you know?

I drank. [but I never used drugs] And like, everybody’s drunk. But I -- you know, I knew that alcohol was for me -- that was to get me by. But -- and then I said you know, I thought my father had became a bad drunk. You don’t need to work hard. No. This is the way it is and you can’t change the facts. You know, I said, “It’s not right.”

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know, and I see in my community what Native women were treated, but -- and I said, “This is not right.” You know, and it’s like -- so that’s two years of going through different communities and seeing different things and out on the streets and stuff. And it was like, wow. And that -- and ‘til you know, to this day I continue to fight where we can [I need to] fight, you know? And it’s like, you know -- but I ended up coming back to the reserve.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.
MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: And then I met this guy. And him and I started dating. I was 18 and he’s been my rock. He’s gotten me through a lot. And without him, I probably would be dead. I know I would have. So -- so that’s when I learned the lesson about what the Indian Act is and all this legislation that we as Native people have to follow.

I know the struggles of -- of some of the women that have gone through, and in a moment, you know, we’ve all faced our demons. But with this rock beside me I can come over, go through a lot. He’s been there. And he is the most supportive Native man I’ve ever -- my father didn’t want me marrying a Native man. He would push me, “You can’t marry a Native. The whole turning down [They’ll only bring you down] Native isn’t a [isn’t] good…” But I didn’t know this story until he had passed away and my aunt had told me.

They were at the Shubenacadie residential school together. And she told me his struggles and what he went through. So I don’t blame him. I blame the system, right? And it’s -- it took me a long time, because I hated my father ‘cause he was so abusive. I hated my mother for leaving us in that situation. But it took me a long time to get over that. And like I said, the fact [with Val] he’s been hearing me [there and] like I said, I said “Val I
Statement - Public
Bonnie & Valention Polchies
(Beverly Polchies)

-- I’ve got to go protest. That this woman is fighting for a house. She’s got nowhere to live." Val will be right there to support me.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: The 35 years we’ve been married and I -- I went to a lot of protests. He -- he went with me sometimes. But I mean, he’s been there, and he knows that I’m not doing this for me, you know? I’m doing this to help other women. To me that’s how I help myself. So that’s something that I’ve had that -- feel what I need to do. And that can put (indiscernible) [continue doing], you know? And it’s like, when we left the community for a little while in 1999 our -- our youngest child was suicidal. And I said, “The system is not going to take our child. We need to find a school or he’s going toward [where he’s going to learn]...” ‘cause I know what the school systems were like. I had a hard time in school too. And I said, “They’re not going to take our child.”

So we ended up coming to Halifax for 13 years to get him educated, you know? And it was that school -- that school of you know [the best move, best move for him, now we have a] (indiscernible) had a son that we’re so proud of. He’s our big teddy bear.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: M’hm.
MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: But he’s a strong Native man with the biggest heart like his dad. He has -- he’s -- when we decided -- Val retired in 2012 I said, “It’s time to go back home.” Our son’s graduated, and I said, “You know, it’s time to go back home. We need to go back home.” And I said, “That’s where our people…” well, when we got back home it was like we were outsiders, you know? ‘Cause we went and got educated. We went and got you know, the community felt like, I mean it’s -- it’s so much mixed community. You know, I mean the language is gone. You know, there’s a few (indiscernible) [handful of] speakers left. There’s no -- there’s no culture. There’s nothing. No, and so you know, I was upset. And I told Val, “Like, I’m really upset.” You know, we had a house there. But it -- it got contaminated with sewage. Chief and counsel wouldn’t fix it.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know? So we -- because I’ve been a strong native woman, the women in my community -- Chief of Counsel had something against us most of my life because I would only stand up and challenge him. “We can’t treat women like that,” you know? And we’ve always been on the outs with the politicians in our
community, you know? And when I got back, and I said, “You know, I’m really upset that our kids don’t have the language and culture, especially if the only middle school we have in our community is the head start. The daycare, the pre-school.”

So I told Val, I said, “You know what? That building wasn’t set aside, designated a specific building. We need a house.” So we went and occupied the -- the head start, the daycare.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Not only because we wanted a house, but because it was the [there was no] language and culture there. So I said, “I’m not leaving that -- I want them to learn their language and culture and that in preschool,” you know? We got two to five-year olds, they should be proud of who they are, you know? Like, not whitewashed. I said, “Why don’t you worry he’s [my whole community’s] whitewashed?” You know, and I -- and Val really didn’t want to do it, but he stood behind me and they [we] went in. It took a court injunction five days later they kick us out, but we proved the point.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** We had mentioned it, [eventually] we got our house. And there’s now language and culture in there. And you know, I’m head [I ran] for
counsel and I’ve -- had gotten in. And I made sure that
those kids were learning the (indiscernible) culture, you
know? And it’s like, regardless of whatever I decided to
do (indiscernible) [Val was there. I said: “Val, I’m
blocking the highway] and now I’m (indiscernible) the
island. He [They] took my tax card away.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: You know, my status
card. He said -- let me, sometimes he wouldn’t go with me,
but that’s okay. He supported me and gave me
(indiscernible) [by being there with] the kids. So you’ve
[we’ve] done some crazy things over the years.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: It’s so nice that
(indiscernible) how long have you guys been together.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: 35 years, but also
that you’ve been there for each other.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Supported each other.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah. Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: To me, this whole
thing is that there’s -- there’s no (indiscernible) in this
world have been travelled off wherever [with Aboriginal and
Indigenous women being killed off or whatever--]

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.
Statement - Public
Bonnie & Valention Polchies
(Beverly Polchies)

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- to me myself, my own personal thought is, it all boils down to racism. That’s the bottom line for me then you know?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: ‘Cause we’re finally getting new stuff right now [up where we live] the town, it’s a big Bible belt from one county to --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- the three other [hundred] kilometres. It’s different from all that earlier in this world.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: And it’s very racist. And we’re all prejudice. And there’s no community, yeah. I think that’s -- that’s the whole [Episcopal] church, Catholic church -- all these different churches and it’s a Bible belt. And oh yeah, I’ve (indiscernible) [Love your neighbours, love yourself]. But I see it straight up like I said, [I used to go to church I’ll -- I’ll (indiscernible) the [was raised a] Catholic, but I never practised my mom and dad because the Native church, no you should not give him – God bless him and all that. (Indiscernible) listens to religious organization.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Yeah. Kind of
[backed away] (indiscernible), and how do we -- I -- I don’t even know how to do that, but a lot of culture, that was (indiscernible). I still -- and if I didn’t know about (indiscernible) and that (indiscernible). I never -- (indiscernible). It’s not like I ever did though. And that’s my -- my bottom line for --

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** -- if you wanted to leave the men as (indiscernible). (Indiscernible) men (indiscernible) that’s growing up with this murdered people, whatever. I’d like to hear what they did, [I was at a hearing the other day] the guy I mentioned there. Those people with her, [that are] killing off our women.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Yeah.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** What the hell? I’m not (indiscernible). I’m -- I’m (indiscernible) chopped somebody’s neck (indiscernible) [she only weighs 100 pounds]. And this television, I -- I have to agree with what (indiscernible) said the other day, it’s (indiscernible) [cowardly] very (indiscernible) [cowardly]. But -- and myself, that’s happened (indiscernible)[kinda shrug things off, kinda non-chalantly]. But -- but out [I was] in the military too, but I -- I would (indiscernible) [worked with German people, I worked with]. African Canadians, Americans whatever you call them. And every
nationality, but I never once was prejudice to them
(indiscernible) that --

**MS. DARIO BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** -- blah, blah, blah, blah. Not (indiscernible) there, but I’m never, never. I said, and -- and Indians, it had a lot of
Indians. I know a lot of Italians I don’t like, but you know, all the -- they’re all the same. No, I don’t pay
(indiscernible) everybody is (indiscernible) as I. A happy world. (Indiscernible) [Let’s all get along together, let’s all sit at a table and] and it’s all (indiscernible) we’d break bread together. So we went -- you’re from
Germany, you’re from France, you’re from -- and that’s all fine and dandy. That’s (indiscernible) [chit chat, you know]. That’s the kind of person I am though.

**MS. DARIO BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** And all my friend (indiscernible) ahead, that’s racism. That doesn’t -- this doesn’t -- the system had nothing to do with racism, but this -- my bottom line is racism. And like this year, last year, after it’s -- Native status, her -- her sister’s
(indiscernible). It’s not -- and that’s a (indiscernible). (indiscernible) [Once you marry this white guy, you’re no longer an] Indian. It’s one Indian, oh, [She was born Indian, Hello] I mean how are you going to -- just
[indiscernible] [you’re not Indian any more, I’m sorry].

There’s not many of them [indiscernible] so you know, [indiscernible]. Like I said, they don’t belong with us no more. It’s all racism. And even some of the celebrities from T.V. it seems like -- I [indiscernible] [want a] tax cards. (Indiscernible) I want that card, you know? That [indiscernible] you know I said, it kind of [indiscernible]. Laughingstock they put national television at least come up with this, you know? And that’s the national media though. (indiscernible) all Mexico [indiscernible] [Live in our shoes there buddy and we’ll see how Indian you] want to be.

That’s the thing about this whole thing, racism, eh? By the time I was ten, my father had [indiscernible] T.V. I was 16, 17 years old when he got a T.V. And I used to watch old cowboy and Indian shows. Now you know which one was [I always root for the] cowboys ‘cause they always won, you know? Now it’s [indiscernible] cowboy. Come on, get that [indiscernible] [Indian].

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** The --

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** (Indiscernible) you know? But I ended up (indiscernible) the rest of it there.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** [Bonnie], Valentino I kind of wanted to ask you -- I know that the -- the murder of your sister in this situation [and your sister-in-law]
hasn’t been solved. Is it something you hope that this Inquiry, the commission will look into so that you -- you will get an answer to what happened to her that night?

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** I don’t think that’s [you guys] -- have the mandate to do that. They know where to look into [how are you going to look into individual cases?] -- into these cold cases.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** The -- m’hm. Yeah.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Right? I understand right? Looking at all the systemic and (indiscernible) --

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** -- (indiscernible).

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** You have to come and --

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** No, I’m not -- we didn’t come to the Inquiry for you guys to solve it.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** Yeah. No.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** We came so that they recognize that girl [Beverly].

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Because we have been trying to get her recognized for a long time.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** M’hm.
MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: But because she crossed that border --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Right.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: (Indiscernible)

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- you know, that’s what I was told, you know? She left her community and she was killed in the United States? Well, that’s -- that’s not our borders, right?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: So we don’t recognize borders you know.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: That’s also when I took my -- when -- when (indiscernible) standards [away the ladies status because she married a non-native], I should (indiscernible) --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- and they sent me to [and the same for] that border, you want to get across a border? You’re not leaving anymore [you’re not Indian no more]. You look up over here.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: You think there’s a --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: No, we all keep
pushing and hoping at least, you know here with the autopsy reports, you know? Because the -- the three people that were with her that weekend, they’ve all died. Like I said, they’ve all -- like I said, if they were involved with her death, karma will come [got them].

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: That’s how we look at it, because not one of them would speak to the family. So they -- if -- if they know what happened to her, they did - they took it to their graves with them.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: But maybe we’d just like to know the truth --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: -- of what actually happened.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Having the autopsy report and --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yes, even that, right?

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Because like I said, maybe -- we put it and we have that energy [image] in our face all the time [in our head of . . .].

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: And identify her body
in morgue. You know, we -- we see that.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Every now and then in the community somebody would come up and say, “Did you ever find out what happened to your sister?” “No.” “See, you should talk to (indiscernible). [You should talk to so-and-so, so-and-so, they might know something about it.] That guy might know something about her.” And [then we go to so-and-so] indiscernible) don’t have any -- any memory of that because --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- (indiscernible).

And trying (indiscernible) you know, I see. Yeah. You know, we know -- we know about that. We heard that --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: M’hm.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- she was hit on the head with something. Then another -- (indiscernible) somebody (indiscernible) [she fell off the] back of a pickup truck. Found her in the ditch and somebody helped her up, took her to the hospital and they took off. I don’t know if the guy that took her to the hospital is the one that (indiscernible) dies [one of the guys] or I don’t know.

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: They pulled [took] her at [to the] hospital. When she died from
(indiscernible). No shit. If you found her in the ditch and (indiscernible) put her in a wheelchair. And the (indiscernible) [the guy in the] truck took off. And you know, it was in the newspaper, and they said respond (indiscernible)—[this is what this guy looks like, a composite from the police]

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- (indiscernible) the cop, and I’ve never --

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: (Indiscernible)

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: -- not (indiscernible) [nothing ever come of it].

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah. Is there anything else you would like to share?

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: I don’t have (indiscernible).

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: No.

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. Okay. Thank you for your courage today. If your voice -- I think you -- your voice has been heard. Your story has been told. You -- yeah?

MS. BONNIE POLCHIES: Thank you. That’s --

MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Thank you (indiscernible).

MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES: Bonnie
(indiscernible) tell me her rock, but I don’t perceive [consider] myself as a rock, but she had been right there beside me for 35 years. And you know? And sometimes I have to put her in line, but that’s (indiscernible) work if you can get it [we keep it off the record] (laughter).

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Yeah, right. Yeah.

**MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Thank you very much.

**MR. VALENTINO POLCHIES:** Thank you.

**MS. BONNIE POLCHIES:** Thank you.

---Upon adjourning at 12:36 p.m.
LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE

I, Anja Curuvija, 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.

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Anja Curuvija

March 8, 2018