National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
The Saa-Ust Centre
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Statement - Volume 368

Ann Livingston, In relation to Elsie Sebastian

Statement gathered by Jayme Menzies

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NOTES

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

2) The use of square brackets [ ] indicates that amendments have been made to the certified transcript in order to replace information deemed inaudible or indecipherable by the original transcriptionist. Bryan Zandberg, Registrar for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, made the amendments by listening back to the original recording on April 23, 2019 in Vancouver, British Columbia.
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Documents submitted with oral statement: none
--- Upon commencing on Saturday, April 7, 2018
at 11:08 a.m.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: This has begun.

Let's begin. My name is Jayme. I'm from Manitoba. The
date is April 7 and the time is 11:08. Now, Ann, you can
introduce yourself.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: My name is Ann
Livingston. I was born in British Columbia. I am 63 years
old and I lived in the Downtown Eastside for 23 years.

The impact -- the woman who went missing
in my family was my nieces' mother, so that's my brother's
ex-wife although they never legally married or she would
lose her status. She was -- I think born in 1958 or,
sorry, 1952 or 1953. She's older than me. 1953, I think.

She was -- I remember when I first met her
-- she was feisty and was into rights for Aboriginal
people, which sort of, you know, I come from a family of
six children. We lived in Victoria at this time.

My brother's whole life is very much
immersed in Native culture and all his friends in Victoria
and his friends in Kamloops. It was just such an
interesting way -- his life went.

Anyway, his daughter is [Niece 1]. [Three
lines redacted - personal information].
Anyway, so the -- I moved to Vancouver in 1993 in June and didn't quite realize that [Niece 1] -- Elsie had last been heard from in October of 1992. She lived at the Empress Hotel as far as we could tell.

A guy named [A.] was her sort of boyfriend at that time. I think they split up. Anyway, the kids -- so [Niece 2] is the other niece. Her name is [Niece 2]. Elsie married Robert Sebastian and he's from Hazelton.

They had two more children together, so I've always treated [Niece 2] as my niece as well. It's just the same. She was variously at my mother's home or involved in our family in that way.

They let me know that they hadn't heard from their mother over Christmas. There's a kind of a concern but not really -- I remember being at my mother's house and Elsie would phone sometimes and she was quite inebriated and she would be slurring her speech. There's a kind of,

"Oh, I'm not talking to her. You talk to her."

So I've taken at least one of these calls. So there's a kind of divided feeling amongst the girls when their mother stops phoning because it was a little bit uncomfortable. You know, they're in high school.
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They've been probably publicly embarrassed in part because of racism. But it's one thing to have your mom be identified by a race but if she's slurring her words or seems impaired at all, it's just devastating for -- you know, just as a kid who's like ten or between and can look down the bus and see how everyone's reacting. It's got to be just crushing.

Anyway, they had this deep love for their mom but this kind of, you know, hesitation or mixed feelings about being with her. So that's a tough, tough place for the kids.

[Niece 1] lived at my mom's house for long periods of time and I would be there and I had little kids. So, you know, there was -- whenever she was in trouble, she'd phone me. Oh, my God.

So I had a car and I had little kids, but it was basically a pact between us that no matter what had gone on, she's like, "I'm not telling my dad that. He'll kill me."

You know, that kind of thing. So I'd go in and get them and try to just be a good auntie as I could. So that was my relationship with my niece.

Then when her mom had gone missing, she came over and in
the spring. She said,

"You know, we haven't heard from her."

So her and I went to every single bar on Hastings, I guess she was just above drinking age -- not that I guess we would have cared that much. So her and I go into the Sunrise and the Balmoral and the -- every famous kind of big bad bar down here.

I can remember she would know someone or go up to someone and say a few words and then they'd know how they knew each other. And then she would kneel down next to the chair and say,

"Well, have you seen my mom?"

And people would say,

"Oh, I think so-and-so saw her"
or,

"No, I haven't seen her."

So that was our way of looking for her was to try to find connections because often, this community of people who are Native and from around, you know, they do know each other and there's a real -- a lot of information.

This is all pre-cell phone anyway, not that that, you know, it was tried and true.

We kept coming to nothing. We followed as many of these leads as we could and we -- so I got
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1 concerned. As the summer bore on, she -- as much as
2 everyone would say,
3 "Oh no, she's just disappeared."
4 She always was in touch on birthdays,
5 always was in touch at Christmas, you know, those kind of
6 things? And she would have done something for the high
7 school grads, so I think [Niece 1] was the high school grad
8 at that point.
9 So the summer sort of creeps by and I've
10 got it on my (indiscernible). I can get things done. I
11 start getting on the phone and phoning everywhere I can
12 looking for her, figuring if I've got her name and her
13 birth date, then I can see is she in jail --
14 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
15 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- is there a John
16 Doe remains that are not been claimed somewhere. Like how
17 does this system work?
18 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
19 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So I was actually
20 finding it's not a very good system. Like the jail won't
21 tell you if she's there or not and then I said I was
22 thinking of visiting her,
23 "Should I bother?"
24 And then they'll say no. And that's their
25 code that she's not there because evidently they can't tell
you. I'm just like,

"Gosh,"

you know.

You know, I respect privacy and all that stuff, but we need a mechanism for this.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So I was really taking the low road. And then -- which is -- evaporate from our minds and everyone's busy and you get on with your life and then it would come up again. And then more and more women were going missing.

So between 1993 and as you can see on these dates, I was here from 1993 on so there was -- oh, one, two, three. I remember when Angela [Arsenault] went missing. I remember the posters and that's 1994. And then I would stop in at the -- a guide named Morris (ph). Who's that -- he used to be an Elvis impersonator. Oh, I can't think of his name.

Anyway, he was working at the Aboriginal centre there and I would stop and chat to him and say,

"We still haven't seen Elsie."

So all these women went missing: Cindy [Beck], Andrea Borhaven, Heather Bottomley, Heather -- you know. So some of them, their families made way more fuss. Dawn [Crey], Sarah [de Vries]'s sister really made a big
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fuss and came down. There were posters of Sarah all over the place.

So all those years went by. And I had a job. My job was I helped co-organize the Vancouver Area Network of Drugs Users.

And before that, say in 1995, we set up a -- really an illegal injection site but it was meant as a place for drug users to sort of control. We had these tiny grants and we just sort of paid the rent. And in those days, you could get a pretty cheap storefront. So a group of activists did that.

From there, we knew people that went missing. I knew an Olivia [Williams] from coming there and she -- after we shut down in 1996, someone told me she was gone.

I remember Sharon Ward and I remember -- you know what I mean? The various people because they're sort of fleeting and everyone's usually in a group.

Angela Jardine, I remember the day she went missing. Serena Abbotsway came in all the time. We knew her quite well. And you know what I mean? There's like so many of these women were part of the fabric of the Downtown Eastside in terms of the drug users all knew each other and they used to stop into our place.

Anyway, it was -- and then the stories...
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were,

"Oh, there's this car. There's that car."

You're constantly hearing about how do they go missing in the day? It starts to become mythological and one point we even thought,

"Why don't we just set up a sting and see who it is?"

Like it's got to be somebody doing this.

And no one was sort of brave enough to do it because anyway, it just got by the by.

I had at this time when I first moved here, I had a three-year-old, a five-year-old, and a ten-year-old with cerebral palsy. And I was living where I still lived at Four Sisters Housing Co-Op in a three-bedroom apartment.

So it gave me this home and I'd invite people to my home often to do these projects. And so I don't know if any other women came. The women tended to be the generators of income in the neighbourhood and the men tended to be the people who were involved in drug dealing.

So the common complaint was women would get ripped off by drug dealers and often they have relationships with dealers who didn't rip them off that they would try to really keep together.
And the men had less of a way to make money unless you were breaking into cars or selling dope; right?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They weren't usually selling sex. And so it was a really, you know, I learned a lot and I was just basically an open book.

I'm an organizer. I'm not a drug user, but I know how to do community organizing.

So eventually, we have the Vancouver Area Network of Drugs Users -- it's still going. And they have an elected board and all this kind of stuff. So it was -- that project is always about listening to what the people are saying and taking action on the urgent concerns of the group. And taking the action that they decide they want to take.

So there was so many, you know, this was certainly something that wasn't taken action of.

The other thing that was so terrible and such the kind of bad things is things like the women's centre, which is so revered -- the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They would not let any of these women even in the door.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They had a very --
the culture in the 90s was extremely strict. People who
were active drug users, the belief was that if you were
really mean to them and unkind and wouldn't let them in
your place, you were giving them a motivation to stop using
drugs. It didn't work.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They were killing
people basically. We had huge numbers of drug overdoses at
the same time as these disappearances. So there was a real
confusion about whether someone was murdered, missing, or
had overdosed on drugs because people -- it was just a
sense of faces disappearing.

During the period of -- so the 1995 until,
you know, sort of 2000 and 2002, the number of people that
were dying from drug overdose, dying from suicide, dying
from AIDS, or being disappeared this way was hundreds per
year just in a ten-block area.

That's an astounding thing for people to
go through. And it's something I think that has given me --
it's an experience I've really had, like not
"I live nearby and it was going near
me."

I was right in it --
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- in terms of the drug use and the criminalization of drug use was causing so much death.

So we had the -- first, it was overdoses and of course these disappearances going on at the same time.

There's a real stubbornness on the part of the coroner's office, I find, that they won't give you the information you're looking for. And we don't have any place to say, "I know --." Like if you disappeared tomorrow and I said,

"Well, I have this vague idea. Well, I should check with the coroner."

I have to know your first, middle, last name and your date of birth or the coroner won't speak to me.

I don't know if this is still true, but I could actually get them to mail me the coroner's report if I had that bit of information.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So, you know, it was so hard to check with the coroner to see if they had a body
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or if someone had simply disappeared. It didn't allow
people to be citizens and residents and kind neighbours or
friends.

Friends couldn't find out anything about
their friends. They weren't family. They do this kind of,
"Oh, you're not family"
and yet some people we knew that their
families hadn't been in touch with them for 20 years and
suddenly, we were,
"Oh."
And couples, it was particularly
heartbreaking to see because if the couple was -- one of
them was dead, the other person couldn't get any
information about where the body even went.

Sometimes, you know, you get this -- like
I don't know if you know this. If there's someone dies,
you're stuck with the police. And so you're trying to
communicate with the police. Every now and then, they're
nice to us because they've got a body -- like she's not on
there, but she just died. See, again, I can't remember
people's names.

Anyway, her body was in the refrigerator
in the basement of Vancouver General Hospital for more than
a month. It might have been going on two months.
And as soon as we became aware of this and
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I had these certain phone numbers I could call, so you're calling the actual morgue, they'll refer you to the police. You always have this awful little tangle of people. And when -- then they said to us, "Well, do you know who she is?"

And we said, "Yes, we do."

She's mentioned in this town of Ontario and then you do this Nancy Drew thing and you start hunting around looking for her son. She mentioned she had a son and where was he? And finally, her son did come and she got released and it was an opportunity for us to say, "You know, your mother was an important person."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know, she's got this huge stigma and label on her, but in our lives she was our friend and she was an activist and she went on TV and she was in the paper.

You try and take these things and give them to the children like a memento to say, you know, "This is a --"

and it's not just a stain of shame in your family and something you need to cover up. Because I think that is causing this intergenerational damage.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Anyway, the bad of the story goes like that. What I noticed is that as they started to announce family things, I had e-mail and like to me, it's the beginning of computers. I don't know if it really was, but it was the beginning of me doing computers. And so there become an e-list for the families and if they called for a meeting, I went. And I'd often contact the kids, but early on especially when they're still quite young like their late teens, early 20s, there was a real hesitation to pronounce their mother missing or dead.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Because it's one of those loyalty heart things that one of the ways you can show how much you loved your mother was to say, "She's alive."

And so when I understood that, it helped me a lot. It was -- I just went to some session on disappeared people and it was like, "Ah" like a light clicked on because I kept thinking, "Are they stupid?"

Like I mean you don't want to be too
brutal about it, but hey, we're getting into ten years here
or you know what I mean? You start going,

"Hmm"

because how long can she persistently be
hiding?

So it was -- and I think what keeps
fueling that is you get no information from the police.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Anyway, so the police
came. They would form a task force. See? Task force. I
don't know which one this is. This is a late one where we
finally got Elsie reported. She didn't get reported until
2002 or 2000 -- I don't know -- 2001. Or maybe it was the
year 2000.

Anyway, it was eight years that we had
been reporting and we could not get her reported. It was
the stupidest story you can ever imagine. So we'd say you
call and honestly if they fix this, good for them, but I
went through it again, so...

They keep claiming they fixed the way you
report women or people missing. So you call 9-1-1.
Actually, I don't think I did. I think I looked up and
someone got the number for a missing persons department. I
call them and they said,

"Oh, no, we can't take the report."
You have to call 9-1-1."

"Okay, I'll call 9-1-1."

I call 9-1-1. They said,

"No, you have to call the missing persons department."

So it'll just go on for hours.

And I was starting to take down their names and could you please give so-and-so a call because she's sending me back here.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And I was trying to stay really calm but a lot of people wouldn't necessarily.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Or they just give up.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Understandably, yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes. So they would ask -- now I've blanked his name out. Isn't it funny how we do this to ourselves? I think it's because I'm so mad at him.

There was a police officer who still looks for -- works for Lookout as an outreach worker. And I was there and witnessed it once, but this -- I think what was going on. It'll come to me what his name is.

Anyway, he says,
"My nieces are there. There's some kind of gathering."

This is a few years later and there's missing women there and they go right up to him and they go,

"Our mother Elsie Sebastian's missing"

and

"Have you seen her? Why aren't we getting anything back from her"

and all this stuff. He goes,

"Oh, I see Elsie in the park all the time."

And then they turn and glare at me.

I live two blocks from that park. I walked through that park taking my kid to daycare. I whatever -- like four times a day or something -- you know, there, back, there, and back. There's four times a day. And I'm too stupid to notice that Elsie is sitting in that park.

And the stupid thing was he -- just based on a first name basis -- I don't know, is Elsie a rare name? He'd say he'd seen Elsie. And my nieces, the looks they give me, like I was just completely hopeless.

I was just like,
"How could you do that? How could
you be that irresponsible as a police
officer" that you're going to flip these girls that
have really a serious issue with their mother is missing.
This isn't some little thing.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And he goes,
"Oh yes, I see Elsie all the time."
And I don't know how many times he did
that to me. I was just like,
"Oh, my God."
So he eventually isn't a police officer
and I can guarantee you that's why because he's making such
a liability problem.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But anyway, he's
still -- oh, he's a big hero in the neighbourhood and he
runs around doing outreach. Anyway, whatever.
So that's the kind of stuff you're up
against because you can't hold any of those people
accountable for that kind of behaviour.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And what I found was
the missing -- the task force would be headed by someone in
a big announcement. And then they would have some stupid thing and you'd have to figure out Surrey on a map, drive all the way out to Surrey and go to some meeting, which would -- that was the reward. And you'd be in there with Sarah [de Vries]'s sister and the phrase -- she's the woman who solved the whole crime.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Her mother -- I'm not kidding -- they were climbing the fence at Pickton's farm.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, really?

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: She went around what the police never could do and this is why, you know, if I have a strong recommendation: We need to make a completely system for looking for people and it needs to be done with a combination of government agencies.

So I'm on welfare right now but I have, you know -- if I was on welfare and living in an SRO and was someone isolated, I should be able to leave what I might call a "living will" with welfare. It should just be another form I sign. If I don't pick up a welfare cheque, I'd like you to notify these following people.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And just have it there. I might be gone, I might not be gone; right? But someone will get to the bottom of it quickly, not eight
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So the other thing is if I was on methadone and I was picking up a daily dose of an opioid that will make me, you know, virtually die from withdrawal if I don't get it, and I miss a pick-up or two pick-ups -- I gave a living will at the pharmacy so that they -- when I'm two days out or something, some reasonable period that I can determine if I sign it -- and they will contact these following people if I don't pick up.
And there's more. There's welfare. There's housing. If I lived in a place with a, you know, a concierge which many, many now of these places have that -- I don't know how -- you know, you'd have to look at the details of how each one keeps track of people going in and out, but I believe there's a bio on Vancouver because during the 90s, we found so many dead bodies in rooms and people couldn't get the, you know, the Balmoral. Let's keep picking on the damn Balmoral.
They wouldn't go up and check their room and you'd say,
"I know he went up and I know he did some drugs up there. You got to go up there."
And they would say no. They'd wait until
the stench in the hallway was so bad that they came into
the room and then I'd go in.

And that's what -- so there was a huge
fuss made about this. And that -- well, for one thing,
it's so hard to live in that hall -- that whole floor would
smell so -- you know what I mean? It's a very unpleasant
problem, but it's also really undignified --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- that we have such
a shitty system in a hotel that they won't look for you.
And even when they're asked to, that's what's so
heartbreaking. So we've --

Anyway, so those are the really hardcore
recommendations I have. In terms of that -- and the other
part that's such a problem is they have warrants for their
arrests.

The latest woman from VANDU -- I can't
think of her name right now. She's from the North Shore --
Pete. Angelina Pete (ph). Let's use her as an example --
and Chipman (ph). I don't know where she is on here.
Maybe her body was found. I thought her name was Chipman.
She's from Prince George. These are in alphabetical order.
Anyway, okay, so we'll go back to -- what
was the first name I said? Angelina --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Angelina
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- Pete. She's still missing. Body never been found. It's within five years or I don't know. I lose track of time, but it's not over a decade. It's recent in my mind.

There's a warrant for her arrest. So she goes missing. Her -- and they've got an improved system for reporting missing, but this still goes to the police. She's got a warrant for arrest. Are you kidding me? Why are the police going to find someone with a warrant for their arrest? And these warrants are just bullshit.

The warrants in this neighbourhood -- and there are thousands of them. We cannot find out. This is how many there are. They won't tell us how many there are because there's hundreds and hundreds initiated every week.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And they miss court. They fail to comply with a bail order.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They fail to comply with a probation order. They fail to comply with a condition of release. They fail to comply, fail to comply, fail to comply, and it's bullshit. It's nothing. They have not done a crime.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's this awful, awful entanglement. So you have one -- it can even be a pathetic thing like a ticket for jaywalking or --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- peeing on an alley or -- I don't know. All the bullshit (indiscernible) laws that we have.

And once you don't pay that ticket, it doubles and then there's a notification is sent to your mailing address -- ha, if you have one and if you still live there. And then you'd see that you're supposed to go to court. And if you don't show up, they're going to initiate a warrant for your arrest and because you didn't pay a fine for some stupid ticket that was unnecessary that someone gave you in the first place.

And this is where we have the police and it just can't be described any other way. They mine this neighbourhood for crime and they get rewarded for overtime. And I'm not the only one who says this. I have a document that a guy named [G.P.] who was a police officer. He's no longer alive, but he wrote this.

And that was the first time that I saw a police officer said it outright that there's an in-built mechanism. So the very most vulnerable people who might be the women who are going to go missing in the first place.
have got a relationship with the police. It's completely unworkable. They arrest them for nothing.

And when you're arrested, it's not like,

"Oh, could I have come back tomorrow and you can arrest me after I pick up my methadone and call some people to look after this, that, or the other for me?"

No. It's never a good time. You're usually facing withdrawal from drugs and they take you to a remand centre if you've done it enough times. And then you're in remand. You're actually serving time for a non-crime and you haven't seen a judge yet.

And when you see the judge, he gives you the time you've already served. This is affecting this population at an alarming rate and it really just keeps feeding into all this uncertainty about when someone's gone.

If I call remand, they don't tell me who's in there; you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They won't. I don't know who, how big of a poo ball you have to be to say that they go,

"Oh, yes, she's here. Yes. Don't
worry about it."

You know what I mean?

And why do I even know her bloody proper name? I might only know her street name.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So you can't sound the alarm when people are gone. You can't -- and they've got this horrible level of persecution going on. They created a completely impossible relationship between police and women. They don't go to the police for help. These are the bastards that arrest them for nothing and won't negotiate with them.

I mean I've heard of -- I have a friend in Abbotsford and there's all kinds of models we could implement and solutions to this problem. But there's this absolute wall and no discussion and no --

So my friend in Abbotsford happens to have a relationship. And the admiration for the Abbotsford police department for me may be completely misplaced, but what they are is they're small enough.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: If you have a problem with them, you can go to the board. A place like Surrey?

No board. All RCMP. Just a shit show. Just a mess.

And I don't even think the police are
happy with it. And our one here isn't -- it's less nice than Abbotsford because you can't get a meeting.

The police at some point just put up a wall. There's no community meeting between the police and people in this neighbourhood.

They now have something -- they're calling it lunch with the chief and it's at Carnegie. And you know why I'm never invited? Because I might say something.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So you're supposed to sit there fucking eat without choking without the chief and if you've got something to say, too fucking bad. And then they can boast about that they have this great relationship with the neighbourhood and they're doing it through the women. They're doing it with women, all women, as a result of the explanation of this.

But it's so phony. And if I -- I walked in once and you could feel the whole room freeze, "Uh oh, she's here."

You know what I mean? Because I sit there and I want to know answers and I'm completely engaged in this. I spend all my time hunting for people or looking at drug policies that could change or you know what I mean? All the people tangled up in this really awful
remand centre released to the street, re-arrested, remand centre, released to the streets. And it's -- and the overdoses.

I spent last winter in an illegal overdose prevention site that became legal finally, but I'm really up to my eyeballs of people that are living in an alley, overdosing, being revived. Their medicare has been cut off, their welfare has been cut off. It's just a new cruel era.

So when these women were going missing, the welfare wasn't as cruel as it is now. So for the most part if they came back and reapplied, they would get back on welfare. So less of them of these women that I knew, they did not live outside.

So that's a -- you know, nowadays if we were looking at women who are really at risk, living outside is one of the big, big things that's happening for them. And there's a very active shelter for women that's basically a night drop-in because they don't force -- the women's shelter can often be run in such a cruel way that they're miserable and people stop going to them or you know what I mean? It sort of damages you to sleep there.

That one has been extremely well thought out, so if you come in super late, you can go back out and then come back until -- I don't know, two in the morning or
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1 something.

2 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

3 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So women are in and
4 out, in and out, in and out. They come and eat. Then they
5 use the bathroom and then they thing and then they might
6 come and sleep for a while and then they -- you know what I
7 mean? It's exactly the kind of what you call designed --
8 what do they call it -- trauma informed --

9 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Trauma-informed design.

10 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- design. It's
11 perfect. And we need so much more of that.

12 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

13 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So anyway, the stuff
14 about leaving with the police, so --

15 When I think between as much as sort of
16 social service that we have and these kind of living wills
17 so that people are thoughtful about who have they put down.

19 "If I go missing, who do I want
20 looking for me?"

21 And it isn't going to be the police. So
22 -- and of course, that will be the judgment of the people
23 who are left with those numbers; right?
24 So you get called -- I get called by
25 welfare. They say Elsie hasn't picked up her welfare
cheque and, you know, they always go like -- that's what we
were so amazed with.

Why would someone not come and get money?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like are you kidding me? And the police would say the stupidest thing.

"Oh, yes, she's left town. Women like this do that all the time."

I think,

"No, they pick up their cheque first I'm pretty sure."

Like, are you kidding me?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like they just didn't seem to grasp how poor they were.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: If they were doing sex work, they were being paid extremely low. And of course, it went -- it got worse and worse since I came to this neighbourhood about how much money people could get from exchanging sex for money or exchanging sex for even drugs.

So the vulnerability was always terrible, but it got worse and worse and worse.

And, you know, you could pull up and a
little white baggy of white powder or a little baggy of white powder and kind of go like this. And women would get into your car if you had a, you know, a handgun on the thing and blood dripping out of the -- you know, it was just not a consideration.

The urgency of drug treatment is the other part of this --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- that we haven't dealt with at all. And this is the big fight with the overdoses. I think we are finally going to get somewhere.

We've got all of the CEOs of any kind of B.C. Centre for Substance Use, the BC Centre for Disease Control -- are all completely plain language: We need to stop criminalizing this population.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And the double criminalization of women, plus the stigma of being a junky ho is way -- piles on women. And so -- and that brings me to the other point.

So I don't know if I've beat that horse to death, but I think we can make a brilliant caring appropriate way.

As much as I could on social media, once I realized that how just dismal and damaging it was to try
and deal with the police, both from our personal experience
but also from all the stories of all the families. That's
what was always shared.

I tried to tell them there was something
wrong. I know there's something wrong. I -- you know, and
then they finally get into a room where a purse is sitting
there with eyeglasses, like stuff she would never a room
without and she's gone. And certainly, her mom's died.

Aunt Tanya (ph)'s mom's very clear on that
and someone who looks like a Stephanie Lang (ph) and I was
thinking -- I think they look alike, so I always used to
get -- oh, whatever.

Everyone needs to carry around a little
sign of their missing person because you get in the room,
you might,

"Hmm."

And this was always my reference point
back because I really just hated the idea that we didn't
know who anyone was. You just had this blank. You know
what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like oh, what year?

Like, you know, you have to keep reviewing it.

Or I think we needed to use the strength
of those families and their stories to construct a usable
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system.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like I said, some of those things about living wills but also -- and not having the police be able to completely withhold all information from the family.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: What was the point of that?

At the very end of the story with Elsie, we go to the Oppal inquiry. And one of the lawyers hands me a complete file on Elsie, which I've now hidden in my house. I was so worried about it. He says,

"I'm not allowed to give you this. This is confidential."

I'm thinking,

"Really? We're not even getting that?"

I mean it was so healing to just read through --

There's a CPIC on Hastings Street and, you know, it's got the date written down. She was searched by the police and they let her go.

And the next interaction, she's overdosed and she's at Lions Gate Emerg. on the North Shore. And
then she seems to leave there and go to an IGA on the North Shore. She phones welfare. This is the olden days when you could phone welfare and tells them: Would they send over, like fax over -- what do you call them? Something that pays for your groceries, like a voucher.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: For groceries and then she could just spend that and leave with food. And that was it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: The end. And we had no way of knowing that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: There was then -- that means their next welfare cheque would have piled up.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Where did she leave at that time? Was the rent paid? Some confusion about whether she left the young prince and when she lived with [A.]. And then the kids got all paranoid and figured that this guy murdered her -- this.

And so I knew him from the drug user group and I kept saying to them -- because they're just -- for them, it was like just popping up every now and then getting right on at -- okay, this time we'll get to the
bottom of this because that's the sensation you have. You haven't looked hard enough.

So one of the days -- you can either weep about it or feel bad or just get back out there. So they come over and we do another hunt and I'd find -- and they -- and I kept saying to them,

"You know --."

I've watched him like a hawk and I don't say anything to him necessarily. I've watched him sort of -- like if he was a purpose or -- you know, I mean I didn't want to sort of led on.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But I'd see him day after day after day after day and he wasn't like a predator. If he was picking up women that were disappearing, I'd be so all over that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But I'm just like, you know, there's -- I just don't think there's anything there. Anyway, he's (indiscernible) from Nova Scotia.

And it's just because they want something to happen. They want some solution and it wasn't helping me any and I don't know if he got interviewed. Finally, one of the task forces really got a lot of money and these people came and interviewed people. They took swabs of the
insides of their mouths.

I don't know whether there was a big Pickton break-up. And the girls got flown over here and there was this long table with all of these items of clothing. There was so much of this laying around at Pickton.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And they were trying to look for pieces of jewelry they might recognize or clothing or shoes or anything because it was just all lying all over place. A huge fucking mess.

If he was -- if she was killed by Pickton, it's before he moved to that place because the date's too long.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And when you're doing a -- I just don't know if there would just be anything left at all and I think there was a real pattern because all of the people that they found remains of were from --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Couldn't find --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- were from the late 90s, not the early, early 90s. So that was heartbreaking but every time one of these things comes up, then there was a sense that, you know, as terrible as the news was for the other families, at least they had this thing where --
MS. JAYME MENZIES: An answer.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- they got their
questions answered. So we remained in this constant
aching, you know, open no answers.

And again, why didn't they share the
information they had with us? That's really healing to
say,

"Here's what we know. I'm just going
to sit down and tell you everything
we know."

They won't tell you anything.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And then in the end,
I get it from some lawyers who's going to lose his licence
or something for giving it to me.

I need to hunt through my house. I assume
I'll find it when I go to move and I don't know whether I
was just so paranoid and I thought,

"I can't, like, put this guy at
risk."

But I found that about everything that had
to do with Elsie. I would constantly lose whatever it was.
If I made notes from the times that I had called the jails,
I just couldn't find them. And I thought,

"Isn't it interesting when someone's
missing, they're like missing and you
have this missing."

Like it's just a -- a gone thing.

It's like when you go down the streets
sometimes and you can't remember which buildings were
there.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And yet it's so much
in your mind's eye for such a long time and then bang. And
that's what's the neighbourhood is like.

You see faces. You walk down. You see
them day after day for years and then one of them is
missing. Your brain doesn't go,
"Oh, so-and-so is missing."

It's this odd slipping. You know, you
feel like your sanity gets a little odd. I mean; you know
what I mean?

I don't know how to describe it, but I
think it's -- for a neighbourhood to have gone through
this, who's left in the neighbourhood to even talk about
being a survivor of that many deaths occurring in that
small of an area and especially if they were people you
were seeing every single day and what. You know, we'd have
meetings and meetings.

My problem was they were always in groups,
so I usually would say -- even to this day, if someone says someone died, I say,

"Yes, you need to show me a picture because I can't --"

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's way easier for me to remember a face than another name when all the other names are just -- it's like a shelf. You keep pushing at the front and stuff is just falling off the back and you have no way of sorting it or holding on to it.

So I think we should have a really, really memorial. I think it's a good healing thing -- healing for the kids.

I mean there's an AIDS wall in Stanley Park and what we were told really early on when we tried these efforts to make a memorial before is that you had to have the permission of the family to put their name on it.

And we're having again a huge even bigger loss which is all overdoses, although like I said -- I can be more clear -- these women were going missing when overdoses were at the same rate as 2016. And I mean per capita rate because the number was still only 400. In the peak year in 1993 and 1994, and you know, right in there. And it didn't -- but the per capita rate didn't get exceeded until 2016 and now we're just shot up to 2018.
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It's doubled again or something.

We lost 350 just in Vancouver. And if you look at the old Vancouver rates, they're around two something.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Wow.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And anyway, and then you look at the per capita numbers and because so many people moved to Vancouver in the last ten or 20 years, that's why.

Anyway, it's just one of these stupid things, but the other...

In the networks that we'll look for people, I started to tell people that they could come to my house and sleep on my couch and walk around this neighbourhood and I know everyone.

Then they could have this, you know, heartfelt thing that they went and they looked.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like it's worth it.

Just come. You know, and that's what, you know -- that's why I've been so excited when I saw this space. I thought, "Oh God, there's going to be space for something -- going to happen," that's not all kind of like over controlled and you have to talk to this -- you know what I
It just needs to be left a little bit, you know, open. And let friendships arise. Let social networks of support happen because this is -- there's no study you'll ever read that says that services save people's lives. What you'll find out is that it's -- you know, income of course, and housing of course.

And the third one is social networks and they're informal networks of support is the phrase that's used over and over time.

And that's what -- I've just sort of -- you know, we do fight for better welfare and we do fight for housing all the time. But what we actually do and can do and you don't really very much funding although it's nice to have a space to do it in is the informal networks of support.

And that's what people (indiscernible) need to be able to rely on. If I was missing one of my children, would I go to the police? No. I'd start phoning all his friends and try to figure out where he was. I'd start snooping around on his Facebook page to just follow every lead you could because someone must know something. There -- you know.

And that's what was missing for these women. They were so isolated and so -- maybe, you know,
the Balmoral wouldn't give you any information. Then, well, call welfare -- they're not going to give you any information. You call the hospital, they won't give you any information. Like it was awful.

You were just sealed out from everything and then you had to sit there and either feel guilty because you had -- what did you call it is the name where you're half in and half out? You have this mixed relationship because -- they'll just phone you for fucking money again and you know they're addicted.

Like, you know, and it's the families are just in agony about what's going on. So they have this -- I keep thinking of the word "benevolence". It's the wrong word. It's when you're -- anyway. I'll think of it, I guess.

They have that, you know, mixed relationship -- to see -- absolutely dearly loved this person and you're trying to protect -- you know what I mean? You just can't cope with them anymore.

So they feel so guilty then when something goes wrong because there must have been something more I could have done.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And when you can't find their networks of support. The way Marnie Frey (ph) -
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- Her -- it's her step-mother actually.

Her step-mother came down to Vancouver and I remember meeting her. So they had these little meetings with families, various task forces, and then I think they got a grant or something at the Aboriginal policing centre.

I can't -- and there was a little -- there was a feisty woman there and she kept us together. She was good. She -- it really felt like she was on your side.

She wasn't going to make up some excuse.

So she took a picture of Marnie and she went down to -- she said women were like loaded or like whatever. And she goes,

"My daughter's missing."

Now there's an end. A fucking cop shows up. Have you seen this woman? It's like "Whoa." I'm committing a crime. I probably got a warrant.

You know what I mean? It was just such a brilliant thing and they put together an 800 number and they got tips on the 800 number that were the proper tips.

They were actually really tips.

And they funded that themselves outside of the whole police thing. This is a really important for people to notice. Please don't make us have to use police to find people. It's just not going to work ever. It's not working now. It never has worked and we're just at a
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1 loss.
2 So what we need is, you know, a ways to
3 keep women -- that they know no matter how excluded they
4 are, there's an actual place for the excluded where people
5 know their name, they generally know where they go. The
6 Women's Centre has improved a lot, but it's still
7 completely overprescribed. It's completely packed. You
8 need five more of them; you know what I mean?
9
10 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
11 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And the more we have
12 of that, the more these women can get their lives together
13 too. And we've got a new era where welfare just -- went
14 off all the time. So these women all wouldn't be on
15 welfare.
16
17 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
18 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So some of the stuff
19 I said about
20 "If you are on welfare, you don't
21 pick up your cheque, notify" --
22
23 MS. JAYME MENZIES: That won't work for --
24 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: We need even more
25 clever ones.
26
27 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
28 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: We're going to have
29 to be looking at if someone's been at a shelter.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But we need the living will left part of it so that the shelter isn't going,

"Oh, I have a liability issue. I can't tell you."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They can look at the file. If they've got any paper on someone and then say,

"Yes, I'm allowed to tell you what's going on."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Because even the detox centres, treatment centres -- and that's some great news for people that someone's, you know, safe and in recovery.

They also have extremely strict rules about who they'll talk to. Anyway, I think the -- I like the term "living will"

because it implies that someone's going to make a decision when you're not there to make it and you feel like the same relationship to a living will would be how much trust you have in that person you're leaving in charge of you if I have to be sort of put down, you know...
They do let you put yourself down. But you know, generally, who's going to make decisions about my end of care when I'm not -- and I'm so incapacitated I can't make...

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I think it's a really workable -- I mean it's more workable than what we've got now and I just -- it's so discouraging.

So I have a friend and he had a -- his really close friend Sylvie (ph) was found dead in an alley and he's absolutely convinced that she was murdered.

So he called the -- they have a missing women's line that you call. That's not it. I don't know - - do you know this line? They actually have this -- the VPD have a missing women's line.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Or a -- what's it called? "She" something. They make these stupid names up.

Anyway, when he called it, they never called him back ever. Ever. And then I always think, "You know, why were they boasting about that they fixed this?"

We should be mystery shopping whatever it is that's been set up just as a matter of dignity.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like, not "Oh, we don't even suspect you guys are doing it wrong."
We just have a routine, which is mystery shop.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: We just -- every so many months, we check to see whether people and maybe, you know, let people know if you have any trouble with these services we're offering, please let us know because we don't want to offer services that don't work. That wouldn't be a thing, you know.

Taxpayers pay for them. Like why wouldn't we have provide in that that we do an excellent job and we make sure it's good? Not going on there.

I'm just trying to think. There's another whole section on this about not having the police look for people and all of that bizarre stuff that gets put up with the coroner and, you know, all these --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- you know, people that --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well, I think you mentioned before, which is the mug shot -- that may be --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes, the
memorial. The healing stuff.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes, that the efforts to make -- if it's possible to do an AIDS wall, I don't see why it's not possible to do an overdose wall and especially the women's wall because I think the women's wall -- it will just fade from memory and then, you know, like every now and then I stumble on new stories or something and I'm so shocked. But I think of it that way and it's not that we want to be famous for having this terrible tragedy. What we want to be famous for is fixing this terrible tragedy.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: This is what happened and it's sort of the "never again" thing. Like to have a sense of dignity to say, "We all looked in horror at the situation" and then we've done everything we can. And it needs to be a lot.

I mean the memorial part -- if the only thing you have -- and Elsie's picture, her daughters got really pissed because it was a mug shot. They actually only had a mug shot and there was -- they were putting up posters because she could -- went on the list.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But right now, you
could go to -- we could go to Surrey and we could make a list. And there's no list. There's no poster like this in Surrey. There's just missing women.

I think, "Did we fix something?"

Because I don't get the sensation we did.

And again, you know, who's looking for them? Who knows where they are? Is there -- you know, if it's just a police file, I think it's really a -- it's not the way we want to do things.

I think there should be -- like as I guess we have a more intact way of looking for loss dogs than we do looking for humans. And you know what I mean? I really do think we do. I think we have a -- that's kind of a little system that's in place.

This isn't a system what we've got now.

We've got a mess on our hands.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And it's so muddly.

I think the -- I mean the -- I think it should be thought about in terms of saying what's the most healing thing that could happen for the family whose mother -- it's not just that they're missing. Their mother's addicted to heroin, was selling sex, and is now missing.

[Pickton Victim 1]'s daughter is now struggling with drug addiction just like her mom with the
same parents. So now her step-mom and her dad are trying
to do, you know, chapter two.

        And when she was at school -- and I
believe it's like Campbell River somewhere -- the kids are
going,

        "Your mom's a junkie ho and she's
missing in the Downtown Eastside."

        Like how does this shit even happen?

        MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

        MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You think really?

How does that... So I think that there's a huge gap there
and I'm not a professional in that field. But I think when
you bring dignity to it, I think that there's a far more
secure chance for the future of the kids.

        The idea that kids aren't scripted and
it's sort of a therapeutic word by either parents is a
naive assumption.

        "Oh, well, if her mother used drugs,
she'll never use them because look at
what the damage it did to her
mother."

        Have I got bad news for you.

        MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

        MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: In fact, if you look
at -- you know, like let's use some statistics and some
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1 science --

2 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Totally.

3 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- and really do a

4 properly researched program to say what -- and teach the

5 families. This could well happen again.

6 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

7 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: What could we do?

8 Well, she was in grade 7 in elementary school being taunted

9 by the other kids. Before —

10 "Oh, now she's in her 20s and has a

11 heroin habit the size of Montreal;"

12 you know what I mean? Like there are

13 troubles already now.

14 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

15 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Now what? Again, the

16 same -- is there any improvement to access to drugs? That

17 was the thing.

18 So the thing about -- so that's one whole

19 thing, the memorial and then this legacy for children. I

20 think it needs to be very -- why shouldn't it be thought

21 out by people?

22 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

23 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's not -- I bet you

24 that whole field is -- I bet you someone's an expert. I

25 could certainly read the studies from time to time and I
know that if you've ever been to jail, you're likely to go into jails like -- I don't know -- increased 300 percent or -- it's just shocking.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know what I mean?

These -- so I know that there's little bits of it and I'm not saying to put in a program, but just to have everyone be conscious of it. What if the kids knew that?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON:

"My mom had an addiction issue and that's very likely to affect me" not so it compels to do that, but what to do if it does.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: So for example, has there -- have there been any supports for Elsie's daughters since she's been named --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I don't know. We don't talk enough about that and I'm not sure if they do or they don't.

I find [Niece 2]'s more thoughtful, but she also has two children and her youngest is still quite young. She's a very, you know, it's -- she's an excellent kind of really gentle mother, breastfeeds, you know, she has a very -- and that really holds her together. But when
the kids get older, you know, she'll again have these
issues.

It's hard for them to surpass the age of
their mother. She died when she was 40 and [Niece 1]'s
already passed 40. You know what I mean? There are
critical things and I think there should be a thoughtful
sort of lifetime understanding and access to support
because I think people go to therapy and then they go,
"Wow, got that handled"
and then they go on in their lives and
the most devastating thing is they can get in a situation
where they're going,
"Why am I going through this again?
I already handled it."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Well, it's one of
those things where there's kind of a spiral or a cycle; you
know what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And it gives yourself
a lot more compassion for yourself to think,
"I shouldn't be fucked up like this
because I already handled this;"
like that you think it's --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know, like a boat
of antibiotics. You take them, infection's gone, and now
you're going to go.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: There's a kind of,
you know -- I just think we should be thoughtful about it.
And like, as far as I know right now, I don't know of a
website or anything that's up and running where the people
can all do this.

And we used to do this in the day. They
e-list -- will be okay for a while and you can see people,
like for instance, some people will die -- what's her name
here? I don't -- Patricia Johnson (ph). Is there an
Angelina or something on here?

She had this old grandpa guy and he was so
great on there. And then I remember when he got really ill
and died and then we didn't hear from -- you know what I
mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: There's other loss
that goes on and people's lives change or they don't have a
computer and whatever.

Anyway, it would be nice if it was still
held together in some way that there was a reunion or
something. You know, how are we all doing? And the kids
to say -- they're a special club kids don't want to belong to.

"My mother was murdered."

Fuck. Or is missing and we don't -- never found out.

And the tips that can go on between there because I always wondered -- if we couldn't get something together to say,

"All right, we're going to make a tombstone or we're going to do this thing and we're going to recognize this."

Without having someone in the family pipe up like Elsie's sister for many years --

"Bad bitch. Look what she's doing to all of us. She's not missing."

And I just think in my amazed mind,

"Twenty years and you think she's hiding; eh?"

Like honestly. But there's nothing I can say.

But the daughters are then suppressed.

They --

"Note to self, don't mention anything about Elsie around her"
and yet this is their auntie, so they --
you can't assume support is going to go well in these families.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Everyone just comes
with their own worst crap and I think there's a myth in our
culture -- I don't know if it's in Aboriginal culture.
It's certainly in white culture that someone when mom got
sick, we all pulled together and --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- and blah blah blah
and it's just not true. It can be. It's lovely when it
happens, but there's also this other very real thing is,
"I feel really bad. I'm upset and
I'm going to attack my sister and
fight about some fucking coat that my
mom left"
or you know what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: People just get
insane. And when it makes no sense, you have to look a
layer deeper and that's what we all need to be trained to
do. And I think that's some of the real knowledge and
stuff we can hand on.

So your instinct isn't,
"What a cunt. I'm fucking done with her. I'm never speaking to her again," which might mean that your children and her children are now estranged.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like these awful things that can go on and on. Instead, you might think, "Hmm, pretty sure this isn't really about the coat."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's about the coat, but it's not really so that you're looking deeper to say, "This is her way of grieving right now. What we should do is just let this go and then we'll check back in later when we're"

-- you know, if there's more composure or think of a more celebratory reason to come together. And I'm not an expert at grieving, but I think that's what -- if we had more of that, I think that it would allow the informal networks of support to thrive and it wouldn't always be a miserable experience of going to the Oppal inquiry; you know what I mean? It was grim. And then -- you know what I mean?
It wasn't -- where if I think if we made some kind of event that went on either every five year anniversary or something or -- but really honour the kids.

So of the she -- even though and I don't know how this works across the country because it may not work nationally, but it seems to me we should do that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But they apologized.

I mean why should you report someone missing for eight years and not even get her on a list? Not even get her on the fucking list in their own system? No one was looking for her.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: [Private information redacted - one sentence]?

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: [Private information redacted - one sentence].

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So it was specifically with the Oppal inquiry, but it wasn't just -- picked and remained people.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: [Private information redacted - one sentence].
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1 redacted - one sentence].

2 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

3 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: [Private information

4 redacted - two sentences].

5 MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But I think it -- it

7 signals to them that something happened to them and it's

8 something real and it's not just some fake apology.

9 So the other thing with women who are

10 Aboriginal and I sort of -- I don't know how -- I just la-

11 da-da dreaming on thinking "Wow," you know, "This is so

12 interesting, 1,200."

13 You know, it's like almost by accident you

14 couldn't have that many.

15 And then, you know, I remember the big

16 concern for Elsie's life was that she could not marry a

17 white man. And that was very close to our family because

18 we're white. And so she won't marry my brother, but my

19 mother saying to me. I said,

20 "Why are they getting [Niece 1]

21 baptized?

22 And she said, "Ann, if you don't

23 understand, it's a cultural thing. They love to do

24 ceremonies. Ceremony is so important to Aboriginal

25 people."
And I'm going,
"Oh, us hippies, we won't do any of
that shit."
You know what I mean? It was kind of a
real, you know, cultural clash. And it made me really
thoughtful because it was really insightful of my mother to
understand that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But she couldn't do
the wedding ceremony and whether that weakened the
relationship or not, whichever. I'm just saying,
"What a burden."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And she was sort of
clever enough not to have her status removed from her, and
her children's, but think of the thousands.
The legacy that we've left Aboriginal
women in this country is that they don't belong anywhere at
all ever and it's like the doors are all slammed. You
can't go back to a reserve that you've lost your status.
They're not taking you.

At first, I thought -- when I remember
there was da-da-da, you know, there's going to be this
negotiation and then -- and I'm like, you know, butterflies
and -- you know, isn't that great? You know, just running
through the field of flowers. They get to go home.

Then I find out that the reserves take their application and can refuse them. I was like, "A bunch of fucking men are going to do that to a bunch of... fuck you."

You know what I mean? Like this is the injustice and it can't be overlooked.

It can't be overlooked that you have -- how many would it be? Hundred thousand more? Two hundred thousand people who have had this -- I mean we're not even talking about foster care. We're not even talking about fucking juvie kiddie lock-up prison, all of the other shit which is of course a huge story in and of itself.

This is just the kind people that are -- gave birth to you or are already your cousins or your uncles or your grandfathers. You have been disenfranchised and if it didn't happen to you, it might have happened to your mother or your grandmother and then all of these women that result from this.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: This is an expansive number of people and that needs to be mended. Fuck you. It needs to be mended. There's nothing else you can say.

I'm white. If my dad dies, I'm going to get a piece of whatever the inheritance is and I can let
go. I live in Canada. Thank you very much. Women have battled this out. I am entitled to my inheritance and I will go to Court if my brothers all get together and cut all the women out.

We've got rights. And, you know, it's a shitty way to live, but you know, it's your last resort.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I'm just saying. I'm not promoting this as the sole way everything's done, but when you think of the influence -- when I think of myself as poor, old, 63-years-old. Like I'm going to get a shit pension.

I wore (indiscernible) as a huge contribution to the community and my reward is to be brutally poor when I'm old. That's my reward and I'm pissed off about it, but imagine if I was Aboriginal. Holy fuck I'd be ten times madder. It's just -- it's so shocking that that was allowed to happen and it never got repaired.

I remember thinking it was going to get repaired, but it didn't get repaired and if there's anything that this loud, loud, huge number of missing women tells us. Like there's a kind of -- like how could this even happen? You know what I mean?

Well, sure, look at the facts. You'll see
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1 how it happened. They can't go home. There isn't a home.
2 They can't go to extended family. There's all these -- all
3 these relationships have been broken and no one's eager to
4 invite them back. The reserves are too small. We need an
5 entire -- we need to rethink the entire, you know, the
6 unceded land.

7 We all grew around going unceded land,
8 unceded land, unceded land. It's just like okay, fuck --
9 you know, sure. It's a thing you can keep saying to be
10 politically correct but we have a real issue here and
11 people are dying as a result of unceded land.

12 And we need to make a very serious stab at
13 a huge legal case or something. Or just start a campaign
14 and say to white people,
15 "How's it going for you?"
16 You know, feeling that fucking bad about
17 all these women. Like honestly, it's not going to go away.
18 You're going to actually take action on
19 it, and I think that -- I don't think how you do the
20 genealogy or you just start to just -- what you do mostly.
21 You set up the office, you open the door,
22 you put the shingle, and you go,
23 "Come on in. Do you think you should
24 have status back? And where can we
25 put you?"
If these reserves aren't big enough, make them fucking bigger. It's Canada for fuck's sakes.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: We got nothing but land and the quality of Crown land. Like if you let that sink in, it's a really bad feeling.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I just -- the Queen of England owned the land. Like I'm just, like, oh, God. This is getting bad. But I'm just saying -- and I don't know how much of -- if this is the little wedge that starts to pound away at the entire way land was distributed and how we're looking at that, then good. Let's keep at it because the idea that -- I mean it's not that I'm encouraging women to die, but I just don't see how we can structurally think of a way to stop this.

This is -- it's like the canary in the coal mine. This is the signal to us constantly that the historical problems and of course the present day problems are continuing to go missing.

Anyway, I'm just -- that's my rant about that. And I think for whatever -- I think there's tremendous amount of support -- certainly women to women, there is. If we can dredge it up and keep it -- I think
it's a matter of articulating it accurately. And coming with a kind of fact sheet,

"Did you know?"

And I think they must have this in the census. How many people are Indigenous, aboriginal, first Natives, you know, all those titles and Metis even, and say how many are there right now who have no status?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And we must know that. It's got to be out there.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I interviewed 212 people in this neighbourhood and 100 -- or 100 of them were when I call First Nations, Indigenous, you know, whatever they wanted to call themselves and I was surprised at how many said -- so I said,

"Do you have status?"

That's -- it was like one of my questions.

Of the ones that even had status, I said,

"Had you ever been to your reserve?"

"No."

"Are you ever going to go to your reserve?"

"No."

A.S.A.P. Reporting Services Inc.
(613) 564-2727 (416) 861-8720
"Do you feel welcome on your reserve?"

"No."

"Do you know anyone on your reserve?"

"No."

I was like,

"Holy shit. We've got like a refugee camp down here"

and yet the reserves still wants their numbers for whatever system they've got in place, so they can say their membership is a certain amount.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And when one of the moms in our group who's Cree -- she -- they moved into my house, but they were going to take her child away from her and I was like,

"Oh, this is so not happening on my watch."

And we made this little team of -- they were going for a removal and she was still in the women's hospital at Fir. And I think she was on methadone. She was the most responsible person. I was just shocked at how responsible she was.

We had created a little position in VANDU for the women's group because the woman who was hired said,
"Well, I'm not a drug user. Whatever. Why don't I take part of my wages and set it aside and we'll make" --
because we didn't have much money. But anyway, she did it and that woman had reference letters and filled out -- you know what I mean? She was highly motivated.
And for some reason, you have this -- yes, she's like full-term like that. I was like -- so we're going along, blah blah blah, and I get this -- she had the baby. I said,
"Really? I thought the baby wasn't due" --
I didn't ask. She was a super quiet woman.
Anyway, so we'd all fly into this, you know, who's visiting her. Then the day came. She came by the office and she said -- I said,
"Where's the baby?"
She said,
"The baby's at Fir Square"
but she had come out for a visit. And just -- absolute black clouds. I go,
"There's only one scenario when they
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-- you can't take your baby out of a hospital. I know what the fuck's going on."

They had apprehended her other three kids. She was in her 40s. She's super motivated. So we went through this whole rigmarole to get -- we made a schedule. This was my friend's idea because I had just had a baby -- my baby that's 15. And what did I do with my baby? I can't find daycare. Fuck -- fucking throw yourself -- let yourself on fire before you -- you know what I mean? I'm just saying.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So I had the baby coming to work with me all the time. And they're going, "Oh, the baby couldn't come to the drug user's office" and I'm going, "My baby can't tell it's a drug user's office."

It was just like -- so I was like [indicating sound].

And so they were going, "Oh. Well," like, you know, what are you going to say? I'm a bad mother? Like I was a little
"[indicating sound] okay."

Aggressive white woman talking, you know what I mean?

So I -- we made this little schedule for her, but she moved into my place and I had to sign all the papers as if I was the baby's foster mother. And it was a great way to do it because I could both protect her and support her. She didn't need much support, but I never looked after the baby.

I think I held the baby once for 20 minutes because once -- they were trying to take someone's baby away. They come -- for protective thing and I think she stayed for six or eight months and -- until she could get settled which meant getting housing.

And then we'd go to Court from time to time and it was so stressful, but the -- she was incredibly motivated. At one point, she took the baby to a treatment centre where you could bring the baby with you. And I -- I don't know. It was a number of weeks. It was out in Apearenville (ph), I think it's called.

Anyway, so it was just a real --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And those are the kind of things that worked. Why did that work? Because it was based on friendship. There was no service provision
involved because I just took the risk, you know.

You know, I don't know how -- it wasn't much of a risk on my part other than that I was just hoping I would pass as a foster mother because I'd had my own run-ins with child protection services, but they let me become -- and of course, I wasn't really the foster mother. I was fostering their relationship of keeping them together.

So we need tons more things like that because that's another thing. If you go through this list and see how many of these women had children and then they were taken from them, especially at birth. I think it's a -- it's -- I don't know if it's worst. I can't. You can't compare. It's like comparing worst and worst and worst and worst.

Like if you took a two-year-old from you, you'd already be so bonded to your two-year-old, it would be worst. But I think women have a pattern. They use more drugs, they get more reckless. And I think it really adds to their risky lifestyle.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: We don't have anything in place that says, "I'm on your side."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
"I want you to succeed. I know whatever you're facing now -- no matter what it is, we're going to get through it. No matter how badly you behave, I'm going to forgive you."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know, those kind of -- if you call that a service. That kind of stuff. And have enough people involved, so it's not just one person.

These families have to deal with the "problem child," you know. It's overwhelming to the whole family where you can try and have a circle of support, like they do with people with disabilities.

So that was my rant number two. I don't know if there's any more just other than like this memorial thing. I don't know how to memorialize it, but I think this is shit.

I mean for a while I had made about -- how many of these -- I don't know. I probably made ten of them and I would just go to things and say,

"You know, do you have -- do you want one?"

That's what I'd say.

"What do you have?"
And then you're commemorating a missing poster for your kid going missing? But that's all you've got.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: That was like their only way they were part of our society was the fact that someone got paid to go look for them or something.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Because they spent way more. When they sifted all the dirt on the Pickton farm, they spent -- it was more than this. Probably $100 million sifting dirt.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: No way.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes way. It was huge. And of course, no one talks about it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But if you -- and I think that's the other analysis we need to give to this.

These women can barely get $200 a month in support from welfare if they looked for work. That's what they do to them now. And -- and yet when they're missing, we'll just pour money -- just pour it down, down a dark hole. Like sifting dirt, looking for their little shards of teeth.

And at some point, you start to think to
"This is an industry."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like it was something really creepy about it to me, you know.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I just had to stay out of it. I just, you know, like you can just -- I didn't go out there.

Lots of the sex worker women I knew that knew some of these women and their bits were being found, they went out and it was just this tent and they had all these flowers and they would just sit there and weep and weep.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Because I think it -- you know, that wasn't the position we were. I don't know if we would have gone. If -- you know, I probably would have supported them to go, but it wasn't -- there was never a location for her loss.

And I think designating the sacred ground for these women, for the ones that have never been found, could go a long way to the families healing and also the community that this -- that we've got this one rock that's in the park and I think that rock's been there -- I think
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1 the rock was there well before when -- I don't know. I
don't know what years were -- it's been there a long time
in memory of the missing women because they were still
going missing.

And it's a smaller thing, like if there
was a -- I don't know. I mean I haven't thought about it
and I haven't done the research, but -- what I think we
should be motivated to do is to think of what's the legacy.

You can do it with money. You can do it
with one of the things -- like I kept saying that to Wally
Oppal (ph),

"There better be something for these
women."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I mean we did this to
them. Like and for the children. We did this to them. We
wouldn't look for their relatives -- like as an apology,
you know, it's just flimsy butch of words, but the $50,000
was a thing. But I thought there should be -- even maybe a
legacy, intergenerational stuff where there's a scholarship
--

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- or access to money
for training programs or like whatever. Like some kind of
program where you can make your application and they don't
make it impossible for you, but there's a --
And that that legacy's run by the families
in the sense that people can keep their ear on it and make
sure it's still operating properly and hasn't died or
something. Like, you know, just disappeared.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I don't know if I
have any more. I don't know what to say about the -- the
kids that are in trouble now, you know. I don't know if we
have any trouble. How many of these kids --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: How many of these
women's children are dead?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: How many of these
women's children are in trouble?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: That would be a tragic
but interesting --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But I think it --

yes.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- information to pull
out.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I mean they -- I
think we lived through -- I don't know whether -- you know,
when you think of the different crossroads in Elsie's life
when things could have turned out better.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It was hard living in the, you know, 1982 is a huge depression in Canada. And everyone was hurt by it. And if you were on the fringes, you were really knocked, you know, further down. Like, or getting somewhere else was made more impossible.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: That's how I put it.

And then enough of that happened. And in the 90s, it was another huge turn down in the economy.

And I think we don't have anything in place. Like that goes back to this disenfranchisement that has happened to hundreds of thousands of people, not just women, but it started with women. That's where it was somehow palatable to deny women their status and just -- I don't know. People used to be able to sell their status too.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I don't know. The story is much more complicated than I know.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But I'd love to see that really tie to this because I don't think it's going to go away until we fix it.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm. Well...

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: This is Suzie Halagroudput (ph). Andrea Jobory (ph)'s grandpa.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, okay.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I was -- they're so sweet. The -- I think it was Andrea Jobory or Patricia Johnson's cousin and they -- you know, they're so motivated and they come to the neighbourhood and they walk around and they look for her and they talk to people.

And there's got to be a way that that kind of courage and caring and stuff -- it's like you don't want people to think that they didn't care.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: The first thing they said to me when I -- finally. I went to this meeting and there were these two cops there, I said -- I said,

"Oh, no. That's all straightened out. They're taking a missing women reports."

And I said,

"No, they're not."

And they said,

"Yes, they are."

It's like -

"You're all a bunch of [indicating
sound] across the table at some guy."
I knew them well enough and I had met with
them enough times and I said,
"I'm going home right now"
-- this is all very controlled --
"and I'm going to report her. And if
I can't get through, I want your cell
number and you're going to help me;
right?"
And I called 9-1-1 and they said,
"You have to call missing women's"
and I called -- or
"the missing persons."
I called missing persons, they told me to
call -- this went on.
It took me over two and a half hours and
the first thing they said to me after we got the report
taken, which is over the phone -- it's just a simple little
thing --
"Why did you take so long to report
her?"
That's the first thing they said to me
and that came up again.
In the Sun article about this, they had a
bunch of pictures and they'd said,
right? And then the reporter makes these remarks:
"You can see these women weren't really missed. Look how long it took them to report."
And I'm like on the phone with this poor guy like you got to take that out of the article. This isn't us. This isn't us. Don't ever blame the -- and you know, I mean -- and maybe there's some family on here who just didn't give a shit about their relative; you know what I mean? But they were --
It just -- I think the families have anything to say is that's they're caring and they're longing in their search and all their hard work is -- I mean -- unacknowledged and dismissed. And it's because we've got a police system in place instead of another way to find people and, you know, when I went in [M.B.] -- what's his name? [M.B.], that's his name. Poor man.
Anyway, because I keep quoting these awful things he said. I remember I went in one time and I said, "You know, we haven't found Elsie."
And he goes, "She's not found yet? She's fish food."
And I thought,
"Thank God her kids aren't here to
hear you say such a stupid thing."

But another time, I said,
"Well, you know" -
he said

"48 Aboriginal women -- year-old
Aboriginal woman -- don't go missing.
They need to be teens or in their
eyearly 20s and then we'll make posters
of them."

I was like,
"Okay."

And he wasn't defending. He's being sarcastic or something. You know what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: He's -- I don't think it was --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Facetious about it.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It wasn't his position on it. He was just commenting that -- and I remember Angela [Arsenault]'s paper -- picture was up and she's so pretty. And the pictures were really pretty and she was quite young, I think. And, you know, I pointed -- by this time, the walls were filled with these posters and
we can't get Elsie added to them and I think that was his comment that, you know.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: "Well, a 48-year-old Aboriginal woman don't go missing."

They're not going to look. I mean that's the fact that she's Aboriginal.

And I said, "Do you mean if I went missing and I just happened -- I'm white, but I mean it isn't very encouraging."

I think the older you are in that way, you're devalued somehow.

I don't know if that's true whether -- because I think missing people generally -- there's a huge problem with the system of looking for those people. And it's particularly cruel with Aboriginal women because when we tell the story, there really is a complete juxtaposition of how they look for a white woman and how they look for an Aboriginal woman or how they investigate murders, the same thing. All the faux pas and fuck ups.

That whole thing in Regina. I follow them -- I try and follow as many of them as I can, but there's not much of a place to connect and commiserate and give
each other hints and give each other support.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: [Three sentences redacted pursuant to Rule 55].

It's the community and the giving that lets you be a human, not that you're so fucked up everyone has to give to you. That's not an attractive thing for human beings -- I had this -- human beings just want to make the world a better place and that's so true. And you almost never find anyone who doesn't want that for -- you know, they -- everyone feels that they're capable. Almost everyone, even people that you just think, "You can't be capable."

Like you know what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I deal with this all the time in my groups. People that are just so ill and, you know, degraded and you think -- and you go, "No, of course, they can be."

And that's the thing. When they're allowed to be -- one of the ways we can tell we're humans is that we give and we contribute or we help or we -- you know what I mean? We belong. All those kind of soft things.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And that's sure what I'd like to see go forward if there's an outcome to this --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- whole thing across the country because I assume we could find neighbourhoods in Winnipeg or Regina or Saskatoon where women have gone missing and there's just people just left and they haven't got a way of feeling like they can commemorate them or look for them or celebrate their lives or help out with their children -- any of those things.

So that's all I think I have to say.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Thank you.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: You're welcome. You have a wealth of insight.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: You should write a textbook.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Well, the -- yes, actually, you know what? I just realized one of the other last --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: That's fine.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I mean -- drug addiction and the lack of access to substitution programs for drugs and the lack of even detox if people want to go that way and treatment if people want to go that way. And
the kind of bias and hatred and criminalization of people
who use drugs definitely contributed to these women's
deaths.

I don't know if that's a common theme
across the country, but it would not surprise me. So when
you add that vulnerability of the criminalization -- like I
said, they don't want to be found by the cops --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- but there's women.

So that ties to it. But on the plus side, it would be to
say -- when we look after people, do we say,

"Okay. You've been arrested for
prostitution?"

Police hear a claim. They don't do that
anymore but go look at the data and you'll see lots of
prostitution arrests, so who's doing it?

And it's certainly true of any of the
outlying areas. That's never a charge that makes any
sense. It's just destructive. Like what's the point?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Really? It's not
even illegal.

You know, the prostitution laws are
stupid. It's not illegal to sell sex. It's illegal to say
you're selling sex. I mean -- oh, come on. Why do we even
have anything like this? It's just -- it's so flimsy and who are you victimizing? You're victimizing a victim. It's stupid.

So -- but those kind of charges then take on a life of their own and the drug charges. And what we need to do is stop criminalizing people that are poor, marginalized, addicted, and ill. And do whatever -- survival. What they do for survival is what they do for survival.

And it was a consistently omitted thing in the Oppal report and the Oppal inquiry. No one would talk about why -- why weren't they offered drug treatment or minimum wage -- this is why people like guaranteed annual income.

If you had an income every month, you wouldn't have to go and beg from welfare. Welfare wouldn't be able to do their cruel nightmare to you and then for getting things that you needed, you could get away from (indiscernible). You could get away from some of these relationships that take you down this terrible path and it can be universal so that it's not just an Aboriginal program.

I mean I think that until they recognize this terrible thing that's happened to women that we're Aboriginal where they were disenfranchised from their
heritage and their -- what little they did have -- some
reserve, which is horribly inadequate.

But I'm just saying that really sticks
out. But this lack of access to proper research-based,
best practice addiction treatment is another -- like for
years and years, you couldn't get needles on reserves.
They were like,

"Oh, we don't have drug users here"
or that occurred -- just drug use.
So you'd get these weird pockets of this
kind of behaviour that causes people so much damage.
There's tons of AIDS then gets spread.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like it's happening
in Saskatchewan like crazy and almost everyone who's
injecting drugs and getting HIV from used needles is First
Nations.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And you know, like
honestly -- and this, it took us years and years to get it,
but now I can take truckloads of needles and drive them to
Saskatchewan and hand them out. No one would even blink an
eye.

I'm just -- I'm not kidding because I
could have done it with some of the suburbs out here where
they were withholding needles. We'd just fill up my car and drive out there and start handing them out, like in an organized way -- we'd organize a group.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But the -- it was so much of what we can do to help people is, again, to say, "Are you -- how are you doing? What do you need?"

instead of saying,

"We have these programs, but you don't fit any of them and until you get six months clean, you can't do this"

and

"We're taking your baby because we say that" or --

In Saskatchewan, for years and years, the fact that you were on methadone was an automatic apprehension of your child as if that makes you a bad mother. I mean you're on -- lots of mother are on all kinds of stuff. It's just bullshit.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So -- but it's never been really apologized for and you worry that even though it's policy now not to do that, it just takes one
bureaucrat to get in power with some kind of psycho bullshit idea and bang, it can come back in. So that's where we need a much broader understanding of addictions, what are the best treatments for addictions, what works. Shockingly, prescribing heroin to heroin addicts gives -- and they stick with it. If they stick with heroin prescription for 18 months, there's like a 24 percent abstinence raise. Nobody's boasting 24 percent abstinence rates. Most abstinence programs are like if they can get ten percent.

And that's what we got -- these rotating, unexamined, mythical, cruel, you know, it's just all based on stigma because of the criminalization. So it's, I think, a huge thing if -- and I don't know -- you'd get a sense of this going across the country.

If women that are going missing, especially Indigenous women that are going missing, are marginalized and criminalized because of their drug use, which is a medical illness, it needs to be really part of the report that this is another key piece. As it may not be central, it can be still a big piece.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know, if people -
"Okay, how come that woman isn't dead or missing?"
"Well, because she was lucky enough"

- you know what I mean? You can see these divergent points in people's lives where they were able to get away from the danger because they were offered something that worked for them at the time.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So most of the women when I talk to their families, I'd say -- I'd get them up on the stand like I'm some little lawyer. It was pathetic. Anyway, I'd say to them -- like [Picton Victim 1], I said to her,

"Was your daughter ever offered methadone?"
"No."
"Was she" --

This province has the highest rates of addiction in Canada and it always has, but I'm just saying -- especially, you know, opioids and stuff -- we had 2,000 people on methadone when these people were going missing in B.C. -- 2,000. It's like 25,000 now. Like it's shocking. They weren't at all meeting it. It was a huge problem to get on a two-week wait period. Otherwise,
you were just offered religious-based treatment.

Some of the Aboriginal-based treatment, Round Lake, or this or that had a lot more cultural stuff in it but still a very limited -- in terms of the number, like a pinhole to get a ton of people through. It was not a good model.

And that's what -- where we talk about -- and I don't know if it can be introduced into the inquiry stuff.

There's a triangle that's made and at the top of the triangle is abstinence and if you keep tell people they just need to go straight to abstinence, it's silly because -- and this was a triangle that was made in Europe when they said,

"Okay. Here's these people on the street. What's -- what do we offer the people on the street? Drop-in centres, methadone, drug user groups,"

you know, like all these things they can wander in and out of and then they're connected. And once they're connected to anything, they can move up the triangle.

What's the worst thing is you just leave them to die on the streets. The data was showing that most
people who are addicted are not getting any interaction with our government paid-for addiction treatment services for seven years. I was like,

"Holy fuck. Who knew?"

If there's anything we can do better as a society or as a government that's paying for this anyway, it would be to say to people,

"We want you to interact with us soon. How about within six months? How about within a year? As soon as you know you're in trouble" because you can go somewhere and it's not this --

What we've done with abstinence is we've made it this be all. You either have to succeed at it or fail at it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And what you want is to say -- the other research shows that people who become abstinent for two years have made 11 attempts to become abstinent. Eleven. That means we need to offer lots and lots of attempts.

And each time, it shouldn't be, "Well, you know, you failed."

It should be,
"Ha, well."
You know, make it more light-hearted.
"There's some clean time no one will
never take away from you"
and
"How can you stay safe in the
meantime"
And
"Don't ever be afraid to try here
again. You're always welcome here."
Because we used to have a system here in
B.C. It was going on when these guys were in. They
wouldn't let you in detox more than three times a year.
I'm like,
"Well, who made that up?"
And they'd say,
"Oh, that's not our policy"
and I said,
"Well, it's being told to people that
are telling it to me and I'm here,
you know, to say is that the policy
or isn't it?"
And they had it not written down
anywhere.
"Oh"
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and they just kind of –
"They're just using our detox centre
to get food and shelter."

I'm going,
"Wow. That sure says a lot about
what else we're offering them."

I'm like,
"Good. That will keep them alive."

Like they -- people just lose -- they lose
the plot. They just think,
"Well, I'm defending my thing and I
don't want people in here who aren't
serious. And I'd want people who are
really going to commit and then
they're going to succeed."

And the other one is creaming,
"I want to show that my facility gets
good results. So who do I leave off?
The people from the worst
backgrounds. The people from -- that
are going to take longer. The people
that are more sick. The people that
are --;"

you know what I mean?

And then you just cream. You just take
the people that were going to quit anyway and didn't
actually need your help. And you know what I mean? They
just waltz through the place.

Where the people that are at the bottom
tend to get this huge rap and then they get discriminated
against even within a system that's supposed to take people
who are addicted to drugs into that system. They're being
discriminated against because they're not the "right"
addicts. And it's racist. It is absolutely racist.

So that's another contributor to this.
And I don't know -- I mean it's not as if we're trying to
make the list longer, but I think it can't be overlooked
because you see how trapped people get. If you're
physically dependent on a substance that you have to get
every day and the side effects of not having it are you
start vomiting, you have extreme diarrhea and you have
goose flesh and hot flashes and you're so weak you almost
can't walk. You are so sick.

As people said to me, it's like the flu --
the worst flu you've ever had except worst and stuff
shooting out of your mouth and your asshole at the same
time and you can't shaking and shivering and you can't eat
anything. You can't get comfortable. You know, who even
wants to be around you? Who's going to go through that
mess?
You know, so the -- we put -- if that's -- and then for turning a trick or doing something dangerous or agreeing to anything will get you that relief.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: We've put people in a pretty clearly tiny place from where they cannot make decisions and that's why it's so important that we get these replacement programs in where we were saying to get it right away. We were going -- I thought there's a wait -- if there's a three-day wait for methadone, I'm going to lose this person.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: She's shitting her pants right now, can't I just -- so instead you're -- this is what I found myself doing. And you drive them in your car, you give them some money, they jump out and buy drugs off someone off the street, and then they take those drugs so you can actually sit down and finish doing intake with them.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like I'm just going, "Is this the best we can do?"
I mean it's technologically Canada. Like you just start to get so cynical about --
MS. JAYME MENZIES: The --
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- just the bias is so profoundly strong. So most of the advancements have been made by a bunch of junkies that fought like crazy to get all this stuff and, you know, the groups that we formed, the B.C. Association of People on Methadone.

And if you walk into those drug user groups right now, if they're properly done in terms of this grassroots, you start counting people and (Audio breaking off) and they go,

"Well, I don't ask them if they got status or not. I just look."

You look Aboriginal and what we had was -- I flip over a sheet and it just said,

"How many men in the room, how many women in the room"

and of course, you can do that with transgendered. I don't give a shit. If you look like a woman, you're a woman; dick.

So you know what I mean? Which a transgendered person wouldn't mind if they're doing he, she, her, whatever, you know if they're doing female. Whatever. And then the same thing we would do. We would say,

"Is it raining?"

And then,
"Okay. How many people in the room look like they're Indigenous or First Nations?"

And it's a third, a third, a third and because that's what's in this neighbourhood.

That's how -- you know, and I think that the groups that are doing that kind of stuff need to be held accountable. Are you really reaching the people that were paying you to reach? Because you can always go,

"Oh, you know, I don't feel safe with that guy here. He raised his voice"
or -- and we are -- they're tough customers.

As I say, I don't think it's because they had a bad day. I'm pretty sure they had a bad week, a bad month, and maybe even a bad decade. Like maybe we can get over our fucking bullshit and if not, get some fucking self-care so you can come back tomorrow and you're a full tank; you know what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's not about you. It's not about how scared you are. And we've -- you know, even with Insight, we had this happening. Insight bars people. I was like,

"Holy fuck."
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, really.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON:

"Where are you going to shoot? You don't know"

and it's because he raised his hand or he threatened someone. And I'm going,

"It's not that they've done that. It's that you need to make it so they can apologize and be forgiven for doing that. And if you don't make that mechanism, you just create these people that"

-- I'll show them to you. They're all sitting all over the street shooting dope and I don't know if they're, you know, they have done more about that at Insight because we sort of raised a ruckus about it. And it's embarrassing to them. It shouldn't be embarrassing to them.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: If you've got the wrong workers there, get the right ones in. If the workers there are so burnt that they need a break, then let's fund that. Let's make sure we've got ample, you know, breaks and strategies for preventing trauma. Like everyone talks trauma, but all I see is more.
I see the cops surrounding people and sectioning them under the Mental Health Act. Six cops heading for them in handcuffs and then I'm thinking, "If this person is traumatized, I can't even imagine how traumatized they are now."

And these are these repeated traumas; you know what I mean? Where they're away arrested, you're locked in a psych ward, you're tied to a bed. Like I can't even imagine.

And then we're talking about healing them. I'm just like, "I don't know where we start, but I'm pretty sure it's not here."

And it's -- you know, this -- Like this whole process is like that. Anyone can walk here and talk to you guys and there's just not enough of it, you know --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- that's ongoing and there for people whatever they need it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I think I am done now. I'm flagging. Drug addiction, families, drug policy, how to look for people that are missing. How to look for
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people that are missing is -- I don't know. I'll have to go post --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well, I've got some --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I don't know if there's -- if there is any websites or anything that erupt from this where the families all want to meet each other or make a place to share stuff. I'd be interested in being informed of it. I don't know if it's happening or not.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And I mean -- I don't really know -- hopefully people.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I mean -- you mean like a website -- like our website kind of supports --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes, that they make up just a little bit where you can just post stuff.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, yes. That's --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Because it'll be -- I'm sure it will -- there will be complaints.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: The --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- we get complaints every day.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I bet.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They're an ordinary
bunch.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: That's part of it.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I know. Of course.

They went through such terrible stuff.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: It's part of the healing; right?

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I know.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I know about that. I mean that took me a while to come to because --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes, like we have a Facebook page. You know, that's really --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh, I guess we can try it --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: You know, we don't really have enough of what you're suggesting though --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: No.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- right now.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Well, it's just nice to network across the country. I mean I do now with harm reduction stuff and drug user stuff. So it seems like we could do it with this stuff as well.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I mean there's some overlap, but it's not everybody meets that. They just
sometimes -- I mean, God, you read these cases like the Betty Osborne thing and you just think, "Holy shit."
The racism is so terrible.
I mean to just think that women like that -- I mean this neighbourhood I get the sensation we're kind of, you know, as you walk down the street, you'd feel the bones underneath the sidewalk cracking because a lot of people died in this neighbourhood and a lot of women were sold and abused and prostituted like way back. I mean -- where are you from?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Manitoba.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes. I think Manitoba's older than B.C. I don't know. Like even look at these --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I mean in the --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- how old are these bricks?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- Canadian sense, like in --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Vancouver's a very new town.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes. I think -- but we joined confederation in 1870 so likely before B.C., so but just slightly though.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Because I think it kind of progressed with the railroad; right?

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes. But then in terms of the buildings and the --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: The thing -- this neighbourhood's got Gastown and Gassy Jack was this famous guy but he, like, married a 14-year-old Aboriginal girl or something so it's a deadly fucking story.

When you hear it, you just think, "Holy shit. That's our legacy?"

And then when she died, he married her sister. I was like,

"Oh."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, my gosh.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I mean where are their kids? And did they ever have any? Like I'm always curious about who's who now.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Wow.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And my children's great-great-grandfather probably came and took most of the land down here. And I mean they don't have any money now unfortunately, but, you know what I'm saying?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Like there's these --
everyone's got a legacy to get over in terms of -- I wonder
what that was really like, you know.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know, I wonder
whose land he stole. Like you know what I mean? This
whole stolen land thing is a very wounding thing and people
don't behave well always when they're wounded.

Some people are, you know, trying to make
amends and get forgiveness, but other people are covering
up their guilt with more bad behaviour; you know?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Fuck them.

"Lay down"
or, you know, whatever.

"Native people should be grateful".

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON:
"Look at the technology we brought."
And I'm like,

"Really? What technology is that?"

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's creepy. So I
think -- I mean the number of bigger issues that get, you
know -- the whole stolen land thing. It just sits there.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And I think it's --
well, the good thing about everyone's opening everything
was unceded territory is that it's starting to creep into
the consciousness of --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well--

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- white people that
there could be something to settle. I mean as phony as it
might be; you know what I mean? I'm just thinking,

"I'm not sure why it gets said."

I think it's an interesting thing.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I was a bit taken
back when I hear the mayor do it.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I think.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And then just move
along with his day.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes, yes, but at the
same time, you know, someone's hearing this.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And as our own
children are getting disenfranchised, you can't own
everything in this city. It's like [indicating sound] --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- going to this tiny elite. And as there's less and less elite people, it might occur to them, like,

"Hmm, I'm on unceded territory too."

I don't want any of it; you know what I mean? They start to think of -- there might be another model we could use for land use. Let me think. Anyway, who knows.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: It'll be interesting to watch.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes, well... So are you Metis or?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: I am.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes? From where?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well, I was born and raised in Dauphin, but kind of -- my -- we may have -- my grandmother was right just outside of Winnipeg is where her --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And what's your name?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Her maiden name was Teddy A. Terrian (ph).

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Her married name is Lamerre (ph).

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh, yes. And which
one's the Metis name? Both of them?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Not Lamerre. Lamerre is French.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Right.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And then Terrian is the...

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Terrian.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: My friend is Cindy Loranbell (ph) and her father --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, that's a very Metis name.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes. Yes, and it turns out that my children whose great-great-grandfather -- great-great -- I think three -- ended up with a huge swatch of all this land and then you go down, down and their grandmother -- her father was Metis and he's a Macdonald.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And he was a Hudson's Bay guy, I think, or the other one. What's the huge companies? But you know, we find all the -- honestly, there's boxes of stuff with stamps from 1860 something --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, interesting.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I'm going, "That's fucking stamped from 1860. I
could just take this."
Like I don't know what they are. It's such -- I just keep saying,
"Can we get this out of the fucking basement?"
If this basement floods, we're going to lose all this shit.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Hmm.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So anyway, I haven't talked to him into it yet. I'm trying to claw away this whole -- and get it archived.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: That's great.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I said,
"We could just take photocopies.
They can keep the real stuff"
and then we won't have the burden.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And we could just keep our own little -- make our own little family thing if we want. But it's creepy because they were doing really shitty mean things to trappers as far as I could tell.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: We found this one document and he's recording this guy's property and then I realize he's taking it.
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh. I was like, "Whoa. This is" --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Is that history of Manitoba?

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Pardon me?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Is that in Manitoba this was happening? Is that where --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I think it is.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- probably.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I think they were --

I think it was --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: That's kind of where it all collided.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Winnipeg, yes. That's the hub. It's like Chicago in the states or something.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm. Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes, yes, I have a --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Where the rivers met and all that, so --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes. It's -- anyway, I almost don't remember, but Macdonald was the name and --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- and I don't know --
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well, that makes sense because mainly it was Scottish, French, and Indigenous people, so --


MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And I don't know -- he might have been the Metis guy, but who knows. You can never --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I don't know how far back he'll go. You meet all these Scottish people who were involved --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well, that's right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- and then they had Native wives --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- so their kids are Native, but they also had a wife back in Scotland and a ton of them were sent back to go to university.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And stuff like that. There's a really interesting mix.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
Ann Livingston  (Elsie Sebastian)

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And I don't know what
-- I could try to follow the big legal case on Metis, but
I'm failing. I've got to --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- like, you know --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: It's --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Cindy had to fight
like crazy to get her kid covered for his school because
there's some kind of fund you can get. But anyway, I don't
know.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: There's not a whole
lot of -- I mean --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: There's very --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- no matter what the
Courts say, the government don't -- hasn't really acted on
what kind of rights should be upheld for Metis people yet.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: No.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: So...

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And then the whole
issue of land.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: It's a lot like your
unceded territory issue here where there's just land
sitting there that was promised to the Metis and it was
never given over.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Really?
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes. Basically, all of Winnipeg was -- is Metis land that was never, you know, ceded; right?

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Right.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: And so the Courts have kind of acknowledged it, but now it's like, "Well, what do we do now, you know? Winnipeg is sitting on it."

So it's very similar to here except that First Nations signed treaties but the Metis didn't kind of thing --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: All right.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: -- so it's a little complicated.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I went to that museum in --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: The --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Near Regina; is that --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- or near Saskatoon?

Yes, Saskatoon. Lalosh (ph); is that it?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh, Batoche.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Batoche, sorry.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: There is like a --
yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: That's shocking. I was like,

"Holy shit. This is all murder and shit."

They don't tell this to you in school.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes, no, they sure don't.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: No, and it's not --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: It's not one of the --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's too bad. I mean it'd be great to take over and be able to tell us on this history.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I think we'd have a much more cohesive community.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know what I mean?

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Well, the textbooks like the older textbooks kind of frame it as these people were rebels and, you know, not --

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Yes, and look who they paid to come in and mow them down. A bunch of -- so I just see the oppression, just -- you know, [indicating sound].
Like you take a bunch of people and drive them off their land in Scotland and they go to America and drive a bunch of --

"Hey, it's a repeating pattern."

If you were considered an addict, you weren't allowed into Carnegie. You weren't allowed into the women's Downtown Eastside Women's Centre. You weren't allowed anywhere. They were basically standing all over the streets.

So when we made a place for users to come, it was a big deal.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I mean whatever, so.

And then we fought those. We kept mailing letters and threatening to get lawyers and do human rights cases if they didn't fix these policies. Anyway.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: So there's a point to that.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oppressing...

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Oh. Then we get going and we get a little bit of money and we go to do something and our own workers are now doing exactly what was done -- like the first one was with needles.

They wouldn't give out bloody needles at the needle exchange, so we'd get a hold of a bunch of needles and we're giving out the needles and I said,

"I want one of you to stand here at the corner of (indiscernible) and I want the other one to go down the block and come back up the alley."

He goes,

"Well, that's really dangerous."

I'm like,

"Are you kidding me? Like I walk around here at 2 a.m. I'm not scared. Like why are you scared?"
He said,
"They might beat us up."
I said,
"Why would they beat you up?"
He said,
"Because I won't give them needles."
I'm like,
"But you're here to give out
needles."
"Oh, no, I only give them two or ten
or something."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Oh.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I was just like,
"They should be two up."
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON:
"I'm on their side."
But you can't seem to --
MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's like how did we
miss that? I'm sure we discussed this before we all
decided to do this project, but he, like, missed the
amount. He just thinks,
"Oh, we're here to do what was done
to us."
It's like this -- if you grew up with a boot on your neck, you know, once you get that boot out off of your neck, you're going to get up and then find someone to put your boot on their neck. I was just like, “This can't be our legacy. We got to figure out this other way," which is why I think it has to be -- it's so hard not to do that and it's a very unthinking thing. I think it's a very human thing to do.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: You know, but anyway, I think that's why we want to reinforce a third way or this --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- you know, community, friendship. These are the things that people -- I don't know if they're not good at them or they seem to be good at them. It's the space. Where are you going to do it? That's what we find. It's just public all space is being crushed and access to -- like people used to do it in their homes.

The very first meetings I ever held in this neighbourhood, I had a three-bedroom apartment and that means the living room and dining room are bigger, you know, for a three-bedroom apartment and you can have a
dining room table. No one has those anymore.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: They're all in second-hand stores. I see them all the time, these huge tables. I think,

"God, there's so many and they're so cheap. What do you think?"

"Yes, but you can't buy one, Ann, because you don't have a place to put it."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: It's like, what are we going to do with them all?

Anyway, then they come and they sit around the dining room table and we form a drug user group. And then I didn't even think about it until later how complimented they were; you know what I mean? To be in someone's home.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: If your whole life has been institutionalized that you're in a prison or a this. Someone's always being paid to be around you.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And then someone goes,
"Oh, no, come over. And there are
these kids playing and I've made tea"
and you know what I mean? It was like I
had the Queen over or something. It was like,
"Oh, God. I better clean the house."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And then I'd look at
them and I'd think,
"Oh, my God."
It had a way more powerful impact than I
thought it would because it just hadn't occurred me that
they hadn't been invited to someone's home --

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: -- for so, so, so
long because they're criminals and bad guys and drug
addicts and like all these labels; right?
And we had mostly -- we had very few women
in the drug user group at the first, but we got more and
more. We started a sort of women's project and that's
where the women I knew came and lived with me with her
baby.

And she, to this day, still has custody of
that baby -- as far as I know. I think something's going
on right now, but I don't know what it is.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.
MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: But it was a huge victory. She also had a strong role model. Her mother — when she lost custody of her other children, her mother would get in a vehicle, drive here from — I think they lived near Regina and she'd take the kids and take them back.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: And that's a good role model for a woman to have for a mother.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: I don't know if she was very spunky about it, but she got it done. And then of course, she died really young. That's it. These early deaths are tremendous problems.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Because how are you going to — we're not finished with your parents.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Right.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: My dad's 94.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: We're still learning from them for sure.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Well, I should be over there interviewing. I mean he's going to die any minute, but I mean just — I mean he's not sick. I'm just saying he putters around.
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(Elsie Sebastian)

My role is to protect him from the rest of the family who wants him to live in a home and I'm the only one in Vancouver who's thinking,

"I don't know why you guys are so upset. I'm the one who has to go over there and find him dead. Like fuck off. Like don't" --

And then he gets all funny and I go,

"Ed, I'm the one. I'm the -- I'm not -- I'm on your side. I'm on your side. If that's your last request in life that you putter around this apartment and die in here, I guess -- well, I guess I can put up with that."

I just think, I don't know, what, I'm going to fight with him? Because they won't let -- he's still coherent, so you can't force him into a home.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Mm-hmm.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: As glamorous as it sounds. You see this scenario on TV all the time, they're thinking. That's bullshit. You can't force your parents into a home.

My sister tried it, so I know it doesn't work. Like she's interviewing him and saying,
"No, no, he's coherent. He wants to -- he didn't want to do that."

It's like,

"Really? He gets to decide." "We're so worried though. We're so worried."

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Yes.

MS. ANN LIVINGSTON: Anyway, I should get going.

MS. JAYME MENZIES: Okay. Well, I'll turn off the technology.

--- Whereupon the statement concluded at 1:00 p.m.
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I have, to the best of my skill and ability, accurately transcribed from a pre-existing recording the foregoing proceeding.

Karen Mak, Court Reporter