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Statement by Arla Patch collected by Rachel George on November 19, 2014

Arla Patch

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General Information

Private or Public Statement? - Private

Statement Provider: Arla Patch

Date: November 19, 2014

Location: Portland, Maine

Previous Statement? No

Statement Gatherer: Rachel George

Support Person: N/A

Additional Individuals Present: N/A

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Length of Recording: 41:17

Recording

RG: Okay, it is November 19, 2014. We are here in Portland, Maine. My name is Rachel George and I am here today with...

AP: Arla Patch

RG: Fantastic. And the file number is ME-201411-00145. Arla, have you been informed, understood and signed the consent form?

AP: Yes, I have.

RG: Great. And I have to let you know that if at any point during the recording you indicate that there is a child or an elder currently in need of protection, or that there is imminent risk of serious bodily harm or death to an identifiable person or group including yourself, that information may not be protected as confidential.

AP: Okay.

RG: Does that make sense?

AP: Yeah.

RG: Okay, you can start wherever you feel the most comfortable.

AP: Okay, well I would just say my story began when I was twelve years old because I am a member of the Society of Friends, the Quakers, and we have something called First Day school which would be sort of like Sunday school I guess, but it was also very much a history class, and I learned about what happened to indigenous people and at that point, just the amount of information that I learned was so devastating to me as a twelve year old that I made a decision that some day I was going to dedicate time in my life to in some way, addressing that issue. I didn't know how and then in 2011, a good friend of mine who had been a counselor, a white woman from Maine had been a counselor [00:01:26.16] on the Navajo reservation was invited back to attend a Navajo traditional wedding and she asked me to come along and being on the Navajo reservation and spending about a week there, it was as if instead of understanding it mentally, I felt in my body for the first time in my life the legacy of 500 years of genocide and when I got home I put in a search and what came up was the signing of a mandate at that point and so I also surfed on the internet and came up with an interview that Denise had done, Denise Altvater on Donna Loring's radio show and began pursuing Denise and I now know in retrospect that people coming at her and saying "I've written two books" and all of those things were not needed for me to be trusted and understood in terms of what my motives were which was completely service and I think it happened through American Friends Service Committee that I got a notice that Denise was going to be doing a --I don't know what you call it when she does an audio workshop that you call in. I don't know what those are called. Anyway, I was going to be able to be on the phone with a group of people, hearing Denise give a talk about the TRC and there was a time for question and answer and I asked if there was a way that non-Native people could be of help and she said, yes, and then the next thing I knew -- so this was actually from the summer all the way through the fall, I had been sending letters, emails, I even sent her copies of my books which was, you know, now I realize now was ridiculous thing to do.

And so, then in January I got invited up to Indian Island, and it was a very profound experience to know that the next day -- I went up the night before because it's a three and a half hour drive and it was an early morning appointment -- and I went up and I stayed at a motel and luckily my meeting -- Portland Friends meeting -- had a small grant that they had given me for gas money and that kind of thing, so... As a self-employed artist, I would not have stayed in a motel, I would have gotten up at, you know, four o'clock or something in the morning just get up there -- so I had that time -- I could see Indian Island across the river, and I started thinking about what it would be like to walk in and sit down with Wabanaki people who I don't know I had ever met one before then and the only thing that I could feel was all I wanted to say was how sorry I was and I started to cry and I cried for probably an hour and I thought this is really good. This is really important and I'm glad I had that experience because what it taught me as how many of us as Euro-Americans, carry around something that I've been calling unmetabolized grief. It's like we have this grief but we don't acknowledge it, we don't know about it and it's pushed so far back that it's totally not metabolized and without it being realized and externalized, it can drive our behavior with Native people negatively.



And so, in any case, I knew that they --the people I was meeting with the next morning, certainly did not need to see my pain and see, you know, how sorry I was so I was really glad that I had that catharsis and that began my work with a group of people, the second time I met a group of people called the Portagers, who were students of Donna Loring's who had come also and so we were all kind of meeting together and Jenny Parmalee and I met then because there was a woman in the Quaker Group called the Friends' Committee on Public Policy and she had met Jenny and suggested that Jenny go to that meeting. So Jenny went that way, and I went through AFSC, and we met and both of us being visual and media people, at that moment, had a great idea to do a twenty minute video to educate Mainers and we realized it was a lot more complicated than that and two white women weren't going to come in and make a product, you know, so but that's just how naive we both were. I was even thinking about what I could shoot and all of that.

In any case, what happened is, the Portagers, Jenny, and I, wound up becoming the communications subcommittee and that was volunteer work that lasted for a year and a half and it was very, very vital and wonderful work because we developed the power point, we developed so many aspects of what has now become part of this great movement and one of the things I did was write a very long article that the Sun Journal--it was too long to be a, what do they call those? Not just a Letter to the Editor, it was even longer than that and it was longer than the other format that they have -- I forget you know when somebody makes those -- do you know what the next thing up from Letter to the Editor is--I just can't think of it, but anyway, it was even longer than that and when I sent it in to this reporter who had once done a story on me, I met him that way. He took it to his editor and said, you know what, we want to make this a feature, and it was a whole page, and that was really exciting and in it, I did offer as a Euro-American, my sadness and my angst and my apology. Now what was interesting is that what came back in one of the next meetings was that students on the campus of Orono went into the Wabanaki center --Wabanaki students -- and said to Dr. Ranco that they were offended that I had used the possessive pronoun in "our" tribes and what was interesting about that teaching is that all the Wabanaki people that I'd worked with in Communications committee knew me, and knew that I wasn't saying like, "my" tribes but anyway it was just another one of those teachings that I realized I needed to be much, much more careful, more sensitive, much more aware.

So in any case, all kinds of wonderful things seemed to unfold as a result of being a volunteer. In Quakerism, what we would say "way opened," because opportunities just kept falling in my lap and I had a show for example at Emmanuel College in Boston and when they found out I was doing this work for the Truth and Reconciliation, they asked if I wanted to give a lecture to a seminar to a class called Art and Social Justice so I got to do the talk there and that's just an example of the kinds of things that kept unfolding without me even trying. It was like all I had to do was show up and opportunities would happen. *[00:09:00.13]*

And the same thing was with Robert Shetterly. I was just, in the summer, not this summer but the summer before--a really hot July night, I was looking a brochure when the word "portrait" just sort of jumped off the brochure and suddenly I had this flood of images of his portraits that I had seen in an exhibit, now I had no idea where he was from, I had no idea what his name was. And so I put a search in on the computer, the guy who does portraits about Americans who tell the truth and Robert Shetterly's name came up. Then I put in the search for Robert Shetterly and it was a 207 number so I called 8:30 Friday night and he answered the phone and when I asked him if he had heard of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he said, yeah a little bit but tell me more. So, anyway, we wound up in this long conversation, and of course my vision was a whole room of Wabanaki people-- not two portraits-- but in any case, I wound up going over to New Hampshire and meeting him where he was doing a talk. And he was very, very inspired by the story of Denise and Esther and wound up doing their portraits which as I say has been the gift that keeps giving because it's just such a perfect way for people to access the story who might not be able to access it in another way.

So what happened to me also in my own community was really interesting and again I see all these things as very serendipitous because it's almost as if the time has come for this information to be surfaced and that there are many people like me who are Euro-Americans whose family came over very early and who are ready to absorb the deep, deep grief and tragedy of something so huge and horrific. So what happened was--I guess it was in the summer of 2012 – and, so I had just started in January of that year and, a woman that I know in Bethel. I taught all four of her boys in my Art Program and she found a portfolio of mine so she called me and asked me if I wanted it and I went to pick it up and it turns out, she's the director, the executive director of the Bethel Chamber of Commerce. And so we were catching up on what's going on and I told her that I was working for the Truth and Reconciliation, and she said, well MollyOckett Day is the--this is the second year that the chamber has been hosting it and it occurred to me this year that we have no Native presence and so I've called the Penobscot nation and I have Burnurwurbskek drummers coming, I have Barry Dana as a craftsperson, I have Butch – what's his name, Butch Phillips? -- no anyway she had a few people and said, why don't you have in the non-profit section, why don't you have a table on what the Truth and Reconciliation is, so I went back to the committee and I asked and they were like, Hmm we haven't done anything like that but why not, you know? We need to start getting the word out. So I set up an information table at MollyOckett.

The interesting thing was--it was kind of a perfect storm—because in an effort to have a Native presence, this woman whose name is Robin, decided to have the theme for the parade of that year, "the life and times of MollyOckett." Well, that set us wide open for racism to show its face because there was --well first of all, there was Miss MollyOckett that had been the tradition for fifty-four years, of a white girl dressed up like an Indian riding in a parade, waving to the crowd and when I told Esther that, she was like "that's gotta go." And I said, they've been doing this for 54 years -- I said how about-- what if—and then I put the word out actually to Fredda Paul and his wife and they knew somebody up at Sipayik, who worked with children, who was Native, and her answer was why don't you get a Native girl and give her a scholarship. So I said that to Esther and Esther said, Arla-- I was taught from the time that I was little that if I do anything of value, I do it for the whole tribe, I do not do it draw attention



to myself and all of a sudden I realized how whiteman that is to be: look at me, look at me, I'm the princess.

Actually, her name was Princess MollyOckett years ago and at least the historical society got rid of the princess part. So I actually was standing next to Barry Dana when the parade went by because I went over to him saying, did you know there's a Ms. MollyOckett? He didn't know. He hadn't been informed even though I had suggested that. And so sure enough, she goes by but that wasn't as bad as the next float. The next float was supposed to be settlers and Wabanaki people and the Wabanaki people were stripped to the waist. They had war paint. They had Tomahawks. They were hooping and hollering. They had a plains Indian tipi. They had a birch bark canoe where the birch bark was inside out and I'm standing there with Barry Dana and I was just so humiliated and I said, Barry, I'm so sorry. I am so sorry. I said, this is the first time there was theme that would even open it up to anything Native and of course, you know, exposing us and he said, yeah I feel like I'm in a movie. So I decided at that point when that's the float that won, I decided that I needed to petition the Chamber of Commerce, so I wrote them a letter and I asked them if--oh, and the other thing that Barry said that was really significant---is, well how does she get to *[00:14:57.15]* be Ms. MollyOckett? And I said, well, I don't think it's a lot. I think she maybe writes a little paragraph about, you know, her citizenship and stuff, and he said well why isn't she the essay – if it's an essay, why isn't she the essay winner? And I thought, that's gotta be it—we'll do an essay challenge, and then, what will happen is that kids will have to research, they'll have to find out the truth, they'll get the real story and then maybe those could be published and so more of the town would get the real story.

In any case, I wrote a Letter to the Editor saying, had that been a float about African Americans, and they had been in blackface eating watermelon, playing banjos--everybody in the town would have gotten appropriations in a second. But because we're so used to appropriating Native culture, people don't get it and I said, you know, I'm working for the Truth and Reconciliation. This is the first state, we're all learning here. That kind of thing. Well you know, the very next week, the kids who did the float that won put in a quarter page ad and they said, Thank you for all the people who helped us win. And then at the very bottom, it said, we want to apologize if this hurt anybody's feelings because we didn't mean to.

So the incredible thing was that the Chamber of Congress Board of Directors accepted my proposal in the first try and that's the part that's stunning to me. And at the first meeting of the MollyOckett committee, one of the women said well, why have one winner? Let's have one male, one female so we don't have genders competing against each other? So we'll have two winners. So we ran the--I ran the essay challenge and in order to do that, I needed to speak to the schools to have them understand why it was important and I gave a talk to the staff at the public school and this is where I ran into the racism that still exists because I'm naive enough to think-- and I used to work for that school district-- so obviously I didn't know this quality or

aspect of some of the teachers. But after giving them a very brief version, really, of the power point but all the high points, their reactions were three layers. One was: this is good, this is important, we need to do this. Another layer was: this is so difficult emotionally for me, I don't see how I could ever help my students through this, and the third one was that the information I presented was controversial. **[00:17:23.06]** Which was a big surprise, that was the shocker for me.

I did manage to get the principal to let me come and speak to the whole school but of course it was late and very late in the year. All the kids that went to tech school were already gone. All the kids who were in the AP History classes were doing something else. I mean, it was very watered down and in order for me to meet with the kids to follow up with them, he had it during lunch period. So, only a few die hard kids came and we did get entries and we did get entries from Gould. Mostly because I teach a lot of the Gould faculty children in my program and I knew them and I wrote them emails and they put out a kind of APB for the students. And so we had one winner from Gould and one from Tell Star that year. The exciting thing to me was that the judges we had were really high, high caliber judges. We had James Francis, cultural historian for the Penobscot nation, we had Rainy Bench was her name, she's no longer, but she was the educational curator at the Abbe. And I was able to get Richard Blanco, the presidential inaugural poet because he lives in Bethel and I was able to get him to be one of the judges and sure enough, they rode with banners saying "essay winner" in the parade. And there was some grumbling in town about losing Miss Molly Ockett -- a little bit -- but I think a lot of people were really pleased. And the experience for me, with me with all the Wabanaki people I know, is that they really, really appreciated it. They were incredibly grateful and stunned that it happened so quickly. The next year, second year when we did it, of, that would have been -- no, I guess okay the first year we had the essay challenge so that was the second year of a Native presence... Barry Dana got up on the gazebo, at the awarding of the prizes, and on a mic, thanked the town and said how much it meant to Wabanaki people. So that to me was a little bit of an insight in terms of reconciliation and healing.

So that story about changing a local tradition that had been in place for 55 years and evolving it into something that instead of valuing a kind of pageant format and completely appropriating Native culture and misunderstanding and, you know, keeping Native people back in the dark ages. We now honor research. We honor the truth. And the Local Historical Society archives those, and they're thrilled, and they are so happy that this is happening. And we are now launching into the third year and one of the things that I've realized is that I can't be there every year to make this and rally it and make it happen. The second year, I was able to get through to Gould because they made the TRC part of their Martin Luther King day.

[00:20:41.04] And Esther and I spoke and Robert Shetterly came and we had an entire show of his work and then I pretty much shamed the public high school by coming up with some of the money myself to have Robert -- who was already in town -- come and do a talk about speaking up and telling the truth, and I had last year's essay challenge winner from that high school who is a dynamic, charismatic kid, introduce Robert. And I think a lot of faculty when they saw Robert speak and it was put in that context, I could just see, "Oh yeah, this is big and this is important."



We'll see this year because where I'm at now with it is, I managed to get the Gould Academy History Department to completely integrate it into their curriculum and that is what they did last year and they are going to continue to do that and I spoke the chairman of the department and he is going to have all of his staff do that. And where I am at with Tellstar, the public school, is that the principal I had challenges with who was not a huge leader, has retired and the person who has replaced him is a woman, a new principal. I hope the people that are watching haven't gotten motion sickness from it vibrating.

But anyway, I feel very hopeful with her because I met with her at the end of the summer with a teacher who just retired who really sees the value...he had come to a talk that I had done with my Ojibwe friend, Cheryl Shaffler. We had done a talk at the local library and he had come to that talk and kind of had his consciousness raised and he sees the way in which the core standards. Do you know what they're called in Maine? There's a core standards, I think its Common Core State Standards (CCSS) but it's a mandate for all public schools to create ways in which the curriculum can be much more integrated into people's lives, into local history, into how you be a person in the world--how do you bring people together and synthesize ideas? And you know, this is a perfect example of that. And he wants to convince the teachers-- and I was a public school teacher for many years, I know the feeling of add-on and you're already maxed and they're going to add on more work for you so I know that might be part of what they're thinking in addition to those other three reactions before, one of which was that it was controversial... and [00:23:27.22] the Arts Council partnered with the Chamber and wrote a grant that created money for bringing Burnurwurbskek to the school and bringing the Native presence to MollyOckett day and the kick off to this grant was the essay challenge, and she framed it as here is a community in Maine that is becoming more culturally sensitive, more culturally aware, more, using more integrity with Native peoples. I don't know all her words but that was kind of the gist of how she got that and she's writing another one for next year so having Burnurwurbskek come, the drummers and dancers to the schools--both Gould and Tellstar and did both middle school and high school was a good example of how the community is changing and I had wanted to meet with the teachers so they could frame it for their students and unfortunately the head of the Arts Council only gave me like a week's notice or two week's, so I wasn't able to set that up but I did go and introduce them and explain to all student -- Gould and Tellstar's -- what the significance of this was. This was not just another Arts Entertainment but this was an indicator of a really cultural shift and changing of history and making of history and letting them know that Maine is the first state to address this issue.

So I'll see, I have an appointment in December, December 17th, with the principal, this retired teacher who's going to help me make the case, and both the history and English departments and I'm going to give them the example that Gould--and Gould is a private school and there is this public/private kind of competition thing that's been historic in Bethel. But, you know, I'm sorry but Gould has a good example and he gave them the White Devil to read ahead of time and they used all the resources at the historical society -- and a partnership between Gould,

Tellstar, and the historical society is really the kind of thing that people want to start seeing in terms of this integration of different aspects in the community.

I've also been on the phone with Ms. Littlehail, she is the social studies coordinator for the Department of Education for western Maine and she is so thrilled. She is wicked excited about this and she's given me some good pointers and some support. And I'm also talking about our, either, whether it's the TRC or REACH, being the key note for the big conference next fall for the state organization of social studies teachers. And, you know, she's kind of getting the idea of how big this is and how important. One of my frustrations as a educator and a communicator is to get my own citizens in my own state to get this and I don't know why they don't get it. It's so huge and so important and one of the other relationships that's been so important to me was--back in the day when Esther used to give me things to vet -- to find out what they are. See who this is. What do they want, this kind of thing. We had got an inquiry on the (this is before REACH) on the TRC Facebook page and it was a young person and she said see what he wants and so I wrote him an email and he sent me his resume and as soon as I saw his resume, I'm like oh my god, this kid is brilliant and we started an email relationship and it turns out it was Bennett and --he, you know, has turned out to be an incredibly important piece of our documentation and with his professor, Allie Watson, they've done all this research on us and created that chapter that Columbia University published and it continues, because right now he's working on -- I don't know -- do you know about the project he's working on now. It's going to happen in DC, with William and Mary, you know, it's just incredibly exciting. He really gets it. So sometimes -- what's great is that sometimes those outside validations -- I've used them to try to help people see the significance of what is going on here and appreciate it.

So besides the story of what is going on in my town, in my community, I guess the only other thing I wanted to share is basically I guess some of the lessons that I have learned. First big one was that business of the grief, that Euro-Americans can carry and I had it just generalized as a Euro-American and then I actually happened to rent the movie, *The Lone Ranger*, the one with Johnny Depp just because I'm very curious about how the media characterizes Native people and I wanted to see and I knew there was some controversy on that. Well, I know that that movie was exaggerating and demonizing the railroad to create the tension and the drama in the movie but nonetheless, my great great grandfather was the chief engineer of the Pacific Railroad. I had the scale that he weighed the gold on to pay the Chinese workers and I know that the railroad was the final nails in the coffin in terms of moving people, the efficiency to move people to settle, the ways in which Native people were overrun, the way they were disrespected, the way treaties were broken, and then I was like, Oh so there is an even a deeper meaning for dedicating myself to this work.

And then the other thing that has been a very unexpected gift, awakening, is by being on the land of Native communities, Sipayik and Indian Island and staying there and staying overnight and spending time with Wabanaki community organizers and being in retreat with them and being in workshops with them and getting to know them and witnessing the intense family connections and the intense love and commitment. I mean, I know, I see all the lateral violence and difficulty too but at the same time, there is this deep, deep love of children and a network of aunts, and grandparents, and cousins and what it's helped me realize is this absolute isolation that I've grown up in, being in a... Well, and I don't have a classic or maybe I do have a classic white family in the sense that I grew up in a alcoholic, domestic violent,



incesting family so my siblings were in LA, Spokane, Washington, Maine, and North Carolina. I mean, we just... And the idea of us being around each other and being in each other's community is completely foreign.

And what I've also realized is that I've raised my son alone. I had no support. I had no mother, aunts, sisters, and then by divorcing his dad at the age of four, I had to give him up and have him only half time because the settlement was splitting it. So what that's made me realize is this big vacuum in the way that I've lived my life and that there's a model there, for me to really think about and how I want to spend the rest of my life and what my priorities are so that's been really important. The other thing that I realized very early on even when I first heard Denise get interviewed on that interview with Donna Loring, is she and I share a lot of things in terms of sexual abuse and domestic violence and essentially cruelty like the kinds of things her father, her foster father did, my dad did some of those. Locking us in the basement, force feeding food down our throats when we wouldn't eat and we'd throw up. You know, I mean, some really torturous, nasty things but the huge difference that I know is that I never lost my culture, I never lost being a blonde, blue-eyed little girl that could walk into any store, and somebody would say, Honey can I help you or what do you want? I mean I never lost connection with my siblings, I never lost connection with my language. I never lost connection to my essential neighborhood and community and that is the thing that I think white people who want to minimize and say oh well we've all had tough lives. We've all had recovery, you know, we've all had challenges. No, I'm sorry it's a whole other level when you have to do that on top of that epistomocide [00:33:07.19]

So that's another big teaching and I've actually -- I don't think "called out" is the right word or I don't think "elder" is the right word but I've actually had to clarify for some white people who think that they've done huge difficult recovery. I mean, I don't mean to minimize anyone's recovery, believe me, but I just see that there's a whole deeper, deeper level and the other thing is I just sort of keep saying this is we really need some good products. We really need to educate Mainers and we need to find a way that that can be done really efficiently and with the ability to make videos and I just keep thinking still of my initial vision of a twenty minute video that could be distributed around to schools. Now I do see that you can't just send it cold. There does need to be somebody which I would love to be the person who goes to the school, goes to the administration and helps them understand the significance of this and why it's so important. And kind of gets everybody on board and I see it as a -- well, Esther has said this too, and we say this in the talk, the presentation -- going from the head to the heart. You've got to break people's heart chakras open for them to let it in and understand and here's the rub-- As Americans. Americans are not great at dealing with grief. They're not great at dealing with death. They're not great at dealing with anything that doesn't feel good. So I mean, in some ways, I think my own recovery from the things I've had to recover from have been great prerequisite for this work because I'm not afraid to go into that landscape because I know that

when you go into it-- you go through the swamp, you can come out the other side because that is what has happened to me. And it's not easy but it's very much doable.

But we need to get and as an educator and especially because high school has been a huge part of my career, I keep thinking about his video for public and private high schools across Maine and as a great product and going into the school--helping them understand why it's important and then having them all view it and then having, you know, questions that they could ask and you know, do follow up with. So, actually that was kind of all the lessons I've learned and what happened in my own community and what's happened to me in terms of my own awareness, and there is kind of another personal thing that is pretty interesting if you have a belief that this just occurred to me now but if you have a belief that everything happens for a reason kind of thing, I was in a primary relationship for eleven years and the first part of it was long-distance. But here I am working for Truth and Reconciliation and what exactly happened to me was that I found out that there was not a truth in this relationship and I found out that this person who looked so good, was a therapist, worked with people who were drug and alcohol addicted, you know talked the talk beautifully was actually lying about his own drinking to me.

And so that completely changed my life and now I'm single and, what happened at the same time that my personal life was kind of falling apart is that -- and very, very sad because I gave this person what I needed for repair and then watched for 8 months while he didn't do any repair. So, I realized that he was incapable and that it was falling apart. At the same time, I'm engaged in this work that is probably the most meaningful work I've ever done in my whole life, even though I've been a teacher all of these years. This is so deep and important and so I had this really, really wonderful work and then the relationships that I've gotten to nurture and grow with are these incredible relationships with Native people who I never knew before and have so much meaning to me. So it's been a healing for me in a very interesting and unexpected way. So, I think that is all I have to say.

RG: Can I ask you a couple questions? What are some of the challenges that have come up for you throughout this process, throughout the TRC, watching the TRC process, being involved in the TRC process?

AP: I'd say the finance is the real frustration and I worry a little bit about that even with myself for sustainability because I never charge for travel time. I never, you know, I seldom-- sometimes I get a gas card but not that often. I use my own resources. I use my own color printer, you know there's a lot. And, and I do all that because it is this important and it is service. I just think about what would it be like if we were actually really funded the way we need to be funded so I think that is really challenging. I didn't realize that Mainers were racist. That was upsetting and challenging to find out that what Esther's telling me and the experiences that she's had and different Native people that I've met -- like my age who couldn't get haircuts when they were younger and I mean, it's just and it's not just then, it's still -- but I just got a very rude response from a history teacher at Bonnie Eagle that just is shocking. He told me never to contact me again, so I'm going to go to the principal. That's not okay. Those kinds [00:39:36.14] of things, I guess is really. The funding is just really challenging.

RG: What do you hope to see come out of this process?



AP: The vision would be an awakening among the non-Native community speaking from my perspective of my side of it. And of course primarily the healing for Native people and I think because I did go through my own recovery process-- incest survivor, domestic violence, and alcoholic home is I know when I started finally speaking up which wasn't until I was 36, and I'm 64 now, when you externalize the hurts and the pain that you carry, you do begin to heal. It's like it needs--if it's buried, it's buried alive and it needs to be brought out so I do have a really strong, fundamental belief that if healing can happen through this process of witnessing and telling the story. So healing for Wabanaki people and awakening the rest of the state. And seeing that awakening result in change in attitude and obviously policy and behavior.

[00:40:55.21]

RG: Excellent. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

AP: Just my respect and appreciation for everyone involved in this process: you, commissioners, all the community organizers.

RG: The feeling is mutual.

AP: Yeah.

RG: Thank you so much for your time.

AP: You're welcome. Thank you for listening.

[END OF RECORDING]