

Interview with Michael Cachagee		Conducted on the 3 rd of March 2016	
Michael:	Hello (.)		
Katharina:	Hello Michael (.)		
<i>This call was cut off in the beginning; this is why about two minutes of text are missing here.</i>			
Michael:	<p>Like I was saying (.) you know (.) when you look back then you can see why (.) my own life (.) you see (.) So when I got to high school (.) I wasn't (.) because of the background and the low standard of education that I received (.) I had a difficult time moving in and becoming a (?) adult (.) I basically grew up with my children (.) I had no one to model after (.) no visible mother and father at the time to teach me how to become an adult (.) There was no one to mentor me growing up and so I was the result (.) I didn't have a clue (.) which was being a parent or an adult entails by then (.) You're suffering a lot of emotional (.) a lot of psychological damage (.) You weren't even aware of it what was going on for so long (.) And as a result you are not equipped to be a proper parent and all (.) we weren't thought how to be a proper parent (.) I ended up drinking a lot (.) using drugs and it went on for about 20 some years (.) So in my early 40s is actually when I stopped drinking and I haven't drank since (.) But even then after going back (.) and you know (.) I got a (?) (.) I was one of the lucky ones who got a (?) at an early age that kept me going up until my early 40s (.) that's when I went back to university (.) I got my degrees and then I moved on from there (.) But even to do that (.) even though to me (.) when you look back on the foundation that you provide for your children (.) I didn't have nothing really as a modeler or example of what a healthy family goes (.) A lot of times you have relatives and all you don't even encounter until late and it was always a struggle because of the aftermath (.)</p>		
Katharina:	When you were in school (.) when you were in residential school (.) did you know or were you are aware of that other kids (.) Canadian kids (.) were not going to residential school?		
Michael:	<p>No (.) because mostly residential schools were all in remote areas and were isolated (.) But even when you go back und look back at the text books that we were provided in the residential school (.) they were all written by Euro-Canadians that were all based upon their culture and were all biased (.) so even when we sit back and look back and look at basic children's nursery rimes (.) You couldn't connect to them because you couldn't identify with any of the components in it and the language they were using (.) You'd sit in classroom and they'd go through this or start reading poetry and stuff and you couldn't associate with it because it came from an entirely different world and that's what you grew up with (.) So when you go back and look back at that and the process they were doing that (.) what they were trying to do is to displace your culture and introduce you to this other culture that you had no connection with (.) After years (.) after 10/12 years of doing that you end up (.) I don't really know what you end up with sometimes (.) What do you end up with? You end up with a culture where you forgot your language but you still have some aspects of it like your brown skin (.) And then you never really adapted to the other culture that they were trying to force on you (.) So the end of all was a brown skin person that doesn't fit in really with the world that he left and doesn't fit in the world that they were attempting to mold and fit in to (.)</p>		
Katharina:	When did you start to realize this on this level?		

Michael:	<p>It's always been like that even today (.) And again (.) because of how society is with races and all that (.) a lot of it is settled (.) So even today you still have that element of separation (.) I always make references to privilege (.) who owns and who controls a privilege (.) It's the white (.) Even when you go back and you look back at North America (.) it's all controlled by white men and black suits (.) Everything is structured that way (.) It is slowly (.) slowly changing and as our people are wanting to come back into and it's all depending on how we are educated (.) We were sent to school and we weren't given an education (.) So we failed (.) failed (.) failed in that area (.) So if we are going to change and flip it over and change the pattern (.) it has to start with education (.) But even today when you look back at how our First Nation's schools are financed on the reservations (.) they say they would give a \$1000 per child off reserve for the white population and the dominant society and they give about \$400 for First Nations' children (.) Even today the schools that are on First Nations reserves are underfunded (.) And here what are really lacking are the sciences (.) I was up in a brand new school here (.) maybe 15 years ago they built a brand new school in this community (.) beautiful building but they couldn't use the chemistry lab or the physics lab because there was no teacher available to teach the sciences (.) They never thought us sciences in the residential schools (.) So when you take that element of that (.) that particular category out and then forcing you to learn English (.) we were not equipped to really move on and it's been a struggle for a lot of us (.) And then on the flipside (.) when it started reducing (.) some of our children of the ones that went to residential schools did very (.) very well in the sciences (.) It wasn't the fact that we were not capable of (?) (.) it is the fact what they used to teach us (.) And then when you go back and take the whole aspect of taking a child away from a family (.) the family that you get your identity (.) you come through at the other end (.) you can't identify or say what a family (.) and it takes you how many years to go back and reconnect? And that's basically what you are doing because of that void when you left residential schools and trying to reconnect with your family takes a long (.) long time to do that (.) That's been a challenge in my life (.) A lot of my energy went into going back and reconnect with my families and all my relatives and relations (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>Do you believe that when people started doing so (.) reconnecting with their family (.) that's also the moment when people started to speak up about residential schools?</p>
Michael:	<p>What happened here (.) we are quite fortunate compared to other residential schools (.) Back in 1979/1980 we were talking about bringing the students back together (.) It was basically to make a political statement on the property where the school was situated (.) There was some kind of nefarious types of beatings going on with the land (.) The owner of the land was under trust (.) And the trust basically was that the land has been set aside for Indian education (.) And what they were trying to do is (.) they were trying to flip it and sell it off to a real estate deal (.) And then they followed us to make a statement (.) so some of us tried to bring all the students back that went there and not knowing how many were going to come 500/450 showed up (.) And that's when the residential school movement really started in Canada (.) That's when we started talking about all the atrocities and the whole failings of the Indian residential school system and the impact (.) When we first got together it was kind of subdued (.) You've been told not to talk or you've lost your identity (.) you don't really know how to bring forward issues and you have to some degree still that fear of those in charge (.) Because that's what happened as a child (.) That fear was still there and the reluctance to speak was still there as an adult (.) There was talks there and in fact ten years later we thought we would bring back all of them again and that's when the floodgates opened up in 1991 and that's when we started looking at all the lawsuits and law claims and class actions started to begin (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>These lawsuits and the class-action lawsuits (.) do you think that really made the government move?</p>

Michael:	<p>O yeah (.) because they had to (.) If they hadn't looked into a settlement (.) they were going to lose anyway (.) The government and the churches evidently in their (?) four or five years (.) maybe longer (.) they came close to block this but they knew it was (.) there was no way that they were going to stop this claim (.) And so rather than go to court and lose really badly in the courts (.) they chose (.) it was like watching a train coming and standing on the track (.) And they said: "Well (.) if we don't make a deal that train is going to run right over" (.) So they were forced into a deal (.) It was Paul Martin (.) the prime minister of Canada at the time and he said that they would be better off with a deal now and set it off now than pay it later (.) And the courts (.) what was happening (.) the courts (.) even the supreme court of Canada were coming after the governments for wrongs and they were supporting all the claims going against residential schools (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>Oh really (.) the supreme court was supporting?</p>
Michael:	<p>Yeah (.) there was a couple of cases (.) One was the Black Water Case (.) There was two of them (.) One doubt was bicurious liability (.) What the government says: "Well (.) we have no control over these people doing this (.) this (.) and this" (.) And they kept denying it because the people were (.) it's called bicurious liability (.) And that went all the way to the supreme court of Canada and it was upheld that the churches and the government were responsible (.) So basically it opened the gate up for other claims (.) But even the Settlement Agreement itself was sewed together in a hurry and even like now today (.) when you look back (.) They gave us a base amount of \$10,000 (.) They called it a "common experience" (.) The common experience when they use that language (.) it sounds like we all went to summer camp (.) What's a common experience? The common experience was that we were removed from our families (.) we were forcibly removed from our families (.) our families couldn't do anything about it or they would have been incarcerated (.) We were forced into institutions that stripped us of our language (.) our culture (.) our identity (.) And never qualified us to step into the world as workable (.) responsible adults and they call that a "common experience" (.) The only thing common is that it didn't happen in other schools (.) So there is nothing common about it at all (.) that's what they called it (.) And then they give us \$3,000 for a year thereafter (.) And then some of them (.) a lot of them ended up not getting their full credits because Canada had back in the 1930s and the 1940s (.) after the war they destroyed a lot of the records (.) So a lot of the schools and the records were destroyed (.) So if you say you went four years to school A (.) spent four years in school B (.) and two years in school C and they destroyed the records for school B (.) all they are saying is: "Can you proof that you were there because we didn't keep any records" (.) All the records were kept by the government or the churches and if they destroyed it (.) they wouldn't give you the credit (.) So when they go back and our parents had no records (.) so (.) when you go back and a lot of them out there (.) so much sold now with the Settlement Agreement there is about \$350 or \$400 million surplus and the surplus that's just from people that weren't given the proper credit (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>With experiencing how the government handles the issue over money how did you feel when Harper apologized in the name of the government?</p>
Michael:	<p>Well (.) looking at that even now and after what Harper did (.) subsequently to that apology (.) it was pretty shallow (.) We worked with the government ok (.) the National Indian Residential School Survivors Society (.) we worked with the one there who was structuring the text (.) we wrote our text (.) some of our recommendations and sent it in (.) They extracted (.) deleted some of the contents we sent in out of there (.) the odd word (.) not a sentence but maybe just a couple of words (.) We wanted them to recognize that it was genocide (.) cultural genocide (.) And to this date the government of Canada has never admitted it (.) Paul Martin was admitting since he's retired (.) The former Prime Minister (.) he's admitted that it was genocide (.) But to this date the government of Canada never admitted the genocide (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>So Paul Martin admitted?</p>

Michael:	He made the submission and (?) that it was being genocidal after the fact that he was no longer Prime Minister (.) no longer a member of parliament (.) I don't know if you had the opportunity to pull up the UN convention on genocide?
Katharina:	I have (.)
Michael:	Then you see what they did (.) By taking children from one group and forcing them into another group (.) that's genocide (.)
Katharina:	In the report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (.) they call it cultural genocide (.)
Michael:	Yeah (.) they call it that (.) And we said that for years (.) In fact (.) when we wrote the apology (.) we wanted the (?) of that (.) in the context of what they were saying but they wouldn't do it (.)
Katharina:	So now the statement by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that's not really the government (.) that's just the commission?
Michael:	No (.) Even how they structured the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (.) what happened here and then again that impacted how we were faced (.) The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement was structured when the liberals of Paul Martin were in power (.) In the process of negotiation (.) the emergent of the deal and all the evidence and everything else (.) the application process and everything else (.) the application of the Indian residential schools was supposed to be weighted in favor of the survivors (.) It just didn't happen (.) Because immediately after the ratification of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement there was an election and Harper came along (.) One of Harper's (.) one of his cornerstones for his platform when he got voted was that whole aspect of accountability (.) This means that when he got into power (.) he passed the accountability act (.) So that you can't issue a payment of the government of Canada unless you have documentation reporting why you are issuing that particular payment (.) As a result (.) all these students that the government of Canada destroyed the records (.) they couldn't produce evidence of them being in that school (.) Therefore the government wouldn't pay them because of the accountability act (.) So it was like a double jeopardy (.)
Katharina:	O wow (.)
Michael:	That's how governments work (.) So when you go back and you look back at the whole aspect of the accountability act (.) then someone in govern has to be responsible when there is dollars being created or funding created or administrated (?) being created (.) So basically when you look at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (.) it wasn't the (?) of being independent (.) It wasn't independent in essence that Maurice Sinclair (.) Justice Sinclair basically became a deputy minister (.) Because out of the accountability act (.) he had to be accountable for the government and he was at the end of the line that had to be (.) under the reporting of the accountability act (.) had to be a member of government (.) While they claimed it to be an independent body (.) because of the accountability act (.) Maurice Sinclair basically still became a deputy minister (.)
Katharina:	I want to go back to what you said about genocide (.) Could you feel any internationality as well with the UN and so on?

Michael:	Yeah (.) even now when you look back at the UN convention on indigenous peoples that was recently in the court that came a couple of years ago (.) Canada didn't sign it (.) the United States wouldn't sign (.) and neither would Australia or New Zealand (.) The reason why they wouldn't sign this (.) they are the countries where the settlers gained control of (.) If they signed that indigenous rights apply (.) would mean that they would have to go back and reverse the whole history and the whole legal system and the land would all go back to the indigenous people (.) so they wouldn't do that (.) So by them refusing to sign (.) they also continued in some sense not to acknowledge that there were violations of the UN convention on genocide (.) So I don't think you'll ever see the United States or Canada or the ones that had the residential schools being charged internationally for cultural genocide (.) Now you have academics and you have some other people (.) It was genocide (.) like I said the fact (.) if you look like a duck and you sound like a duck (.) there is a pretty good chance you are a duck (.) If you do all the elements contained and practice all the issues that are identified in the UN convention (.) that are deemed and identified as being genocidal (.) there is a pretty good chance that you did practice genocide (.) By not admitting it doesn't diminish the fact that it was genocide (.)
Katharina:	At the time when the UN came out with its rights on indigenous peoples and when Canada didn't sign and America as well (.) did you feel that the world was talking about that?
Michael:	I don't think so (.) I don't really think (.) It's like when I go out to different schools and lecturing and all that and when I raise the issue of genocide and people say: "That was my grandfather" (.) I say: "That's fine (.) you make an admission that your grandfather and grandmother were criminals" (.) And then all of a sudden they get very defensive (.) "But they didn't know!" (.) what do you mean they didn't know? You have a democracy where you send people to Ottawa to make these rules and regulations and not until 1995 (.) which isn't that long time (.) not far back (.) Canada was complaisant with genocide (.) cultural genocide (.) So (.) when you look back at that and the general population (.) particularly the Euro-Canadians (.) they don't like making that admission (.) They like to believe that Canada is such a wonderful place and we are all full of the land of bliss and happiness (.) But there is an ugly side of the history (.)
Katharina:	Yeah (.) that is the image of Canada and I've never heard of residential schools until about a year ago (.) I was shocked and I am still very surprised about how it's not talked about (.) In the States as well (.) I've lived there for a year and never heard of Indian boarding schools (.)
Michael:	Of course not (.) It's the same with all the other history (.) The picture is always (?) history (.) Even in Europe (.) you have the history with the Nazis got in and other aspects of European history (.) I am sure (.) The thing about it (.) when you go back and look back at it (.) the ugly part (.) the underbelly of the beast isn't the most beautiful thing (.) so they do everything in power to diminish (.) I even had (.) I was working at the university here that was a former Indian residential school maybe 15 or 20 years ago (.) I had a student coming in (.) we just opened a medical school in northern Ontario (.) there was a student there that went there for a year and a half (.) he got some of his science credits (.) so he was doing chemistry and physics to get into medical school (.) And he walked the halls of that university (.) never aware of the fact that it was a residential school (.) So you got an institution that in some sense suppresses its own history then what is the rest of the country going to do? So now (.) one of the recommendations (.) there is quite a few recommendations in the Settlement Agreement that identifies the need for the educational systems to start picking up and telling the true history (.)
Katharina:	Can you feel that? Is education changing?

Michael:	<p>The only problem is (.) like anything else when you have a Royal Commission or (.) we did one here in Canada a while back (.) I think it was in 1996 (.) It was called the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (.) To some extent (.) some of the residential schools were identified in the RCAP report (.) and then now we have the Truth and Reconciliation (.) There is nothing in there for oversight (.) So you sit back and the commission comes through and makes all these recommendations but who's going to really sit back and see (.) well we are going to build into this system five years or ten years on the row and we are going to see where we are going with all the recommendations? Now there was the new government and some promises coming along by saying that they are going to buy in and support all the recommendations but the thing about it is there has been nothing to sit back and say (.) well in three or four years we are going to convene an oversight committee meeting of representatives from each of these organizations (.) the churches (.) the government (.) and those involved in the Settlement Agreement to see how the recommendations from the TRC are playing out and what's happening across the country (.) Right now it's kind of (.) what I call "sexy" to talk about the TRC (.) But when will that wear off? A year from now if someone raises the issue of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: "O (.) we are doing this" (.) And that will be the end of the conversation (.) It's the same with the RCAP report (.) I did a lecture there (.) a couple weeks ago down in a medical school and there was about 80 students in the lecture theater at the campus in Sudbury and they were video linked up with another campus in Thunder Bay (.) about 120 medical students (.) And I asked them (.) just wrapping up (.) I asked them how many of the medical students and attendants have read the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (.) One person put up their hand in both campuses (.) There is about seven or eight recommendations in the TRC report that are specifically for medical professions (.) Yet only one was raising her hand (.) And the student was native (.) So again (.) it goes back (.) That's the way we are in Canada (.) We like making these big shows and then when it comes to proving and the putting (.) we are not signing the papers (.) When you look back at the whole aspect of reconciliation and its broad (.) you are painting with a broad (.) broad brush (.) that's we look at it and the government will come back with an eyebrow pencil (.) So you look from broad interpretation to a very narrow interpretation (.) And the narrower the interpretation they apply (.) the less it costs to them (.) So when you look back at First Nations and you look at the reconciliation as a result of the residential schools (.) you have to look at the prisons (.) Why are the prisons so full of all our people? Why are so many of our children in carrying childhood agencies? We have a 140/150 First Nations in Canada that have to state that they are on a boil water advisory (.) They don't even have clean water (.) And then you look back at the housing aspect (.) We still have 24/25 people living in the same house (.) There was an incident here last week where a woman (.) she is 23 or 24 years old (.) she is going to be a grandmother (.) And then you have another situation (.) maybe six months ago (.) a ten-year-old child on a remote First Nation committed suicide (.)</p>
Katharina:	A ten-year-old?
Michael:	<p>A ten-year-old (.) And then you have this umbrella of reconciliation floating around the country and you still have all these things happening (.) What would possess a ten-year-old to kill himself? Then I go back to the medical aspect of social breakdown (.) Then (.) when I talked to these medical professions (.) you talk about systems and processes and applications (.) and whatever they do (.) And they said: "O (.) it's very difficult to design something that will work and be effective" (.) And I said: "No (.) you have a process that's very effective in First Nations communities (.) in indigenous communities and that's the justice system" (.) How you come back and use a criminal element to prosecute and everything else because the proof is in the number of inmates we have in the federal (.) so it's very effective (.) So you can decide on a process that can be very effective (.) You just have to take the time and energy to do that and come back with something effective (.) And the patience (.) The criminal justice system (.) we should be able to find something that contradicts that (.) which has the same energy and the same force (.)</p>
Katharina:	Why do you think so many native women are in prison? Can you feel that there is a gender difference?

Michael:	<p>Again you go back and look at the whole aspect of society values (.) Everybody within society has a value (.) so if you look back at the whole stratum (.) at the bottom of that value (.) when we look at human value (.) is the Aboriginal woman (.) She is the least one that has access to privilege (.) also in her community and also in the dominant society (.) Until that changes and the value of women are changing in society (.) they become dispensable (.) disposable (.) That's a fact (.) Every study or every statistical data you can access will proof that (.) Again that goes back to the whole aspect of colonial thought when they came over here (.) Their women (.) the Euro-Canadian women didn't have as much value as cattle (.) So it's better to (?) a horse (.) it's worth more than a woman (.) Than you look back at an Aboriginal woman and she was less than that (.) So as long as they are devalued in society (.) don't hold the same value (.) you can do anything with them (.) It's reflective in the murdered and missing indigenous women and girls (.) Even when they choose to investigate in them (.) they put more effort in finding a missing dog than finding a missing Aboriginal woman (.) They are changing that now (.) more and more the women are becoming professional but there is still a big gap there (.) But there is a real movement among the indigenous women (.) A lot of the deficiencies and a lot of the discrimination that we all (?) the fighting police sums being reversed (.) The thing about is that a lot of our own (.) there is a dimension (.) in one of our communities it was not acknowledged that a young lady was sexually abused by a respected elder (.) It was in a remote community and they have so much (.) there was so much anti-abuse (.) that she had to face like: "How could you bring these charges against this respected elder?" and all that (.) This was an aftershock over her original complaint (.) she had to leave the community (.) It is happening even in our communities (.) I have seen some of the worst abuses in the band offices (.) in our administration offices (.) Again it goes back to residential schools and how we were treated (.) It is all learned behavior (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>It is very interesting to hear about all this because this is information that is not accessible for me from over here (.)</p>
Michael:	<p>They don't bring that up (.) When you go back and look at how society values of different groups and your value as an indigenous person in the general population (.) My background is in political theory and if you go back and look back at how society values (.) when they structured up (.) and I am pretty sure it's after a European model (.) to become a member of parliament or to become a member of quoted privilege (.) you had to have a property owner (.) But in Canada (.) First Nations people live on Indian reservations that are held and trust by the federal government that has no land value (.) so if you are part of the society that has no value and no quote value (.) then how do you have access to privilege (.) The bank won't even lend you money (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>Really?</p>
Michael:	<p>No (.) You can't use your First Nation property as collateral (.) So basically (.) if you have no property and no monetary value (.) you have no privilege (.) And in particular (.) when you look back at the Indian Act as a colonial document all structured by colonial white men back in 1867 (.) white women had no privilege and indigenous women weren't even considered human beings (.) So then over the years and over the history there is a whole amount (.) their value has never been increased in value (.) So they just (.) Aboriginal women have no value (.) And just until recently (.) until the last 10 years (.) if a man and a woman divorced on a First Nations reserve (.) the woman had no recognized value in the property (.) That has changed (.) It is all contained in the Indian Act (.) which is a colonial document (.) So in essence (.) when you look back at the value of indigenous women (.) they are still under the control of the Indian Act (.) which is a colonial document (.) based upon colonial values of 1867 (.) Then you stand on the side and shake your head like: "What the hell is going on and is it still going on?" (.) It is (.)</p>
Katharina:	<p>It's very interesting (.)</p>
Michael:	<p>And they keep on champing that sense of condemns of a countries violations against human rights and sending out publicly and internationally (.) pointing their finger and in your own backyard you have people living (.) 25 people living (.) three families sometimes living in a 1,200 square-foot hole (.)</p>

Katharina:	That's true (.) When I looked at how the topic got started you always read and hear about Phil Fontaine and how he started to tell of the legacies (.)
Michael:	Even Phil (.) Phil and I were good friends (.) but even him (.) because of the (?) of the Settlement Agreement (.) he got caught up in the whole thing (.) You are like a chameleon (.) you become a victim to your environment (.) You start socializing and running around with lawyers and bankers and everybody else (.) Pretty soon you adopt that as part of your culture (.)
Katharina:	You can feel that Phil Fontaine changed within this setting?
Michael:	O yeah (.) I mean the Settlement Agreement was a piece of crap (.) There were so many deficiencies in it (.) The thing about the Settlement Agreement (.) if I disagree with it (.) I don't have any (.) there is no entry level for me to complain (.) If you look back at the Indian Act (.) there is an element (.) there is section 90 (.) which means that if I have property on a First Nations reserve it is unassignable (.) Nobody can assign to it (.) it's my personal property (.) It is also property given to me by the government in an act of parliament or whatever (.) which was a Settlement Agreement (.) Now when I went back and we had what is called "personal credits" as part of a surplus (.) I had to go back (.) I couldn't use those personal credits (.) it was about \$3,000 (.) I had to sign to another institution like (?) institution or I could (.) there is a bunch in there (.) or I could become a (?) but I couldn't get those personal credits for my own personal use (.) I had to go assign them (.) Yet they were given to me on my reserve under the section of my personal property and no one can assign them (.) So you have two acts of parliament here contradicting each other (.) My personal property was to overwrite that (.) So I went to the (.) I filed a complaint with the Indian Residential School Administration Committee and they told me that I have no standing (.) I couldn't file a complaint with the administrator committee (.) The only way I could have standing is that I would have to sue Canada (.) through the Churches (.) through the Assembly of First Nations or through my lawyers (.) which we hadn't heard of since they signed the agreement (.) They all took their money and ran (.) Even for the ones that wanted to file a complaint that they never got all of their recognized time at residential schools (.) there was no entry level for us survivors to complain about the Settlement Agreement (.) And if you look at the Settlement Agreement (.) any place where there is dollars (.) where there is money in it (.) you find lawyers there (.) It was all structured by lawyers to serve layers (.) It was like that (.) just a gift that keeps on giving if you are a lawyer (.)
Katharina:	There are so many levels to it (.)
Michael:	Phil's girlfriend was a negotiator (.) She is a lawyer (.) Kathleen Mahoney (.) Now they are coming back out to (?) some of the (?) of it (.) They are trying to come back (.)
Katharina:	Phil and his wife are?
Michael:	It's his partner (.) Nobody has wives (.) Everybody has a partner (.)
Katharina:	Phil and his partner (.) they are coming back because they are seeing the failings?

Michael:	Well there was this thing the other day (.) they put in the paper over it (.) What happened (.) it's kind of complex (.) it is also convoluted (.) What happens is (.) there was an element of the Settlement Agreement called the Independent Assessment Agreement and the Assessment Process (.) That dealt with severe cases that were outside the common experience payment (.) That dealt with severe cases of physical or sexual abuse (.) So what happened (.) we have an adjudicator's secretary (.) that ministers had supplied it (.) as part of the Settlement Agreement (.) The Settlement Agreement can't be changed (.) modified or changed unless all fight parties and the federal judge agree to change it but all the parties (.) the signatories of it have to be in agreement (.) So what happened (.) the Independent Assessment Process (.) Canada in the 1990s changed some of the definitions of the residential schools (.) the education aspect will be turned over to the province (.) So when they did that (.) they said that they were no longer reliable for those particular schools so they went to the adjudicator's secretary and said in 3,000 or 4,000 cases going beforehand it's a jurisdictional question: "We have no jurisdiction (.) so we are no longer responsible (.) we wont recognize those claims of abuses in those particular schools" (.) But this was then in a vacuum with just the secretariat in Canada (.) the Department of Justice (.) So what they are saying now is that they (.) what has happened is they violated the process and they couldn't do that (.) So now (.) Kathleen Mahoney and the AFN are all signing up (.) saying that it can't be done and they are doing this (.) and this (.) and this (.) The other process in not finding records and all that (.) they never acknowledged that or come around saying that it was a serious short-fault of the Settlement Agreement (.) And those are the ones that really cut down to the grass roots (.) saying: "Look (.) I went there (.) I was there (.) I know I was there" (.) And they say: "We can't find any of your records that you were there" (.) And you got short change (.) And there was not only the common experience payment they were denied (.) they were also denied the access to the idea to defend themselves (.) So if you were in there for three or four years and they weren't given credit for and they were sexually abused at that time (.) they couldn't proof they were in residential school and Canada wouldn't have a record of them being there (.) So they were denied justice (.)
Katharina:	It's so sad for all these people that were there (.) can't proof it and have to live with it (.)
Michael:	And Canada started destroying these records in the 1930s (.) And then during the II. World War (.) they were running out of paper (.) The only thing they wouldn't destroy was money (.) Like (?) or of treaty payments (.) They would (?) them off but all the education and the school's kids and all the other stuff (.)
Katharina:	I do have one last question (.) Do you have any wishes for the future or where do you see this whole process going?
Michael:	The reason I think of the residential schools (.) none of the provinces (.) none of our redesigning of curriculums (.) introducing the residential schools in this and what happened and all that (.) I just hope it remains like that (.) But even like (.) when you look back and go back and say: "Ok (.) we'll do that in the primary schools and lower grades" (.) But then the universities and the professional schools have to do that as well (.) like I said (.) I met with the Canadian Medical Association and there was no feedback on that and then I went back and did that lection with the Northern Ontario Medical School and only one student was aware of the recommendations (.) That makes one wonder (.) So there is still a lot of work to do yet (.) Like I said (.) the aspect of oversight (.) With the shift over the years (.) someone should strap up and ask what are we going to do when it comes to oversight?
Katharina:	That is an important issue (.)
Michael:	If you get a chance (.) go back and do the research on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (.) I think it was in 1995 or 1996 (.)
Katharina:	I've already heard about that and I've read about it but not in detail (.)

Michael:	You know (.) whatever university has those volumes (.) they are collecting dust and that's what I fear with the TRC (.)
Katharina:	I can see where your fear is coming from (.) We've been talking for an hour now and it's been very interesting for me to get an insight on how you are seeing these things (.) I've been talking to four other people and they are working on reconciliation or working like Rhonda (.) she's worked on making the topic public (.) But I did not get the chance before to talk to a survivor and how he or she is experiencing the process (.) I am glad that you can see a process (.)
Michael:	It is definitely in a wake (.) And those schools functioned for 130 years (.) 130 years (.) it's going to take us 130 years to reverse some of that (.) some of the destructive issues that happened in there and the government (.) The thing that's more frustrating is when some members of the general population will come back and say: "That happened a long time ago (.) get over it" (.)
Katharina:	Can you feel that happening?
Michael:	That is quite a problem (.) quit common now (.) People saying: "Get over it" (.) Some even of our own people (.)
Katharina:	People of your own rows?
Michael:	But then again you don't understand the magnitude of what they are dealing with and I think that is (.) once the world of academia and scholars (.) people like you (.) looking back and saying: "This is what happened" (.) You can't go back and take four generations of people and do this to them without having a result (.) There is a cause and effect here and you got to understand the cause to really understand the effects today (.)
Katharina:	I hope that will change (.) that people will realize that (.)
Michael:	This will be the young people (.) You know (.) over the years we have the university here in Sault St. Marie that used to be a residential school and we bring the non-native kids in from different schools in town (.) grad six and seven and high school students and when they come through and once they hear the history of it (.) they get a real interest in it and look at a lot of what's happening and so there is an interest out there (.) Once the curriculum comes in and they see that (.) they will better understand it (.)
Katharina:	Yeah (.) I bet that this will change that way (.)
Michael:	Okidoki (.) it was nice talking to you and I wish you well with your studies (.)
Katharina:	Thank you (.) Thank you so much for taking the time (.) Have a good day (.)