

AFFIDAVIT

I, Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, am Chief of the Neskonlith Indian Band, Skat'sin te Secwépemc in Chase, British Columbia, V0E 1M0

I SOLEMNLY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

I fully support the statement signed by some 500 tribal community members in North America which denounces the actions of a self-described journalist, Jaqueline Keeler, who presents herself as a Diné/Dakota journalist - IN DEFENSE OF NATIVE AMERICAN AND INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION: A CALL TO ACTION AGAINST COLONIAL AND LATERAL VIOLENCE, AND ATTACKS ON INDIGENEITY.

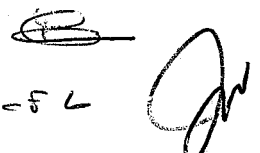
The statement articulates “Keeler’s use of lateral violence, colonial trauma, and colonial recognition as weaponized structures and frameworks against those that Keeler might disagree with, contest her, or who she may have a personal problem with through her network.”

Keeler has used lateral violence, bullying, intimidation and tactics of character assassination via various online platforms and her “Pretendian List”, in which she names hundreds of individuals she has labelled as Pretendians.

“Pretendian” is a term Keeler and her cohorts use to describe individuals who she alleges falsely claim to be of North American Indigenous ancestry or community membership through families. The allegation is typically followed by claims of financial gain.

Keeler’s ethnic animus is not restricted to those she has publicly shamed for not meeting the colonial criteria of “an Indian,” but extends to other ethnic minorities. Keeler has advocated for the use of “Blackface” and used the “n” word in online public forums.

From these online posts Keeler has frequently demonstrated significant prejudice against First Nations actors and artists in Canada, with many whom Keeler has categorized as “Pretendians” and concluded that, “I think Native Americans from the United States should go to Canada and take all the jobs,” indicating that Canadian

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actors are falsely claiming Indigenous ancestry in order to get jobs in the United States.

Indigenous people of African-American heritage, Latinos, Mestizos, and even members of the Cherokee Nation have been attacked by Keeler for what she insinuates is racial impurity relative to tribal lineage.

Many of these Nations and Peoples are re-constituting themselves under their own tribal laws and traditions. I travelled to both Texas and Oklahoma and heard from many tribal People about how they were persecuted and hunted to eradicate them. Sadly, we all know the history of the Trail of Tears and forceable removal of our Peoples from their homelands. It is in spite of these atrocities, our Peoples are revitalizing themselves. Keeler's racial purity crusade – for crusade it is – completely undermines the recovery of these communities.

For over several decades, since my younger sister was murdered in an act of violence at the age of 21, my mother, sisters and I have advocated on issues of MMIWG2S (Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls & Two Spirited). As an advocate, I find it disturbing that Keeler, on the other hand, has been seen in various social media exchanges giving online aid and comfort to a credibly accused rapist, to misogynists, and to homophobes, as a quid pro quo for their support. This fuels further lateral violence against our Indigenous Peoples.

Keeler's victims include many prominent and highly respected figures in the Indigenous world, from Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient Suzan Shown Harjo to former US Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell. She has taken particular interest in those who do vital work on the MMIWG2S crisis. Keeler harassed noted attorney, Mary Katherine Nagel, political staffer Tara Houska, and the foremost MMIWG2S data collator, Annita Lucchesi.

More recently, Keeler has targeted the filmmaker Rain, who wrote and directed the MMIWG2S documentaries, *Somebody's Daughter* and *Say Her Name*, both of which raised North America-wide attention to the MMIWG2S tragedy, provide a platform to the victims' families to tell their truth, and contributed to securing state and federal action to address the crisis.

Keeler's accusations against Rain are particularly egregious. As with all of her victims, her basic premise is that Rain is a "pretendian" who is "monetizing" from his Native American representation. Both are completely false and without merit.

Rain does not identify as “Native American”, therefore cannot be labelled as a “pretendian”. I am in possession of emails to a KOAT reporter who mistakenly described Rain as “Native” in a January 2022 news feature. In those emails, the reporter is asked to correct the mistake. The reporter replies and acknowledges their mistake. This hardly fits the “pretendian” profile. He does not claim to be enrolled in, or a band member, of any tribe.

I have known Rain for several years and worked on a number of important issues with him, from pipelines to MMIWG2S. Rain has undertaken tremendous work on MMIWG2S, his films being a major part. He was once a witness in a MMIWG2S case. He has been selfless in giving voice to survivors and to victims’ families. I have attended film screenings and can confirm that Rain pays his own expenses to attend events. Any proceeds from the events go to the independent organizers or are donated to MMIWG2S organizations by the venues.

It was during a Blackfeet Tribal Council meeting that Rain was asked to make *Somebody’s Daughter*. I was present at the MMIW Tribunal on the Blackfeet Nation in October 2019 when Chairman Davis of the Blackfeet publicly referred to that fact. These documentaries are low budget films, not commercial projects.

I can attest to the fact that Rain has Cheyenne relatives as I have met them. In 2004, he was welcomed into the Strange Owl family from the Northern Cheyenne Nation. The family has its own oral history, separate from colonial methods. They have provided affidavits to this effect.

In 2017, I was at a gathering with his late uncle, Don Shoulderblade, and his aunt, Ruthie Strange Owl-Shoulderblade. Don Shoulderblade was a Sun Dance Priest. He gave Rain his traditional name and in my firsthand experience, always referred to him by it, “Bear Stands Last.”

I assert that Keeler, nor anyone else, has the right to decide who a traditional family embraces as a relative. Traditional families have their own ways and knowledge that don’t rely upon colonial or federal government record keeping. Keeler relies upon Ancestry.com and the destructive tools of the colonizer that have been responsible for our cultural erasure. She uses these documents as weapons against our oral histories and traditional ways. Keeler does not live on a reserve or reservation and demonstrates a pitiful ignorance of our ways.



In Rain's case, it is more disturbing than just questioning his tribal familia in North America. Keeler is attempting to discredit Rain's recently deceased mother's and grandfather's Roma heritage. This is a vile attempt to erase somebody's heritage. One that is contradicted by a Roma researcher who has spent 30 years in Roma communities in Europe and has worked on Roma issues at the United Nations and the European Union.

Rain grew up in Europe. He has written about this, and I and others have enjoyed many discussions with him about his experiences there and Romani culture. Rain is a US citizen, not a British citizen, as Keeler claims.

Keeler is oddly confused by our Indigenous naming practices. I understand Rain changed his "legal" name years ago. I too am about to change my name, from my colonial name back to my traditional name, something that is "legal" in Canada and the United States. It is obvious that "Rain" is a professional alias he uses for his films and books. Further, it is commonplace to have nicknames. I refer to Rain as "Rain Bear" as we have ceremonies with our families and for much of the tribal work we both do. His late mother gave him the Roma name "Lovell." And as tribal Peoples we typically acknowledged our traditional names; how they are bestowed, and how we have received them. I know how Rain got the name "Bear Stands Last" and has the permission to use it.

Keeler is also accusing Sara Mathuin of claiming to be Alaska Native because she sometimes uses the nickname Atiqtalik on emails. Sara is Canadian. I have met her several times. She was adopted. She does not know where her patrilineal line comes from, but a physician advised her that she has some physiological traits that are distinctly Innuit. She has never claimed to be Alaska Native.

Having been in First Nations leadership for many years, I have worked on Indigenous Children & Family issues against the state governments removal of children through the industrial schools, residential schools, 60s Scoop and continued ministerial removed into welfare systems. I have advocated and supported those who were adopted into other cultures by governments legislation and policies.

Keeler does not appear to consider any of these historical and ongoing issues, and like many children who were removed or adopted out of the country, Sara's DNA could have as easily come from Greenland as Canada. The Alaska Native accusation by Keeler is another lie that impacts those who are struggling to find their birth rights and reconnect with their families they were taken from.

Keeler randomly claims to be related to prominent Indigenous people. In one instance, she claims to be related to the late John Trudell, but provides no evidence (as she would demand of others), and she doesn't raise it when John Trudell's daughter, Peji, questions Keeler about why her aunt is on the "pretendians" list. Presumably, if Keeler is related to John Trudell, she's also related to Peji Trudell – but their exchange suggests that they are not. This is a double standard Keeler expects those who she labels as "pretendians" to have evidence of, but it seems that it doesn't apply to her when she claims a relationship.

Keeler's actions appear to be an attempt to gain notoriety to sell books and get clicks on her web magazine. Her methods are highly questionable, unethical, and irresponsible, which is, presumably, why she was terminated from *Indian Country Today* and removed from *Native News Online*. I have worked in both mainstream media and Indigenous media and there are editorial policies and practices that journalists must adhere to. There are also moral and ethical lines to be mindful of which seems to be overstepped in those who Keeler has chosen to add to her Pretendian List.

Jacqueline Keeler, her cohorts, and her "pretendian" witch hunt is causing great disturbance and damage to tribal communities on both sides of the Medicine Line, and this form of lateral violence and character assassination must be rejected. My family, many of whom have worked internationally and across North America, have worked to unite our peoples, not to tear each other down. We have one enemy: those who stole our lands and continue to try, and in the process tried and continue to try to destroy our traditional ways. Keeler is contributing to this mission.

Many of us are doing important work within our communities and Nations to unite our Peoples, and it is only our tribal Nations who define and decide their own membership through custom adoptions, their own customs, laws, and practices. It is an infringement if state governments or third parties interfere with the tribal laws and processes.

I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath.

Signature:



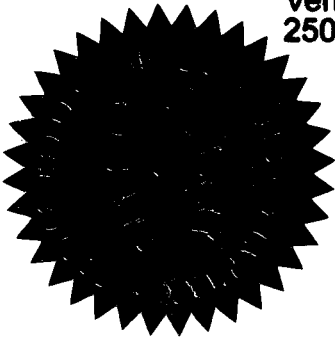
Printed Name:
Kukpi7 Judy Wilson

SOLEMNLY DECLARED BEFORE ME in Vernon, British Columbia on:



February 15, 2022

RHODA L. CHAPMAN
NOTARY PUBLIC
F, 3105 - 31st Avenue
Vernon, BC V1T 2G9
250 545-5353



Page 6 of 6
Page 5 