

Audio 4: (Erika)

In the copious materials that I found in the Public Library and at the archives on Doreen, and most of which were donated by Doreen herself... Almost the entire collection was donated by Doreen herself... she really doesn't talk about it very much. Where it comes through is when she talks about her family and where she talks about not having had a loving family in her life and in seeking those kinds of relationships with people on her own, she's very disturbed when her twin sister and when her older sister reject her, as Doreen seeks their, as Doreen finds them in the community once she leaves the institution. It is a very painful journey she goes on as she tries to piece together how it came to be that she was in the institution and her sisters were not, and how it came to be that she had sisters that she didn't even know about. It's clear that she savours those relationships very, and she keeps them very – she holds them very dear to her heart. She starts her own diary just specifically for letters and cards and valentines and any scrap of evidence of this relationship she keeps very secure and safe in a separate book. But, in reading those letters, it also becomes clear that her sisters were hesitant to develop relationships with Doreen, whether that's because they were concerned about her mental health, or whether they were concerned about the effects that a relationship with Doreen might have on their own children, you get hints of that in both sets of relationships. The children, it seems, embrace Auntie Doreen unreservedly. They write her letters and she keeps every scrap of artwork and letters that she gets from her nieces and nephews, and it's really through that that you get a sense that she, she grieves the loss of a family or the lack of family that she had growing up. Some of that is related to sterilization as she of course also comes to accept that she won't ever have her own children, but she doesn't talk about it explicitly – it comes out in these other ways. As we see in the letter to Sandra Anderson, she seems to express that same kind of sentiment – that one should accept this fate. This was a fate that was brought to them and it happened to them and they, the individuals that lived in Michener, were gonna have to find ways to move on. She's very different from some of her peers in this way, many of whom took the state to task. Lelani Muir, of course, is the most successful in this case, but there were hundreds of other people who sought legal support for challenging the state on their wrongful sterilization – sterilization that in many respects defied most basic human rights – that is, did not provide individuals with information about the operation, did not seek their consent, and, it seems clear, their parents and guardians were not informed about the operation in some cases as well. So, that's where the wrongful sterilization lawsuits come out, but Doreen seems to step a little bit aside from the specific legal cases that come up. She also died before those specific cases came to court, so she wasn't involved in them and perhaps had she, had she lived to be involved in some of those cases, she may have changed her stance somewhat, but it's difficult to tell at this point.