Margaret: What do you teach your grandchildren today?

Annie: I talk Cree to them. I talk Cree to them and they understand it. They won't try and talk back to me.

Margaret: They speak English then?
Annie: Yeah.

Margaret: But what do you teach them today? Do you teach them...?

Annie: I talk Cree to them. But if I want to get something over to them I talk in English to them. It's their language now, the English language.

Margaret: But as far as your ideas and those things.

Annie: Their ideas?

Margaret: Do you tell your grandchildren your ideas?

Annie: I tell it to them. I talk to them in English.

Margaret: I understand that but do you tell your grandchildren stories? Do you do that?

Annie: I tell them crazy stories what my grandparents used to tell me. My grandmother used to tell me this and that.

Margaret: Well, what do you think about the younger generation?

Annie: Now, today, I was asked that, I went and spoke at the University, I was asked what do you think, how are your games, the games you played, how do they differ from ours? And I said, "Today," I said, "your games," I said, "they are hard to explain. You listen to that TV too much. A lot of evil comes out of that TV and we had not, we didn't have those. Just trained so fast that my grandparents taught us and our mothers taught us and we never tried, we were just in an innocent age. Now today," I said, "everything, from a youngster when they are able to talk and they are able to understand, already they almost know everything about sex and everything."

Margaret: You don't think that's good for them do you?

Annie: What's that?

Margaret: You don't think that's good?

Annie: No, I don't think that's good.

Margaret: How do you think that...?

Annie: I say it's up to the parents. Why does the parents allow little children to watch TV especially when it's not a good show. Like having an (inaudible) at sixteen years old, one of my grandchildren. When they sit up and watch TV, cable, it's two, three o'clock in the morning. But what's on the show, I don't know.

Margaret: It's just watching whatever comes on. (laughs)
Annie: Yeah. This one smart Indian that was in the audience eh, he had braids, he asked me, "You think you can go back on the reserve and make a living? What do you think we can make a living on on the reserve?" I said there is nothing there that you can make a living on. The best living you can make now is go ahead with your education. Stick to it and make something, set your goal and stick to it till you reach your goal. And I said I will give you a message. To thine own self be true and thou canst not be false to any man. Yourself, because to yourself you are falling, the above spirit is giving a message. You can't listen and decide if the best, there won't be enough space for every Indian on the reserve, our little reserves, how small they are. Like, my reserve is only six by six by six miles by six. Now just gather all the Indians that belong to that. You can't space them all out in that reservation. Now what kind of living will they make? Nothing. All the wood is gone, all the trappings are out of the lakes, all dried up. You can't go down there and set traps.

Margaret: The ones that are there, most of the ones that are on the reserves, what are they doing today?

Annie: Today they are farming. Yeah. That's I guess, the smartest ones turned to farming. But now they can get grants. You see, in our day, we never got no grants.

Margaret: So you don't, you think it's better for the young people to move off the reserve, do you?

Annie: I think so. (Inaudible)

Margaret: Even coming into the white society, do you think it's better?

Annie: Yes, it would be. But not to throw their real, like, their traditions. That's another thing I said when I speak at the University, we were a proud nation. And let's be proud today, let's put our heads up the way our forefathers did. Put our heads up. Sure, try and get along with your neighbor, the white neighbor, try and get along. And you can do it, you can do it. Make the most of it. And, but don't throw your traditions away. Teach your children our rituals, our rituals are something that we should hang on to. Teach them that. If you don't, I said, all that is going to be wiped out and there will be nothing left. But you'll be raising little brown white men. Oh, you should have heard them clapping. (laughs) You'll be raising little brown white men. Yes.

Margaret: Do you like living off the reserve now? Today? Do you like living in the city?

Annie: I've lived in the city for so long, I've not been out to the reserve for so long now that I've just become part of the outside world.
Margaret: Yeah.

Annie: Although I have my own little, very own place back home.

Margaret: On the reserve?

Annie: Yeah, or my family there. And that's another thing my grandmother taught us was how to slice meat. Yeah, make dry meat.

Margaret: Do you ever have to go out and vote yourself, do you vote when elections come around and that?

Annie: What's that?

Margaret: When elections come around? You know, the elections, when the come here, do you ever go out and vote, yourself? Or do you...?

Annie: I didn't get you. (laughs)

(Break in tape)

Margaret: When you go out to vote, how do you choose who you're going to vote for?

Annie: I just go according to the way I've seen the politicians, understand the politicians, how they work and what they done and what they've done for my people. I know the ones who've really worked hard, who've worked the hardest. And those are the ones I always try and vote for. I have to take a sip of my coffee. (coughs)

(Break in tape)

Annie: I was the first secretary-treasurer.

Margaret: For the local nine with Jimmy Sinclair.

Annie: No, with Walter Langdon.

Margaret: Oh yeah.

Annie: But I didn't stick to it long enough because my husband was, he didn't like me leaving home and I was so much away from home. I'm sorry I didn't stick with it.

Margaret: What do you think about the...?

Annie: I think now today their Metis Society has come a long ways from what they were. They used to be just knocked around and doing labor, just common labor and hard-working people. That's one thing that they have inherited was being strong laborers, they knew how to work. And they know how to work to
earn that little bit of money. They had to work. Now they are encouraging their children to go on with their education. Now I see so many young people with that, getting a proper education.

Margaret: That's what's really important to you know is the younger generation getting educated.

Annie: Yeah. Keep pushing them, the kids, in order to have a better tomorrow for the other children, the great-grandchildren. And I always say, like, I went to a meeting there not too long ago. It was in June I think. Where one guy, Moses Lavallie, wanted representatives from the Elders' Society, two from the Elders' Society, and two from Local Nine and two from, two natives and another Metis stood up and said, "Why segregate, we should all unite and try to pull together." And I said, "Yes, we should unite, here, the three. Unite and try to understand each other so's we can pull together for the sake of our children. No, if we organize and pull together and push those young people, the young people now that are in office, push them, give them our support. Push them because they are thinking of the other generation, next generation that's going to come. They're the ones." Now the Metis Society has come a long ways, they are getting recognized now and we have lawyers, we have doctors, we have nurses, hairdressers, yeah. I have a little young boy here who has won a scholarship and now he was supposed to go to University of Calgary. He doesn't want to go till next semester.

Margaret: What does he want to study?

Annie: What he had a promise of a job yesterday at the New Breed and he wanted to take that. No, I said, I wish I had someone to talk to him. I think he should take it and go now.

Margaret: He might not want to go later.

Annie: Pardon?

Margaret: He may not want to go back to school later.

Annie: Yeah, that's what I'm afraid of. (Inaudible) school now that he's home and he was in a foster home and he really made to understand what an education meant. Now that he's home and free, maybe he won't want to go. That's what I was afraid and I was wishing someone would talk to him.

Margaret: (Inaudible)

Annie: But then I don't want anybody to know that I told him to try it. He used to be with Fred Bird before he went to this foster home. And he went and see Fred and Fred promised to come and see, come and have a visit with him. That was day before yesterday. And he was supposed to start work at the New Breed today. Then he got back and they haven't quite decided
what to do with him yet. Hard to explain and it's real hard
for me to (inaudible) because in my way I don't, I sure don't
like the way the young people are. Taking things into their
own hands. Where did we go wrong? What did we do? Like me,
eh, where did I go wrong? Because if my grandchildren, they
are having problems now. I can see they come from broken homes
(inaudible). Like these young people here, they come from a
broken home when they are small and Grandpa and I took over and
had to bring them up. And their mother was killed in a car
accident so that left them. It was very hard for me, like, eh.
And then Grandpa had to die and that's when I started having
problems with the little boys. So I gave them over to my
daughter with, she had an alcohol problem. Now today she
recognizes, she come to face reality and she knew she had a
problem and she knew enough to quit. Now today she is a
counselor for the alcoholics. That's when I (inaudible).
Lawrence too. Lawrence was a terrible drinker. But he is
doing good too. Sometimes he's called in to give the
alcoholics a lecture. But he's all right. There's only one
that I'm worried about. I have a boy in the Pen, what's he
going to face. Is he going through life with bitterness or is
he going to try and conquer that bitterness when he comes out
or I don't know what, I don't know what to think of it. Last
time we went to see him you could see, you could see the
bitterness on his face, eh.

Margaret: Is he young?

Annie: He's young, only 30. Before he'd be a handsome guy,
now he says, "Mom," he said, "what makes me very bitter is that
when I lie in my cell," he said, "thinking did I do it? Am I
capable of doing it? And I say to myself, 'No.'" I wrote him
a letter, like the first year he was in, eh. I wrote him a
letter. But there is only one. I can't judge him, I can't
pass my judgement on. There is only one great judge and that's
the one you have to face. I myself, a mother loves, a mother's
love, I know you couldn't have done it. I would like to
believe it that way. And he'll be out in, he was supposed to
be out in March, and that damn fool, he was getting day visits
back and forth to Winnipeg eh. He was working on a farm. Now
he could get these visits with anybody as long as somebody went
and signed him out and whoever signed him out had to take him
back within a limited time, you know. Now he got on a drunk,
we went and see him in December. A few weeks after that he got
on a real roaring drunk with his nephew. Of course, the nephew
forgot to take him back. Stayed out for five days and he got
another six months clapped onto that. Had to stay in a hole
for eighteen days, solitary confinement. Now I don't, I dread
to go and see him. We plan to go and see him at the end of the
month.

Margaret: (Inaudible).

Annie: Yeah, Stoney Mountain. And he's completed his grade
twelve when he was in there. I have his diploma. His sister
has his diploma. She's going to show it to Jim Sinclair, see
what Jim could do, eh. They could promise him a job, anyway.

Margaret: (Inaudible) get off on the right track again. So he can get on the right track again.

Annie: Yes.

(END OF SIDE A)

(END OF TAPE)