



Royal Commission  
into Institutional Responses  
to Child Sexual Abuse

## Statement

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**Name** Marija RADOJEVIC  
**Address** Known to the Commission  
**Date** March 2017

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1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary, to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. My full name is and I am Marija RADOJEVIC I am 65 years old.
3. I have previously been involved with the Royal Commission. I have been asked to describe my experience in grooming and entrapment, and how I felt about what was happening.
4. My son was a very high profile boy in his school. He loved his school and he participated actively in all aspects of school life. Thus, he was preferentially liked and respected by the Head of School and other Head teachers, as were other outstanding boys.
5. My son also stood out because he was a particularly good-looking boy. Later he became more vulnerable as he became increasingly confused about his sexuality. It was the culture of the school to invite those particular boys who had evening co-curricular activity practise such as Drama, Debating, Chapel Choir and Philosophy to the homes of Masters whose wives were present and who offered the boys afternoon tea, such as scones or sandwiches before they had dinner at the Boarding House. My husband and I

Signature:.....*Radojevic*.....

Witness:.....*[Signature]*.....

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had no reason to suspect that our son was being groomed by an unmarried teacher. As far as we knew, the boys only attended the homes of married teachers whose wives were home.

6. We did not know it was happening right under our nose. We truly believed that the Christian ethic with which our son was raised and which the school espoused was a nurturing and protective one. I had a significant involvement in the school as well. I assisted the two female teachers responsible for organising the Chapel choristers.
7. My role was to wash, starch, and iron the treble singers' collars. At school I assisted in dressing the trebles. And so the school became its own little 7 day a week microcosm.
8. My son trusted the school completely. I remember an incident when he was in year 7 and in chapel with the rest of the choristers. I was assisting with marshalling the boys when the Head of the school told me that I had a beautiful son. I responded by thanking him and replying, Yes, but they are all beautiful". He then said "Yes, but some are more beautiful than others".
9. In this way, I believe that my son became more vulnerable because he was unable to discern between the person who would hurt him from those who never perpetrate such a horror.
10. During his years as a Chapel chorister my son attended a number of music camps. On one of the later ones during his time at the school a teacher came along to assist with the camp. The Head of music was pleased with this assistance but wondered why a

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Signature:.....*Radojevic*.....

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teacher whose teaching area was far removed from music would assist with a music camp in his own time.

11. In years 11 and 12, my son became withdrawn, surly and depressed. There was a family history of depression and so he was medicated for this. We considered that the stress of the HSC was probably the trigger. With respect to his surly, withdrawn behaviour, given our professions, we considered this to be 'normal' adolescent development. Additionally, his sexual orientation seemed to be unstable. We reasoned that this issue needed to be put on hold until after his HSC.

12. This created additional barriers for our son to disclose the abuse. Our own ignorance must be considered here. Having ourselves led very protected and sheltered lives as had our children, it is fair to say that we transferred this expectation onto the school. In fact, this is why we chose a Christian school for our children. And it did look as if everything was going well. We had grown to trust the school as much as our son did. And to this extent we had become entrapped.

13. In Years 11 and 12 our son began his study of a particular subject at school and this correlated with the beginning of his decline in mood and general behaviour. We began to become concerned when the Head of School called us to a meeting to discuss his worry about and anger toward our son.

14. The Head had reminded our son in passing, of a Prefects meeting one afternoon only to hear him arrogantly reply that he wouldn't be going because "I have something else on".

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Signature: Marija Radojevic

Witness: [Signature]

This was so totally uncharacteristic of our son that we were as utterly shocked and angry as was the Head who had considered stripping him of his Prefect position.

15. We knew that something critical was happening, but still had no idea that he was being sexually abused. We believed that the school was a cocoon like our home. This, I believe is true entrapment. We didn't want to 'rock the boat' too much with the HSC being so soon.

16. Our attempt to discuss this with our son met with calculated silence.

17. Finally, after the HSC, when pushed about his sexuality, our son declared that he had slept with two men, one of whom had been one of his teachers. I immediately told him I would go to the Police at which point he declared that if I did he would deny it all by saying that he had been the initiator all along! We were then totally helpless.

18. Many years of self-destructive behaviour later, he did admit to having been abused, but did not name his perpetrator. He told me that his perpetrator had given him money during his senior years and even after he had left school.

19. We are now left to deal, not only with our endless feelings of loss and trauma but also with the deep guilt about our naïve ignorance.

20. The extent of our entrapment only became clearer after our son's death in 2014. He died of head injuries sustained whilst having an epileptic fit.

21. Signed: .....

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Signature:.....

*Radojevic*

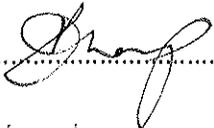
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Statement of Marija RADOJEVIC continued

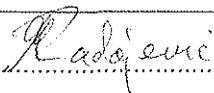
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