

Michael Arntfield

Anastasia MacLean: Welcome to the Three Selves Podcast. I'm your host Anastasia MacLean. Join us as we chat with fellow Western alumni who've engaged in the often messy, but ultimately rewarding, undertaking of discovering their true self in their life's work.

This police officer-turned-tenured-professor tracked armed robbers and suspected serial killers during the day and worked on his PhD dissertation at night. From murder and mayhem to classrooms and curriculums, Western University alumnus, Dr. Michael Arntfield, talks about the privilege of policing, the allure of returning to the Western fold, and how cultivating an appetite and understanding of risk in his former career paved the way for his present pursuits.

Anastasia MacLean: Michael, thank you so much for joining us today.

Michael Arntfield: Thanks for having me on.

Anastasia MacLean: Oh, it's my pleasure. You and I are alumni of Western, but you have much deeper roots in the Western community than I do, both as a former student and as a current professor. So, tell us what it is that you've studied at Western and what you're teaching today.

Michael Arntfield: I was originally a student back in the mid-90s, dating myself now, but I did an anthropology archaeology degree, with the view to getting in and out, and joining the police force. What happened was I ended up moving to the North End a few years later and being near Western and sort of in the western orbit. And I had a very exciting, rewarding career already on the go but I missed the student experience at Western, and I missed being part of that community. At the same time the police had a program whereby they would subsidize accredited courses, so they would pay the tuition. So, I returned to Western part time to get my master's degree, with a view to being a viable candidate for the senior ranks with a graduate degree, which is at the time largely unheard of among municipal police department.

I started to TA'ing, I actually got a paper published, I really just sort of loved it. And my master's advisor, who then later became my PhD dissertation supervisor, had just a very interesting, aspirational sort of lifestyle, including a lot of time off to travel the world and pursue projects and that naturally translated into my then going on to do a PhD while simultaneously police detective, so this was a very interesting double life I was leading. Pursuing armed robbery, hold up crews and, and suspected serial murderers during the day and then going to night class or working on my PhD dissertation.

A number of new lanes started opening up in terms of book deals, television deals, because of the novelty of what I was doing, that I was in the academic world teaching and by that point, the university allowed me to design my own courses, so I had courses on policing profiles in the media, I had courses on serial killers in popular culture. So, I was doing interesting things but ultimately Western then offered me a tenure track position. I was going into my 16th year with the police department, and ultimately this opportunity was not going to avail itself again so ultimately, I bowed out and took this role and am now a tenured full professor.

Anastasia MacLean: Just hearing what you've said about your journey there makes me think well, first of all, you're a lifer at Western. You also mentioned about opportunities that came up, and someone once said to me that the luckiest people are the hardest workers and I, I think that's true. I'd like to delve more into what you've done and some of the choices that you've made in the opportunities that have come up for you. But I think that opportunities come to people who put themselves on the line and they do unique things. Do you do you agree?

Michael Arntfield: Absolutely. And I'll have students who ask me, listen, I want to do what you do, like what's the path? And I said, there is no linear path to doing this. Depending on the day I'm doing 17 different things

and. I couldn't probably replicate this again if I tried and in hindsight, I can't believe the boundless energy that I had to be doing, I mean pulling 70-to-80-hour weeks with a police department and then going home at two in the morning and reading textbooks and, you know, preparing for oral exams and that was the goal. It was the pursuit of purpose, I guess, on both fronts. And we know that I mean to be purpose driven and to work hard, you know, good things ideally will follow.

Anastasia MacLean: I think for people who are listening, who aren't necessarily following their true path, what we call here their true self, they don't oftentimes have the energy for what it is that they do, do because it's not on purpose for them. I think about what are the things that I do, and I lose all sense of time and space when I'm doing them. That's when I know I'm really being me and doing what I need to do. And when you get people asking you for a roadmap, so to speak, for them to do what you to do and be who you are, there's only one you, just as there is only one for each and every one else, and there is no shortcut to going after your true purpose. I think sometimes maybe people ask you that because they're afraid of that journey, and so they want to make it as short as possible and it just by definition can't be.

Michael Arntfield: And I think to find your true calling is to, first of all, understand yourself in the most rudimentary way. I knew by 18 probably that I was not cut out for a 9 to 5 Monday to Friday job. And as soon as I understood that, you no longer have the analysis paralysis that I think a lot of people have. It's like I want to do one of these 50 things, well now that that haystack goes to about eight things, because I know I either want shift work or some type of asynchronous, versatile schedule. So that was one of the things that really appealed to me about police work. And then what happens is when you get into that, you become very versatile at managing your time. You need to be able to shift from days to nights, afternoons to days, and I loved the variety of that. And then the appeal, obviously, of academic work is, you largely make your own schedule, which is daunting if you're not used to that because there's nobody checking in on you, and if you can't budget your time effectively, you're going to run out the tenure clock and you're not going to produce the necessary things to stay on. So really, while they seem like totally different worlds, they actually gel pretty well.

Anastasia MacLean: And how did you know that you weren't cut out for a full-time job?

Michael Arntfield: If you mean like a conventional Monday to Friday job, I don't know. Like a lot of teenagers, I worked in retail and then I worked at a bar, I was a bit of a night owl, I liked having, you know, my days free, I liked going grocery shopping at Tuesday at noon when nobody's there, or at least nobody used to be around. And you sort of live opposite the people who were grinding it out. It always felt very sort of liberating and I didn't want to then end up in a cubicle on a Monday morning at 8 a.m.

Anastasia MacLean: And when you decided that you wanted to become a police officer and not sort of follow the family business, so to speak, and become a lawyer, either as a Crown attorney or otherwise, did your father embrace that choice?

Michael Arntfield: He did and by that point, my older brother was also a lawyer and had gone to Western law, a second-generation Western law and they both actually said, don't be a lawyer.

Anastasia MacLean: For you or were for something that they discovered about being a lawyer that they didn't like?

Michael Arntfield: For me, they knew. And then obviously the policing thing is, is sort of in that orbit, but it's entirely different. So that was very appealing to me, but like I said the entire time, I had one foot still sort of on campus, whether by living near it, whether by working at a bar and staying in touch with people there and then eventually returning there while still a cop. So, it has pulled me back at many junctures in my life.

Anastasia MacLean: So, like you, I've veered away from a traditional career path, and one of the things that I struggle with sometimes is, when I'm in a social setting and I meet someone for the first time, and invariably

they'll ask me, oh, Anastasia, what do you do? And then I am stuck because I don't know if I should tell them just one of the many things I do, or just try and say, oh, it's all under the communications umbrella, or, you know turn it around, well, what do you do? So how do you handle that "What do you do" question without thinking that it's going to take a long time for you to answer and they're going to need a nap when you're done.

Michael Arntfield: That's a really great question, and you know what? I've, I've grappled with that, and it all comes down to knowing your audience. So, depending on the setting, I'd say, you know, I'm a professor at Western, and a lot of people don't really know what that means. They go, so you're a teacher. Well, that's like one tenth of what I do. You know depending on the level of awareness that I have with the person, comfort level, I'll say, well, this is my official job, but I also do x, y, z. So, know your audience and you know, you don't have to tell the whole story, but telling only half of it is still the truth.

Anastasia MacLean: So, let's go back then in time, so that we can take a look at your career journey and some of the decisions you've made and the opportunities that have come your way. I'd like to start with this: what's your earliest memory around the following fill in the blank statement, and you can just fill it in at the end, when I grow up, I want to be a...?

Michael Arntfield: It's a good question. For years it would have been a musician actually. So, yeah, I played in bands for many years and that's again another thing that let me know that this is a lifestyle that I want. You know, hanging out with musicians and touring and playing gigs, the rush that comes with that. And that's in part what ended up also putting me on the path to police work is I was at my house just shredding on the electric guitar one day, and it was incredibly loud, and there was a knock at the door, and my next-door neighbor was a police detective, and I figured he was there to complain about the noise and he actually said, can you teach me to play like that. So I started giving guitar lessons, I had a few students at the time and again, same thing is like, this guy seems pretty cool. So, I thought there has to be something more to what he does for work. And then I started meeting more of them and I thought, you know what? If I have something in common with, as a teenage rocker, with this guy, maybe that's something I should be looking at. And then the more I looked into it, the more it made sense.

Anastasia MacLean: As I listen to you, I think about the kinds of qualities that people who have a non-traditional career path possess, and I think one of them is getting over that fear or putting it aside and really being open to possibilities, rather than saying, this is what I do, and I get up in the morning and I go, and I do it, and then I'm going to really just live for the weekends, or my work is going to be what I do to get by and then the rest of the time I'll pursue what I'm really interested in. And, when you think about it, that's not a lot of time. You know you spend the most hours, and certainly you're waking hours in pursuing what it is that you do for your work. So, what would you say are some of the other really important or essential qualities for people who want to figure out what their true purpose is, and be able to be a success at that, like you've been.

Michael Arntfield: Again, there's no one path, right? There's no, secret recipe. You sum it up very well, like if you're working for the weekend, and that's not even factoring in the time spent in your car. I mean, when you see the line of cars on the 401 and you're wondering, like, you know, what is motivating these people to get on this slab of pavement every day and just grind it out and a lot of them just didn't have the choices one way or another. I'm very fortunate that that entire rat race, I managed to zig around that my entire life. I've got two brothers; one is a lawyer the other one is a surgeon, but then he's also got a medical tech startup, and he's all over the world as well. Like, we've all pursued passions and been able to actualize yourself. I think a lot of that comes down to resourcefulness, but resourcefulness comes from having support. So, you have to have family support, you have to have peer support. And again, we're fortunate at Western to have all these resources locally. So, you have your family, of your friends, but you have to seize upon, the institutions that provide those pathways. And I mean that was the whole basis for my cold case society at Western. So, I mean, I started this when I was still a police officer and then just teaching there part time. It was a think tank, a study group, that made use of all the interdisciplinary expertise on the campus.

So, we had a case for instance, where this girl been missing since the 60s, there was an urban legend just outside of Oshawa, that she was buried in this field. No one had really explored it; you're not going to just excavate a field based on a hunch. And then I remembered, going back to again my first degree, the archaeology department has the ground penetrating radar and other tools. So, I'm at Western, we were able to acquire that and go out and debunked it, that there was nothing there. And as it turns out, it looks like she may have actually faked her death and lived the rest of her life in the United States, but that's a whole other story. But that began with our excluding what for years had been the misinformation that she was dead and buried in this field, and that was able to be done because of all the tools and the brain trust that's at the university, at the disposal of people willing to use it.

Anastasia MacLean: So, there's a real resourcefulness associated with going on a non-traditional path, and in your case, a real entrepreneurial spirit, a willing to take risks. And I think also being super inquisitive on your part. I think the archaeology combined with the policing, combined with the professorship that you do today, you have questions and you want answers and you'll be tenacious about getting them and that's, I think, a real common thread for you and the path that you've taken.

Michael Arntfield: You sum it up nicely with intellectual curiosity and that is key. You have to wonder, "what if I did this instead of that?" versus being complacent. And really that intellectual curiosity, is honed in police work. And that's why it drives me nuts when these cases stay cold for so long and I'm thinking, like, aren't you curious what happened? I mean, that's again where I see my colleagues and I, and there's increasingly awareness and appreciation for this among law enforcement in terms of subject matter experts and bringing them in and drawing on their knowledge. And there is a way to do these investigations better, and you have to go outside of the echo chamber in the police department to be able to do that.

Anastasia MacLean: Did you at some point during your policing career, have a crisis of faith that was related to these cases that go unsolved?

Michael Arntfield: Yeah. So, I mean, that was an opening line in my Ted talk, again, something I could have never done if I stayed on the department. These are the types of entrepreneurial sort of things I could explore when, you move into academia. So, I did in, in that talk cite a crisis of faith. And that was, yeah, the inflection point that I mentioned earlier, which is I largely exhausted what interested me and was frustrated by how things were sort of being done at the time. And I knew that I was in a position necessarily to change. And I think I was self-aware enough that, would I be happy coming into police headquarters in a windowless office at 730 in the morning, Monday to Friday, to move around paper? No, that's not why I got into the job. So, at that point it's like, okay, I need to zag here and, and now this window is opening at the university. So, I mean, if we're going to sort of check boxes here, intellectual curiosity, resourcefulness and timing, which you have to be able to recognize when the time is right to do things. Because so much of that is beyond your control. You have to be willing to be adaptable and respond to change and, and at the right time. And that again, just comes through life experience I guess that's, that's not something that can be taught.

Anastasia MacLean: I think also outside the box thinking is important as well because you've mentioned a couple of times now about how, oh, well, there's never been someone who's done this, so there's never been a situation where you could do that and that at the same time. If you hadn't always thought, this is how big my career can be, this is what I'm allowed to do, this is what other people have done and so I've got to find my way within that set pattern, you wouldn't have done over half of what you've actually accomplished. So, I think that's also another important quality for people to cultivate is not saying no or not saying something's impossible or can't be done, thinking about what it is they would like to do if they want to make a change, and then just going for it.

Michael Arntfield: Yeah. And I mean, we're living in interesting times in terms of those avenues opening up or being able to do that. And that's why I like to keep in touch with my students, because I'm very curious where

a number of them end up after their Western journey. Some come back, many have again non-conventional career paths like they have their degree, but they're not doing anything remotely related. Not surprisingly, you know, I get a number of background check calls from police departments for former students every year. A lot of them may know going that route, or I end up writing a lot of letters of reference for law school because, I mean, ultimately, they share my interests at the same age, so they end up going one of those two routes. Um, now, my kids, I don't know. My oldest daughter, who's starting at Western, she hasn't ruled out starting with police work because I said it's a great onramp to life. I mean, I was working full time, you know, contributing to a pension, had a pension plan, and defined benefits at the same time, my friends were still an undergrad.

So, you can start young, it provides you with tremendous life experience, and transferable skills and, do you need to do it for 30 years like they used to do? No. And case in point is, is me. And I know a number of people actually who've leapfrogged to something else because that job has made them aware that actually they're good at this or they're good at that, or that they met somebody during the course of their duties because you come across all walks of life, who then they wanted to do what that person did, or they ended up becoming friends with that person and they started a business together. You never know what it will take you, but it's a great first step for those who are cut out for it. And I tell my students that and a lot of them take my advice and, and that's the path they chose.

Anastasia MacLean: Yes, I would think that many of your students, knowing the non-traditional path that you have taken and continue to take, they would get a really good sense of how that's possible. Some people think they go to school, and then they have to find a job that fits in with what they've studied for, and then they do that until they retire, and then maybe later they can do something that they really want to do. So it's great that they get from you the sense that, no, that does not necessarily need to be everyone's story.

Michael Arntfield: Yeah, and I say a bachelor's degree in anything essentially teaches you how to learn and just opens your eyes to the world. You know, use it as a springboard into grad school or medical school. You're learning how to learn, you're learning about yourself. I mean, I knew early on that a number of people were doing police foundations or going to college. They were clear, they're like, we will teach you to do all of that stuff. We will teach you the handcuff, you don't need to come in knowing that or thinking you know that. We need you to come in well-read, knowing how to write lengthy, complex reports, all the things that you can learn through a bachelor's degree, so it didn't matter what it was. So I chose something that was of interest to me because ultimately, and I tell my students this, if you're interested in law enforcement, there's only three things you need, and you'll learn everything else. And the three things are soft skills that can't be taught. Common sense, empathy, and a sense of humor. If you have those things, everything else can be taught at the academy or through a field experience. So, a degree is just a stage in a life more than a piece of paper.

Anastasia MacLean: So, did you always have a sense that your career was going to be different, in the sense that you would end up wearing quite a few different hats? Or was there an actual moment when you realized that your life's work would be a journey?

Michael Arntfield: Yeah. I mean, early on in my career when there'd be a posting for a retirement party, for instance, and they would always post the very first personnel photo taken of the person in uniform. There'd be these old timers and there's a photo of them on the poster advertising and they're like 19. And I remember thinking at the time, my photo is not going to be up there. I'm not going to be looking back at like 21-year-old Mike Arntfield and having a retirement party, that's not how this ends. I knew that early on, and I guess I hadn't really thought about that until you just ask me. But I knew that one way or another this was taking me somewhere else other than the conventional. Okay, here's your gold watch. See you later.

Anastasia MacLean: I'd like to ask you what we will call *a series of one's* questions. So the first is, can you describe the one career related, let's call it a wrong turn that you took, that you learned the most from and are grateful for.

Michael Arntfield: Hmm...that's a hard one.

Anastasia MacLean: Surely everything wasn't perfect.

Michael Arntfield: No, but in terms of a wrong turn, I couldn't correct out of. I can't think of one. Where I am now isn't a contingency arising out of something that, you know, I had to salvage. It was all.

Anastasia MacLean: Deliberate.

Michael Arntfield: Yeah.

Anastasia MacLean: What about naming one person who had a profound influence on your career journey?

Michael Arntfield: Too many to mention. Between family, police partners I've worked with over the years, my PhD supervisor Dr. Tim Blackmore would be up there for sure. Without his guidance and support, it would have been a far rougher road to get to the end, particularly again, given that I was working full time as a as a police officer still and wasn't necessarily following the traditional graduate student path. So, he was tremendously supportive of that. So, meeting after hours when it suited my schedule versus during his office hours on campus. I had a far different experience than I think some colleagues, grad students I see now with their supervisors so under the circumstances and in this context, Tim Blackmore absolutely.

Anastasia MacLean: Without naming any names, can you think of people who were not particularly supportive of your non-traditional path? I can remember doing a particular kind of work that lots of people would just do it until they were done their entire careers, and they'd be fine with it and that's okay. But I knew for me, no, just like you, with that picture of the 19-year-old cop versus the cop now retiring, that was not going to be me. And I know that some people I thought who were very supportive were not, and some people who I didn't think would be supportive or unsupportive because they were sort of on the periphery for me, became very supportive. So did you experience that or get any pushback anywhere along the way?

Michael Arntfield: Here and there. On the police department again, they were tremendously supportive of this, my supervisor was very supportive in terms of flexibility. But there'd be the odd person who didn't respect what I was trying to do enough to, to work with me on that so I had to make some decisions in terms of, okay, I guess I'm not going to accept this position or apply for this transfer because that supervisor. So it did probably cost me, there's a handful of things I didn't get to do on the police, but I wish I could have, but it just it wouldn't have worked with my sort of dual existence at the time. There's also some faculty who were wary of having a cop in a PhD program, and they, they had a certain suspicion of institutions and were somewhat conspiratorial and had a certain idea about, without even meeting me. In reality, they finally figured out, you know, the agenda was to make things better for people. So, there was some obstacles but I'm fortunate enough that nobody really went on full attack.

Anastasia MacLean: And I think what you have to do when you have people who are not supportive or people who are openly trying to block your path, is to just stay steady and strong and just surround yourself with the people who are the ones that are your cheerleaders and they're in your corner. I know for me, I had to not have certain people in my life anymore. It's a loss, but it's a loss that I was willing to sustain for what, for me, would be the greater good.

Michael Arntfield: I haven't had to extricate anybody out of my life, fortunately. Maybe because day to day, the change wasn't that drastic. I went from working all the time to working, sort of, as it suited me. But, I mean in terms of family that I didn't necessitate, you know, that I moved to Australia. I ended up being a visiting professor in Australia and, being there for a few months, but I didn't have to do something as drastic as move there and make the decision between taking a job and staying near my family and friends. Typically, the journey in academia, what's expected is you take a job anywhere in the world, uproot your family, and if you're lucky, one day you'll land at the university that either you came from or where you want to be and at the time, I

understood just what a gift that was and what a privilege that was and that's the only thing that could have pulled me out of police work at that point in my life.

Anastasia MacLean: Is there a particular risk that you took so far in your career that's had a more significant payoff than you would have expected or dreamed of?

Michael Arntfield: Uh, I think what a lot of people see as risk, I see as just rungs in a ladder that you have to, you have to keep going. So, when people talk about, oh, you put yourself out there, you're taking this risk, I don't really see it like that. And I think part of that is having a certain appetite and understanding risk every day based on my earlier career.

Anastasia MacLean: And also, in your case, maybe being very deliberate about each step that you take along that ladder. So, seeing it clearly and seeing the end game as well.

Michael Arntfield: Yeah, and I mean that's the question now and someone just asked me this the other day is what's your third act?

Anastasia MacLean: Mhm! I was just going to ask you, is there another hat that you want to wear?

Michael Arntfield: Again, difficult to quantify because my position now with the university allows me to do all these other things that aren't necessarily expected of, of someone in my role, whether it be, you know, public appearances or television production work. It also allows me then to explore what the third act would be, and that fortunately won't, unlike last time, necessitate that I necessarily leave what I'm doing but I would like a definitive third. Go back to your earlier question, if someone asks out of the blue next time, I'm on a beach somewhere, what do you do? I could actually say this one thing, whatever the third thing is. And I want it to be something completely random, like I'll know when I see it.

Anastasia MacLean: Oh, so you have no idea.

Michael Arntfield: I'm bouncing around a couple of really random things, but, but we'll see.

Anastasia MacLean: Okay, because that sounds really counter to me to what your path has been so far. Like you've made a lot of deliberate, conscious choices, and now it's just going to be almost like pulling something out of a hat.

Michael Arntfield: But again, I've discovered everything organically. So, I figured out I'm not cut out for Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. What are my options? And then I sort of discover police work through my father, through my neighbor, though, you know, other means. I end up living in the north end near Western and at that point in my career as a patrol officer, I didn't work anywhere near there, so I was never up at Western again until I moved there. And had I did not move there, would I have been so enamored of it again? Would have I returned? So that was random. So, I just keep discovering things and, and figuring out that this is something I'm going to go after so, when the third act avails itself to me, I'll know it.

Anastasia MacLean: Well, and you just seem to go for whatever comes up, whatever opportunity, or what you refer to as randomness. When something happens, you don't hide or push it away, you embrace it and figure out what it means for you. And that kind of nimbleness, I think, is really a key characteristic in pursuing a non-traditional path.

Michael Arntfield: Absolutely. And I mean, at some point you need to commit to an idea, or this is what I'm going to do, but you really have to do that on your own terms. No one can tell you, you should do this. I heard people say that all the time, you're going to law school, or you should go to law school or this, that, the other thing. Obviously, if we're going to talk about risk, there's also a risk can actually also go in for something because if you fail to obtain it, then what? And a lot of people, unfortunately, yeah, they put their eggs in one

basket, then it doesn't work out and then they're left with no plan B, and they end up doing something that they hate because that was all that was left on the table.

Anastasia MacLean: What sort of impact has pursuing your purpose, your true self, had on your personal life? Has it made things more challenging? Had some people been disappointed by what you've decided to do?

Michael Arntfield: No, the contrary. The friends and alliances that you make in policing are lifelong. It's an incredibly social job and that's the other thing that appealed to me about it. So I managed, and I was very conscious of this, because what happens is when you go into that world and you're working shifts opposite all your friends so my friends from the bar, my friends from undergrad, my friends from high school, it's easy to lose touch with them because you spend all your time with this other group of people who you become very close with very quickly. I was mindful not to do that. So, there's a group of us who've been friends since high school, we all have found different paths, but we get together for dinner every couple of months. Like it was important for me to cultivate and sustain all of those relationships. And then when I move on to academia, we've built sort of a little group of our own among our peers. I've been fortunate enough, I've got colleagues all over the world again and fly me to guest lecturer or to be a visiting professor. So, I'm very fortunate because otherwise academia can be very alienating. It can be an often transactional relationship. I pride myself that I keep in touch with them, and I hope I have a greater role than that with them, but a lot of your time is spent poring over books or writing papers, or doing sort of cerebral stuff that isn't necessarily overly interactive or social. So, it's the classic work life balance game and again, that comes with resiliency, and I think being flexible.

Anastasia MacLean: So we probably have listeners who are students, they might even be student of yours and those that are partway through their career life or halfway or those that are about to be done. And all of them are thinking, I really want to make a change, but I don't know how, and I don't know where to start. What sort of advice would you offer for them?

Michael Arntfield: We saw this across the board during the pandemic, right? I mean, I know a number of people who did drastic U-turns, cast off the shackles of whatever they were doing and pursued what they actually wanted to do because the world was on pause and they had the opportunity to do that. It's unfortunate that that's what it took and all this other collateral damage that came with those lockdowns that prompted people to make a change. But sometimes it requires, like I said, for my third act, I'll know when I see it, other people need to be nudged. I would say, if you're feeling like it's time for a change, it probably is. I can't speak for everybody's situation, but you know, when people, going back to the pandemic again, like, why am I getting in my car to drive down the 400 for, you know, 90 minutes round trip to do something that I'm only doing because this was supposed to be temporary ten years ago and here, I'm still there, and ten years has gone by. I think a lot of people underestimate how elusive time is, and it's something you can never get back. So it's going to be different for everybody, but, if it feels like it's time for a change, don't wait for the next pandemic. And I know that's easier said than done, there's a million other variables kids, income, location but there's no time like the present time is finite.

Anastasia MacLean: And I think people don't have to suddenly stop everything that they're doing and start something new. I think they can sort of acknowledge that they have this voice that's telling them it's time for a change, and think about it, and surround themselves with people who are supportive, who they can talk to. Maybe they have mentors, maybe there's someone else's career that they really admire, and take a look at that and just give themselves some time around their, let's say, full time commitments to do that exploratory work.

Michael Arntfield: Yeah. And you don't need to make a full leap of faith, or just completely cut the cord on, on whatever you're doing. Like I said, I straddle two worlds that at the time seemed totally incongruous, and ultimately the timing was right for me to make that change. But in the meantime, yeah, start dabbling at

something else if time permits. You know, get a second avocation or a hobby job. And I know a number of people, again during the pandemic, who picked that up because as soon as things reopened, they're like, I miss interacting with people, I can't just be on zoom calls all day. So, yeah, I may be overqualified, but I'm going to work at the mall. I know a number of people who have done that. They got fun social jobs, and maybe they want to open their own franchise for whatever store they're working at. You know, I know somebody who started bartending after, you know, 20 years. You know, maybe they buy the place out and the time and they realize that it's right. Put yourself out into the universe and the universe will let you know what you should be doing.

Anastasia MacLean: One of the things we never got to was talking about all of the books that you've written, but I know that you're researching your 13th book. And your latest book came out in 2022, published by HarperCollins, and that is "How to Solve a Cold Case and Everything Else you Wanted to Know About Catching Killers", so how do people find that book? Where do they go?

Michael Arntfield: As the trite saying goes, anywhere fine books are sold, which includes Amazon. I didn't pick that title, by the way. Some higher ups at HarperCollins had seen a couple of my TV shows and my Ted talk, and they thought, turn this all into a book. It's kind of a mind-bending book in terms of what you think you know about murder as a phenomenon, including the stats that you hear all the time is just plain wrong. So, it's sort of a behind the scenes reimagining of, of everything you thought you know about a number of social problems, murder included.

Anastasia MacLean: Can you give us a sneak peek or little idea of what you're working on for your 13th?

Michael Arntfield: The working title is "Manifesto", and I'll hold back the, the subtitle. I published a book back in 2017 with a professor from University of Toronto called "Murder in Plain English", which looked at the relationship of multiple murderers to the written word, what they read, how or why they write about their crimes, why they corresponded with police and the media. So, this is sort of a continuation of that, but it's going to look at other types of people as well, and how language is manipulated and what multiple murders have in common with other occupations.

Anastasia MacLean: Okay, we'll be looking forward to reading that one when it comes out. Now, for people who'd like to get involved with your Cold Case Society that you mentioned earlier, they can contact you on your website then, michaelarntfield.com and go to the contacts page and reach out to you. So that's michaelarntfield.com. And I think that about wraps it up. Thank you so much Michael for chatting with us today. It's been an absolute pleasure.

Michael Arntfield: Thanks for having me on and good luck with this production. There's a lot of proud alumni out there that I think will be tuning in very loyally to this.