And Gladly Did We Teach: Oral Interviews With Pioneer Nuevo Mexicana Rural Teachers

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RURAL TEACHERS
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Southwest Hispanic Research Institute
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AND GLADLY DID WE TEACH
INTERVIEWS WITH PIONEER NUEVOMEXICANA RURAL TEACHERS

by

Erlinda Gonzales-Berry, Project Director
María Dolores Velásquez, Project Assistant
Tey Diana Rebolledo, Project Associate

As I collaborated with Diana Rebolledo on a series of projects on women, I became more convinced that the story of Hispanic women who devoted their lives to teaching the rural children of New Mexico was one that had to be documented. The fact that my own elementary education took place in a rural school under the tutelage of my mother, and that for years I listened to her tell stories of her earlier experiences as a rural teacher, also contributed to my interest in the topic of education in the proverbial "one-room schoolhouse".

I knew, of course, that Fabiola Cabeza de Baca had in effect begun this process of documentation. In her autobiography, We Fed Them Cactus, she tells us:

It had never occurred to me that schools in rural areas were different from those which I had attended. I had not been home very long when I began to learn that the children around us had from five to seven months of school
and that many of the teachers in the county did not have even an eighth grade education. Education in our family had always been mandatory; that other children did not have the same opportunity as I, did not seem fair to me. When one of the school directors came to solicit me to teach school in our school district, I felt privileged. (p. 154)

Another Hispiana who had made an early contribution to the documentation of Hispanics in public education was Dora Ortiz Vásquez. In her Enchanted Dialogue of Loma Parda and Cañada Bonita, she wrote:

Parents and children came and soon I had a room full. Parents were offering to help and support as they left their children with me. I soon found myself with a room full of children, small and big boys and girls. The two big girls were my 8th grade students followed by 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th, and 3rd grade students. Also among the students were two boys, Timoteo Paiz and Bennie Baca. These two had come to see how hard they could make it on the teacher. (9)

The work of these two women piqued and nourished our interest. Consequently Diana Rebolledo and I applied for a grant from the Center for Regional Studies to do a series of interviews which would allow us to continue the work begun by Cabeza de Baca and Ortiz Vásquez. Later, María Dolores Gonzales Velásquez joined us in this undertaking.

We decided to limit the scope of our project to videotaped
interviews with women in their late seventies or eighties, who had become rural teachers very early in their lives and had made teaching a life-long career. Our interest in education in New Mexico immediately before and after statehood accounts for our selection of older informants who were identified by friends and acquaintances.

As we discussed the project and began the early stages of the research, we decided that, in addition to learning about our selected historians' unique personal lives, there was specific information of a broader social and cultural nature we wanted to know. We were fascinated by the fact that these women, coming from traditional families and backgrounds, at very tender ages were able to assume public personas and perform public work, thereby crossing the boundaries of sanctioned communal norms. We were interested in knowing, what, in their own private constitutions or in those of their families, accounted for their crossing the boundary that separated culturally proscribed woman's space from the public domain? Were there conflicts regarding changes in their traditional roles? What subsequent difficulties did they encounter in maneuvering the demands of career and family? How did they make the transition from family control to independence at an age when women were expected to be protected by family? Because they were among the first Hispanic women to go out into the public sphere, how were they viewed by their communities, particularly if these communities were not of their same cultural background? Were they seen as agents of change, as role models? Were they discriminated against
in terms of teaching assignments, placement or treatment by parents? How did they cope with students who were near their own age?

As educators and professors of Spanish, we were also curious to know how these women had reconciled whatever contradictions might have emerged as they carried out the mandate to teach English, to Americanize Hispanic and sometimes Native American students, even if this meant repressing their own mother tongue or cultural values.

Our conversations with these maestras (Virginia Gonzales, Josephine Córdova, Mary Merino Sánchez, Rafelita Chávez, Celina Salazar, Guadalupe Baca Vaughn, Dora Ortiz Vásquez, Mary Domínguez Chávez) have provided exquisite moments of insight into our cultural past, into processes of transculturation, and into their struggles for personal fulfillment. While each woman has her own highly individualized story to tell, there are recurring motifs: poverty, supportive families, obstructive political structures, social discrimination, community vitality and support: the stuff of which History is made.

The transcribed content of the taped interviews is found in this volume, and the videos are also accessible in this collection. We believe the information contained herein will be of interest to scholars and students interested in education and womens' history, as well as to anyone who appreciates learning about the lives of exemplary individuals. We wish to take this opportunity to publicly thank our maestras—"our teachers" because they did indeed teach us
the lessons of service, dedication and love of community--for sharing their stories with us. In the case of Virginia Gonzales, and Dora Ortiz Vásquez, who died shortly after our interviews, we must thank them through their families.

We also take this opportunity to The Center for Regional Studies for funding the project, The Southwest Hispanic Research Institute for their clerical and moral support, Carlos Vásquez for his words of advice, Tomás Peña, our research assistant, the Center for Southwest Research for accepting our work, and the families of "our teachers" who helped us out in so many ways.
It's June twenty-fourth, nineteen ninety-three. We're in Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico. The interviewer is Erlinda Gonzales Berry. Our camera person is María Dolores Velásquez and we are interviewing Mrs. Anita Chávez, Anita Domínguez Chávez who lives here in Ranchos de Taos. We are in her home which is located maybe about a mile from the Ranchos de Taos Church, on Cordillera.

Cordillera. A lovely old home built in nineteen thirty-seven and this is where Mrs. Chávez lives. Our contact with Mrs. Chávez came through Professor Enrique Lamadrid who is a professor at the University of New Mexico. He is married to Carlota Domínguez who is Mrs. Chávez' niece. That's how we were able to contact Mrs. Chávez and she has been nice enough to grant us this interview. We are now panning her kitchen and we will shortly bring the camera around to Mrs. Chávez and to myself, the interviewer. We will begin this interview. It is by the way three forty-five in the afternoon, on a not too hot summer afternoon in Taos, Ranchos de Taos. Mrs. Chávez was a
teacher many, many years ago and we are here to talk about her life as a teacher. Mrs. Chávez, first of all I want to thank you for with meeting with us and having us come into your home. Let's begin just by talking about your early life. Where you were born, who your parents were, where were you brought up, your childhood.

D - C: For the first years that I taught?

G - B: The first years of your life. Just who you are. Where you were born? Tell us about your family, those kinds of things. Were you born here in Ranchos?

D - C: No, I was born in Chamisal. That's going up the U.S. Hill. I was born in Chamisal and my father went to Menual School, so we all went to Menual School. At the time, you know, the priest was so mad about kids joining the Presbyterian Church.

G - B: So, your family was a Presbyterian family?

D - C: But, my family just stayed together and we all went there. My first year of teaching was at El Valle. It's about ten miles from Chamisal. My father and the superintendent were very good friends so as soon as I finished high school, I got a teaching job.

G - B: Now, you went to grade school at Menual, too, or grade school in El Valle? Where did you go to grade school?
D - C: Where did I graduate?
G - B: Grade school.
D - C: Oh, to grade school, in Chamisal.
G - B: In Chamisal.
D - C: Chamisal until I was in the fifth grade then I went to Santa Fe, to Allison James.
G - B: For junior high?
D - C: For junior high and high school.
G - B: Now, did you say that when you studied at Allison James that Dora Vásquez was a student there?
D - C: Yes. Dora Vásquez, we were in class together. I don't remember if she was ahead of me or I was ahead of her. But, I knew her well.
G - B: So, you went there a few years. Two or three years to Allison James.
D - C: Oh no, five years.
G - B: Five years. You were a boarder, right? You lived in--it was a boarding school?
D - C: Yes. We were boarding there.
G - B: What was life like in that school?
D - C: Well, everybody cooperated. Everybody did their work and everybody was happy. We were all a bunch of happy girls and the thing that struck me real good was that
when there was a cantata for Christmas, all the girls were trying for singers. So, I won the main part to sing. And from there on, no, not all the time that we didn't get along with people because, you know how girls are. But, I think in general, everything was very nice, and we were able to get along with the teachers. We hardly ever had any fusses against the teachers.

G - B: Now, you mentioned right when we started that your family was Presbyterian. Were your parents the first ones to become Presbyterian? Or your grandparents?

D - C: My grandparents on my mother's side.

G - B: They were the Presbyterians.

D - C: They were Presbyterian.

G - B: And then your parents were also, and then you were brought up as a Presbyterian. Was that hard?

D - C: But then I married Catholic.

G - B: A Catholic. But I'm wondering if, when in a place like this in northern New Mexico where Catholicism was so strong, growing up Presbyterian was probably hard sometimes, right? Or did you ever feel like you were...

D - C: No, I don't think so. Because, on my father's side they were Catholic. They never said anything. And
besides whenever a Protestant had a dinner we used to pray together.

G - B: Everyone together.
D - C: Everyone together.

G - B: It didn't divide the community.
D - C: Nothing, nothing.

G - B: And how was life in El Valle then? It was mostly rural, farming.
D - C: Very rural and my brother, who's the doctor, and I got the teaching position at El Valle, just fresh from high school. I was the first then my brother. So, we used to go on horseback every morning.

G - B: So, you lived at home with your parents.
D - C: We lived at home with our parents from there we went to El Valle on horseback.

G - B: To be the teachers.
D - C: To be the teachers.

G - B: And you were how old when you started teaching?
D - C: Oh, I think I was about twenty-one.

G - B: But, did you start teaching right after you graduated from Menual?
D - C: No. Let me tell you. I went to work at the superintendent's office here in Taos for one whole year before I started teaching.

G - B: So, from Menual High School. What was Menual like? Was that a good education for you?

D - C: That was not Menual at the time, this was Allison James School.

G - B: So you went to Allison all the way through...

D - C: All the way through.

G - B: So, you graduated from there. Came back home to El Valle.

D - C: No, to Chamisal.

G - B: Chamisal, right. And then from there you worked in Taos?

D - C: Yeah. I was working in Taos.

G - B: Did you live with your family or did you move to Taos?

D - C: Here in Taos?

G - B: When you worked with the superintendent?

D - C: Oh, no. I boarded myself in his house.

G - B: With the superintendent.

D - C: With the superintendent. Do you remember who the superintendent was in those days? ¿No se acuerda quién era?
D - C: Sí, era Floyd Santiestevan.

G - B: Floyd Santiestevan.

D - C: Maybe you have heard about him. He was a very famous man.

G - B: Sí. Verdad.

D - C: He was a very good man with my dad. They got along beautiful.

G - B: ¿Y que hacía su papá, de usted? El era ranchero.

D - C: Era ranchero. Sembraba mucho frijol y maíz y todo.

G - B: Y se hacían la vida del rancho.

D - C: Con borregas y vacas, gallinas y, trabajar en el labor toda la vida.

G - B: ¿Y su mamá? ¿Trabajaba en la casa con la familia?

D - C: En la casa porque éramos ocho de familia.

G - B: Ocho hermanos y hermanas.

D - C: Sí. Cuatro hermanos, cuatro hermanas.

G - B: Y de esos, usted fue maestra, un hermano es doctor y... ¿los demás también se educaron?

D - C: Este trabajó, éste murió, Diana trabajó por Eli Lilly Company. Isaac, pues he didn't have. My sister Polly is, was a teacher.

G - B: También.
D - C: Teo, Servilia was a, she worked with, what do you call that lady that passed away, Jenkins.

G - B: Oh, the state historian, the librarian.

D - C: Yes.

G - B: The state historian.

D - C: Yes. She worked until she retired.

G - B: With Mrs. Jenkins.

G - B: She just passed away. So, she worked in the state archives and in Santa Fe.

D - C: In the state archives, yes.

G - B: And your brother, where did he go away to get educated to become a doctor?

D - C: Clarksville, Missouri.

G - B: In Missouri. Now, obviously your parents valued education.

D - C: Oh, yes.

G - B: They sent you away to school at Allison James. The brother became a doctor, several of you became teachers. Were you always as a child encouraged to, to...

D - C: Always encouraged that we should just keep on going.

G - B: And why did you become a teacher. Do you remember what made it possible?
Well, at that time any high school student could be a teacher.

Right.

So I got in there to give it a trial.

As long as you had your diploma you could get certification, right.

As long as you had your diploma, the state department would accept you.

Did you have to take any kind of test or just show your diploma.

No, we didn't. But, we kept on going until we got our degrees.

Okay. So, you decided to be a teacher. You and your brother went to teach at El Valle? Did you live at home? You did, right?

Yes. We lived at home. The first six months because my brother at that time left to Raton. The one that's a doctor, to work for Sigfeld, the district attorney.

I see.

I don't know how come he elected to go down there. So, he left from Raton, he left to Clarksville to study medicine.
G - B: Okay, when did you start studying at the university, at Highlands, right? You went to Highlands? Do you remember more or less?

D - C: In the forties when my children were small.

G - B: Okay so You taught for awhile.

D - C: We taught the seven months.

G - B: Okay.

D - C: We taught seven months. Whatever we made in the winter time we spent it going to school in the summer time.

G - B: Did you start going to school right away or you taught many years before you went to college?

D - C: Oh, no. We started going to school right away. In nineteen forty, my baby was four years old. They used to go to school ther. You remember at Highlands they had summer school, my children all attended summer school.

G - B: Now, tell me, you started to teach, then you got married shortly after or when...

D - C: Yes.

G - B: And did you quit teaching after you got married to bring up your family? To have your family, or did you keep working?

D - C: Yes, I stayed home for a while. For about six years.
G - B: And you had your children?

D - C: I had my children.

G - B: And then you decided to go back?

D - C: And then, of course, I always wanted to go to school to get my degree. So, in the summer time, I wasn't teaching yet, but my husband was teaching and I used to go with him, with our family to Vegas.

G - B: Your husband was a teacher, too?

D - C: Oh, yes.

G - B: Where did you meet him?

D - C: I met him here in Taos.

G - B: In Taos. And he was a teacher in Taos?

D - C: No.

G - B: Where did he teach?

D - C: Different communities. Arroyo Seco, Talpa, El Cerro, El Valle...

G - B: Wherever they needed a teacher, huh?

D - C: ...San Cristobal. Todos esos lugares enseñó él y nos llevaba a mi y la familia con él.

G - B: ¿Entonces ustedes vivían en cada...

D - C: Rentábamos casa y vivíamos allá durante el invierno.

G - B: Y luego en el verano se iban para Highlands, a Las Vegas.
D - C: Y luego en los veranos nos íbamos para Highlands.

G - B: ¿Y luego usted decidió también empezar a estudiar en Highlands?

D - C: Yo, ya estaba estudiando..., 

G - B: Siempre.

D - C: Estudiando, sí.

G - B: Dígame un poco de, los primeros años que enseñó. You went to be a teacher. You were very young. You didn't have a lot, you were just getting started. Do you remember who your students were? What they were like? Were they all students from rural families? What the school like and what were the students like? Your first job, the first time you taught?

D - C: The first time that I taught was in El Valle. We had first grade through sixth. And we were two teachers, so I took the first two grades then she took the rest. So, we had to work with the little ones. Have somebody take care of them while we were with the other group. Usually there was somebody that was reliable to help. So we put that person in charge of the little ones. I mean, of the little ones, that's why I decided that I'd teach just the first grade, just to have them all to myself.

G - B: That's the group you like working with?
D - C: Yes.

G - B: Were most of kids that went to El Valle they were all Spanish kids probably, right?

D - C: All Spanish kids.

G - B: And did they speak any English when they got to school?

D - C: No. No, that's what we did. We taught in English. I was supposed to teach my first graders English. First, we went all around the building, looking for things to give them the English name. And then later on you could have them tell you “what is this for? “What size is it? What color is it? How many?” and then we had little shows for the little ones.

G - B: Do you remember any?

D - C: Oh, gosh.

G - B: We know you were a singer.

D - C: No, I raised my children and I what, is this song? My gosh.

G - B: No se acuerda de ninguna.

D - C: I say, I forgot it.

G - B: We'll come back. ¿Podían enseñar en español o no? ¿O tenía que hacer todo en inglés?

D - C: Hacíamos en inglés pero teníamos que hablar en español porque venían sus parientes a visitarnos y teníamos que
hablar todo en español. Pero sabes que los niños a esa edad son más fácil para enseñarles porque tienen más gana de aprender. Yo veo mis nietas estas, estas no hablan el español pero están tomando español y ya las oigo decir palabras en español. Y yo les hablo español, porque quiero que lo aprendan bien un poquito.

G - B: Que bien. Es mejor, no. Y a veces en algunas de las escuelas castigaban a los niños si hablaban inglés no les dejaban hablar español. ¿Era así, aquí o no?


G - B: Usted usaba lo que era necesario. Cambiaba de una lengua o otra.

D - C: Sí. Lo que era necesario. Pero lo que te ponían más énfasis era en que aprendieran el inglés.

G - B: ¿Ustedes creían que era muy importante que aprendieran inglés?

D - C: Sí.

G - B: Y, ¿porque?

D - C: Porque como, cuando hacía visitas a Santa Fé, pues teníamos que saber inglés.

G - B: ¿Aquí no tenían que saber mucho, no?
Aquí no teníamos que saber pero cuando yo me iba pa’ Santa Fe, mi hermano se iba a Albuquerque a Menaul, pues teníamos que saber inglés.

Para ir al mundo más ancho había que hablar... ¿Y que hacía como maestra, muchas veces las maestras no eran sólo maestras, tenían que ser 'janitors', y tenían que hacer los school plays y dar de comer a los niños, de todo. ¿Usted hacía todas esas cosas?

Todo. Todo, todo. Es la primera lección o la otra maestra. En veces si llegábamos a la escuela y tenía que hacer lumbré para calentarnos.

Lo primero era hacer la lumbré.

Primero hacer la lumbré. Pero teníamos muy buena parentela y nos ayudaban mucho.

Los padres.

En las tardes algunas veces muchas de las madres iban y barrian un cuarto y lo alzaban bien. Pero en la mañana teníamos que hacer lumbré.

Los niños ¿eran pobres, muchos de ellos? ¿Comían bien? ¿Podían aprender o había mucha pobreza?

De comer si tenían mucho. No tendrían mucha ropa lujosa. Pero tenían mucho que comer porque sus padres eran gente que trabajaba mucho. Y esta gente de quien nosotros arrendábamos cuarto se mudó para Peñasco para
que sus hijos fueran a la escuela alta en Peñasco.
Siempre estaban esta gente queriendo subir más y más.

G - B: Sí, porque le iba a preguntar a veces dicen que nuestra gente pus, no nos interesaba la educación. Están atrasados porque, no creé... ¿Usted no crea que eso era la verdad?

D - C: No. No. No. No. Todavía, ahora yo tengo escueleros que ya no los conozco, chiquitos. Todavía ayer, estaba yo regando mis flores y de ese rumbo de allá del camino en la carretera con una troca amarilla poniéndole asfalt al camino. "Mrs. Chávez, How are you?" So, I turned around, "Yes, how are you? Come over, let me see who you are." I knew he was one of my kids. Then he told me his name. He told me all about his family and he said, "Do I look like when I was in the first grade?" "Oh, yes." I said. "You sure do. That's why I knew you." And then the other one came. He said, "You weren't my teacher, but Mr. Chávez was."

G - B: And did you and your husband teach at the same schools a lot of times or not?

D - C: No. He went his way to his school, and I went to mine.

G - B: Was it hard to be a teacher, a mother, a wife, a community person? How did you bring all these things together?
Let me tell you. Sometimes I wonder how I did it.

Because, having three kids, and then my sister came to live with me so she could go to high school here. So, I had three girls, teenagers, and my little boy. But you know everybody had their chores and everybody helped, and there we didn't have any washing machines. That was the hardest part for me. My husband used to come in the evening and put a great big tub of water to warm it up outside with wood. So, Dolores, Virginia, Carmen would come and wash. They washed by hand, you know.

Did you get a lot of help and support from your husband?

Oh. Yes. That's what I say, that I went my way and I did what I pleased, and he never told me. He was the most gentle person.

And he didn't have any problems with you having a public life being a teacher, being a career woman?

No. Never, never. He always helped me. He always did everything he could, you know, to help.

In your family, your parents did they support your career? Did they ever say, "Oh, hijita, ya no trabajes. Quédate en casa con los muchitos."
D - C: Oh, no, sabes que no me ha dicho nadie eso, nadie. Va a ser que un cuñado mío, izque dijo. "¿Cómo está tu hija?" O está muy bien, teniendo su familia ella ahí, estándose en la casa con elllas. Es la problema de ser la maestra. Más pronto le dije a mi esposo, "yo me voy a ir a la escuela."

G - B: Entonces, usted lo hacía porque era algo que quería hacer? Y le gustaba mucho?

D - C: Ya. No más tenía la familia y es todo.

G - B: Do you sometimes wish, "I should have stayed home all the time with my kids." Or are you happy that you were a teacher, that you were a career woman?

D - C: No. No. I was happy in the school. I was happy with my friends, with my pupils. I didn't miss a whole lot. I was glad to come home in the evening, get dinner ready. We didn't have a radio at the time until we got a radio, (unintelligible) nights.

G - B: And when did you get your degree?

D - C: Nineteen forty-one.

G - B: You started teaching when? Nineteen forty, more or less. Or, earlier.

D - C: Nineteen forty-one, this one...

G - B: Ya, that's it. And after El Valle, you taught at different places, other schools.
D - C: I taught here at Corillera. There was a two teacher school room right there. One year, from there on I quit because my family was coming, and then I went back in nineteen forty.

G - B: And where did you teach after that? Still here in Cordillera? When you went back, where did you go to teach?

D - C: From Cordillera, I went to teach with the sisters.

G - B: Here in Taos or dónde?

D - C: In Ranchos de Taos.

G - B: At the Catholic School.

D - C: At the Catholic School. I don't how come the priest hired us.

G - B: They just needed more teachers...

D - C: I stayed there ten years with the sisters.

G - B: Teaching first grade or...

D - C: Teaching first grade. Well, what they call now kindergarten. The first grade, you know.

G - B: Was there a difference in the kinds of students you had, let's say at El Valle, Cordillera, at Ranchos? Was it more or less the same kinds of background.

D - C: Yes, they were the same. The three places we had to emphasize on teaching them the English language.
G - B: Did you get special training for that? For teaching English?

D - C: Why sure. We had it at Highlands. But, before my going to Highlands we had to use our own head how to...

G - B: Your imagination?

D - C: But, the sisters when I was there, there was a sister that was my brace. She taught me, she showed me the little books, the stories, the songs. And she would help me. So, that put me ahead when I went to take the course.

G - B: Let me ask a question. When you first started teaching, when you were a young girl, twenty, twenty one years old, did you ever have students that were old, almost getting older, or were they always...

D - C: They were always little. I didn't have any older kids.

G - B: Because, I remember when my mother, went out to teach. She had all the grades in Cerro. You know she had many grades. She would have boys that were almost her age because she was one of the first teachers. But, this was in the late twenties.

D - C: And they didn't go to school?

G - B: They hadn't had a school.

D - C: Oh, my god.
**G - B:** When she taught school, she was seventeen years old and the boys were fifteen. You never had experiences like that?

**D - C:** No. I never had them because I always had the little ones. At El Valle, the same group. But, when I came over here everything changed. I just took Sister Carita’s advise about what I should be doing with those little ones.

**G - B:** So, she was your advisor, coached you in the teaching.

**D - C:** Yeah. A kind of advisor. I would ask her and she was always very nice. And I stayed there ten years until my girls finished high school and went to college.

**G - B:** And then you quit teaching? Or did you retire? Or did you keep on teaching? Did you retire then?

**D - C:** I retired in sixty-eight.

**G - B:** In sixty-eight. Where were your other jobs? Were they also with the Sisters or did you go teach somewhere else?

**D - C:** I taught here at the Sisters in Ranchos. Llano Quemado is the first new town there. Llano Quemado, five years. And thirteen years at El Prado.

**G - B:** Oh, you taught at El Prado, too.

**D - C:** At El Prado.
Were teachers special people in the community? Did you think they had a special place in your community? Did the people look up to you?

You know especially at El Prado. We had such wonderful parents, wonderful people. They had been away from the community for years, and they came back over here, and they put the children with us. And if we needed something they were ready to help us. We had the best cooperation from them. Whenever we had a little program, they were the first ones there to help us. The first year that I was at El Prado, we even took the fifth and sixth graders to Mexico to Juarez to see the...

A trip. A long trip.

And then we had Arriero, the art teacher that went with us. Mrs. Cordoba...

Is it Josephine?

Josephine, myself, what is his name, Mr. Arriero that was it, Arriero. The man was teaching with, what is his name? It's Martinez.

I don't think I know him.

So, we had a lot of cooperation from the parish. At El Llano the same thing. When I went to El Prado, I didn't know anybody there because I had been in this
part of community. Pretty soon, I got to know everybody and still they are my best friends.

G - B: You said these people had been away, and then they came back with their children. Had they gone away to work?

D - C: To work.

G - B: Things were hard and they had to go get jobs like in Colorado? or...

D - C: Like when I used to go from here to Colorado to the potato fields.

G - B: Mines? The potato fields.

D - C: These people had been away maybe for two or three years, I don't know how long. But, they came back and they were regulars at school. They were very good people.

G - B: And always supporting the teachers. Tell me about the little programs you used to put on. Do you remember what kinds of thing you used to do?

D - C: Well, we used to have little programs, probably for every occasion. Especially the Christmas Programs.

G - B: I remember those.

D - C: In the halls. The kids looked forward to it. Now, they...

G - B: And the parents did too, didn't they?
D - C: And the parents were there. That's why they loved it.

   Excuse me.

G - B: Is there someone there, María?

MDV: Hay una niña aquí.

G - B: Let's just stop it for a minute.

(interview stops and resumes)

G - B: ...who were your bosses in the different schools like principals or superintendents or...

D - C: Oh, yes. Over here in Corillera I had Alice Valerio. She is a retired teacher. At El Llano, I had Juan Romero.

G - B: So, your bosses were usually Hispanic or Spanish. They weren't Anglos. Not in this area.

D - C: No. We didn't have any Anglos over here.

G - B: Not even in the schools.

D - C: Not even in the schools.

G - B: Was there a lot of política.

D - C: Oh, sí la política era lo que me traiba a mí para arriba y para abajo.

G - B: De las escuelas.

D - C: De las escuelas. Porque cuando estaba enseñando aquí en la Corillera me dijieron que ya no me iban a
necesitar, so, I went and talked to the Sisters over there in El Rancho. They accepted me.

G - B: But, in the public schools it was hiring and firing by party. A quien deben, dependía en quién ganaba. ¿Y quién hacía esas decisiones, el school district or school board o quién?

D - C: Pues, también todo estaba, el superintendente con los...

G - B: O si era Republicano, daban trabajo a los...

D - C: Sí. Por eso mi esposo se fue a enseñar porque, era republicano y el cuerpo de directores era demócrata. Estos tenían todo el poder.

G - B: Poder.

D - C: O por eso le traían allá en diferentes lugares. Cuando corrió para superintendente, esos districtos fueron los que lo hicieron ganar.

G - B: ¿Los de afuera?

D - C: Los de afuera.

G - B: ¿Y él fue superintendente aquí en Taos? ¿En el condado de Taos? ¿Cuántos años?

D - C: Eso. En el condado de Taos. Cuatro.

G - B: ¿Y le dieron trabajo a usted, buen trabajo entonces o no?
D - C: No. Pues, que ya lo bueno era que yo estaba lista para comenzar a retirarme y no necesitaba de cambiarme, ¿para qué?

G - B: Era difícil ser maestra y estar entre la política, yo creo, ¿no?

D - C: No. No tuve yo esa problema.

G - B: No tuvo problemas.

D - C: Porque conozco bien a la gente. Y sabe uno con quién llevarse. Y yo nunca tuve...

G - B: Y en las escuelas cuando enseñaban, usted dijo que enseñaban, usaban el español cuando era necesario. Les ¿enseñaban español, como leer y escribir, a los niños?

D - C: No.

G - B: No. El énfasis era en el inglés.

D - C: Inglés.

G - B: ¿Y enseñaban cosas sobre la cultura hispana? Hispanic culture, costumbres, holidays, canciones, cosas así o no era...

D - C: Nomás, holidays and something that pertained to the season.

G - B: But, in Spanish, too? No...

D - C: Yes. We had Spanish. Especially for Christmas, we had Spanish.
G - B: You did teach them, and some customs. Some Spanish customs.

D - C: Some customs, yes.

G - B: But you never taught Spanish as a subject to improve their Spanish?

D - C: No.

G - B: That wasn't part of the curriculum.

D - C: No.

G - B: How do you feel, as you look back about your teaching experience, was it a good life, a good experience?

D - C: Well, to me at the time, it was the most wonderful experience. And now that I'm alone, I think, how did I do it? How did I do this thing? How did I, which I am glad I accomplished something.

G - B: You feel that you contributed.

D - C: I accomplished all by myself. Something that I wanted too. To take care of myself, what more do you want. And I thank God that I have my health. This morning my brother who is a doctor said, "Anita, you've never been to the hospital."

G - B: How wonderful.

D - C: I said, "No, Joe." "I've never been to the hospital. But, my heart's shaky."
G - B: And let me ask you, What's the best memory you have about being a teacher? Do you remember one incident that was very funny or very sad? That was something that happened to a child or some predicament that really stands out in your mind. Or there are probably a lot of them?

D - C: Well, I don't know.

G - B: You don't remember anything real special.

D - C: This will catch up with me.

G - B: Any bad things about your career?

D - C: I never had any troubles with anybody and we were always very, very close friends.

G - B: Now what do you think of todays schools and what you hear from your grandchildren of todays education?

D - C: Today?

G - B: You have any ideas or opinions?

D - C: I don't have any idea because I've been retired for thirteen years. There's a lot of difference between now, at the time that you had your little ones, the first grade. And now, they are real lucky that they go to pre-school. That they are ready to start in the first grade.

G - B: You think that's important, the pre-school?

D - C: Yes.
G - B: Do you think that the schools are doing a good job?

D - C: They are doing a good job. Because my little one already, Eric, knows how to read, already.

G - B: And do you have any advice for today's teachers? From your experience. What would you say to teachers today?

D - C: To any teacher, I would say, "get along with everybody. To be happy. Because you gain the respect of those people."

G - B: Now, sometimes it's been said that our culture likes to keep its women down, to keep the women at home in their place. Doesn't let them go out and develop, that certainly isn't true about you?

D - C: No. I think that you want to do something for yourself, which is, if you have a desire, you do it. Because, over here, I see many women that took the same road that I took, to be on her own.

G - B: You don't think there were forces that discouraged them or tried to keep them from accomplishing their goals?

D - C: No. No. We have the retired teachers.

G - B: Do you still belong and participate?

D - C: Oh, they are mostly widows, all of them. So those people worked there trying their best, like I was.

G - B: When you get together, do you talk about the old days?
D - C: Oh, no, we don't talk. We talk about what's happening, and things like that.

G - B: Today. You don't want to remember too much. Or spend your time on the past.

D - C: No, like this guy he said, "remember we started at, I was coming from Seco on our horse and you told me, "You better tie your horse. You better tie your horse and leave it there until noon." You know.

G - B: And you don't remember...

D - C: Things stand out, and then the kids, you know. He's a man already? I would have never known him. A first grader and now, a man working with the highway department.

G - B: I guess one of finest things for teachers is to know that many people in the community really care for them and respect them. That must be a good feeling. You don't think too much about that? But, you know there are a lot of people out there that are very thankful and very respectful...

D - C: Oh, yes. There are some that probably, but they don't go before you. They probably do it there with another group that don't like you. No, we never had that in our schools. Because, just seeing, just think..., Chubby Martínez is the other guy.
G - B: The teacher?

D - C: Chubby. He was a younger teacher.

G - B: Is there anything that we haven't talked about that, you'd want talk about? About your career as a teacher? Or your life?

D - C: Oh. What I’m most thankful for is that, that when I was younger, I could do whatever I wanted because my husband never deprived me of not doing what I was going to do. And we kept on working together. And I sent my kids to college. They were going to high school when we were teaching. So, none of them wanted to go to Vegas because they hated the place. You know, teenagers. And none of them wanted to go to Albuquerque, just my son, to the university. Now, my two girls went to New Mexico State. One is a principal at West Mesa...

G - B: In Albuquerque?

D - C: In Albuquerque. My daughter is lab technician at the hospital.

G - B: In Albuquerque?

D - C: In Albuquerque. My son just got in from South America where he's been working with the government.

G - B: And all your children were college educated.
D - C: I thank God. Because I had my health, my husband had his health and we could afford it. Because nowadays the poor kids can't.

G - B: It's very hard.

D - C: It's too hard for them.

G - B: Now, you said, as a young woman you were lucky because you were able to do what you wanted. Your husband was always supportive. What do you think, in your life, what made you that kind of person? What in your upbringing in your family, in your childhood made you the kind of person to say, "I'm going to do what I want to do with my life?"

D - C: Well, to tell you the truth, I don't know... (laughter) how come. I guess, being that my husband was a teacher, like I said, I wanted to compete with him.

G - B: Oh, that was it, okay.

D - C: Compete with him, and I didn't want to stay home all the days of my life. So that's how come.

G - B: You wanted to get out and see the world and do things, huh?

D - C: Yeah. Yes. We had a little roadster.

G - G: And you went up and down in your roadster.

D - C: We rode up and down.
G - B: Life at Highlands, how was that? When your were a student, was that fun? Did you enjoy that? Or was it a lot of hard work?

D - C: Yes. A lot of hard work. Because we had to rent to stay. But, we used to get along fine. I remember one time, it was summer-time that we went down to Highlands with the three kids to register to take classes and I guess the professor saw my kids and he said, "Sixty dollars for six weeks. Board and room. I have never forgotten that. And still my husband knew him real well. I guess maybe we weren't dressed up. I guess, they didn't want us. "Bernabe," I said, "how in the world can we make it with sixty dollars for room and board for the five of us. That's it." Something, something good came out of it. Before you know it something good happens.

G - B: Always good. You have to believe in it and expect it. I imagine you got a very good education at Allison James.

D - C: Oh, yes. We had to work hard.

G - B: What were your favorite subjects?

D - C: My favorite subject was trying to learn English. Trying to read to make the correct sentence. I could read, you know in English. But, I could not figure out
a sentence. English and history. I don't think they had New Mexico History at the time, but they had history in general.

G - B: Okay, well, I thank you very much for talking to us this afternoon.

D - C: Well, it was nice, it was fun while we had it.

G - B: Well, I think that all of you young women who went out to teach from very limited backgrounds, sometimes from poor families, managed to teach, to bring up families, to get a college degree. And I think you're examples for today's youth. Good examples, and sometimes we don't get a chance to say, thank you.

D - C: I think that I was very lucky that my parents saw to it. My parents were the ones to say "You're going to school. You're going to Allison James," and you know what? We used to be up at four in the morning, my daddy would have the horses ready to take us in a wagon, to catch the chile line train...

G - B: To go to school?

D - C: To go from Embudo to Santa Fe. So now my kids ask me, "When are you going to ride the Chile line?" Sixty-four years ago I rode that. I can't believe it.

G - B: You know I forgot to ask you when you were born?

D - C: Ah?
G - B: I forgot to ask you when you were born? ¿Cuándo nació, en que año?

D - C: Nineteen-o-nine.

G - B: Nineteen-o-nine. Exactly the year my mother was born.
Nineteen-o-nine. My mom and dad. And she was, of course, a teacher, too. So you rode the train to to...
Did you know Cleofas Jaramillo, who was from Arroyo Hondo? She was a writer. Cleofas.

D - C: Cleofes.

G - B: Cleofes Jaramillo. And she wrote, The Romance of a Village Girl and she was a writer.

D - C: Oh, yeah. Era Jaramillo?

G - B: Fue casada. No me acuerdo que era...

D - C: No la conozco. Las que conozco son maestras, Carolina Domínguez. She's not related to me because I'm Domínguez but she's the oldest teacher there, I guess.

G - B: Carolina Domínguez.

D - C: Carolina Domínguez. I don't know any of those people.

G - B: Okay, Mrs. Chávez. Muchas gracias, por la entrevista y por recibirnos en su casa. Se lo agredecemos mucho.

D - C: Yo también. Tengo mucho gusto de habernos encontrado a las dos y ya ponemos la mesa para atrás.
G - B: Oh, we had one observer that came in, in the middle of the interview and we want to introduce her. She is María.

D - C: You're going to be there, honey. You're going to be with grandma?

G - B: So we can see you on the screen, too. María, how old are you?

María: Six.

G - B: Six. You're a big girl. And what grade are you in? Are you in school?

D - C: First grade.

G - B: First grade.

D - C: She finished the first grade, no.

G - B: Do you like school?

María: Yeah.

G - B: You do. And your grandma, she was a teacher, did you know that?

María: Yeah.

G - B: She was a teacher? Your mother was not? None of your children, your one daughter was a teacher?

D - C: Yes.

G - B: Okay. That's all.
RAFAELITA CHAVEZ
February 18, 1992
RAFAELITA CHÁVEZ
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Side A:

G - B: ¿Dónde nació, creció Mrs. Chávez?

Chávez: Yo nací en Peña Blanca.

G - B: Y digame algo de su familia. ¿Cuántos había en su familia?

Chávez: Let me see. At the time, no me acuerdo. Déjame ver.

Era Mary, Corrine, Duie, que le decía mi sister, Josephine and me. And one brother, that I remember.

G - B: When were you born more or less? Do you want to tell us what year you were born? You can tell me then I'll tell you.

Chávez: The year. I don't mind it.

G - B: ¿Cuándo nació?

Chávez: Nineteen eleven.

G - B: Nineteen eleven, in Peña Blanca, New Mexico. No?

Chávez: In Peña Blanca, New Mexico.

G - B: And did you live there all your life when you were growing up?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: With your family.

Chávez: Well, like one time we lived in Gallup. We moved to Gallup because my dad was working in the mines with his
brother. That’s when we started growing up, you know, and then my mother realized that it was better for us to come back to Peña Blanca because we had to start school. They lived in the mining camp, see.

G - B: In Gallup.

Chávez: In Gallup.

G - B: The last time we talked to you, you told me that your dad worked in Madrid en las minas. Do remember a little about that?

Chávez: We went to Madrid once when he was working there for Christmas, I think. They used to celebrate it. Oh, that’s when Madrid was a really, really nice, you know. And I remember he used to give us a dollar there for Christmas presents or something, and we used to celebrate it.

G - B: You told me that he would go work and catch the train, jump on the train to come home on the weekends.

Chávez: Yes, yes. And from there he used to go in a buggy, that’s where they used to carry the mail. He used to go visit us and go back on Monday.

G - B: And how was life? Was it hard growing up in those days?

Chávez: You know, to think about it, I think it was so nice to be growing out in the country because there’s always so
much to do. So much to enjoy; farming and there was a
ditch right behind our house. And our garden was just
on the other side. We used to enjoy it when my dad
used to irrigate, you know. We used to take our shoes
off and, and,..
G - B: Play in the mud?
Chávez: No. Where the water was running into the garden, you
know. And, we used to catch little fish in the
meantime.
G - B: But then you had some trouble with that ditch, no.
With the flood.
Chávez: Oh, with the flood, yes. That's when we lost
everything. It was in nineteen thirty-one, I think.
G - B: So, the flood just came down and...
Chávez: Came down and ruined...everything was wiped out.
G - B: Everything.
Chávez: But, we used to enjoy it there so much. I remember my
dad used to raise a lot of corn, wheat, alfalfa,
vegetables, chile. That good chile.
G - B: And you went to school with the nuns, no. Allí en Peña
Blanca. Tell me a little, if you remember your early
education.
Chávez: When I started going to school that building that you
see in that book was already built. The story is there
just behind, I guess, probably, I don't know how old I was when we came from Gallup. Because I started going to school there already.

G - B: You think you got a good education from the sisters, no?

Chávez: Very good.

G - B: You feel...

Chávez: Very, very good. In fact, I have the list of all the people that are working, some are retired already. But, I'm going to show you the names, after a while, of all the teachers that came out.

G - B: Out of Peña Blanca.

Chávez: Out of Peña Blanca. And we had a Senator from Peña Blanca. We had...

G - B: This is Senator Montoya?

Chávez: Montoya. His early years were there. I think he finished in Bernalillo with the sisters of Loretto.

G - B: And the sisters were brought from elsewhere?

Chávez: Yes. They were foreign teachers. Like Sister Sixta, she was a German. And you know what I was learning from my cousin. I was asking her, because when I retired, I heard somebody say my teacher in the first grade was still living and she was in Jemez, still teaching.
Really? One of the sisters? She must be pretty old then, no, now? She would be a teacher when you were a, a,...

She died four years ago. That's what she said.

Oh, four years ago. And you didn't see her after you grew up?

Yes.

Well, we need to answer that phone and then we'll come back. Okay. We'll take a little station break.

I don't know who's calling me. Let me see.

And then my throat is so funny. It's not clear. It's because I was sleeping I laid down there.

You want some water?

I think I better clear it up there because I think, I was talking so... (interview is interrupted)

When you went to grade school, did you speak English?

Grade school?

When you first started school?

Well, my first language is Spanish.

Is that what you spoke at home?

We didn't know any English at all.

Do you remember learning English? What they did or...

Oh, I remember a little. That they started the books
with Spanish and English at the beginning and afterwards they did away with them, I don't remember.

G - B: So, the first few years they were teaching a little bit of Spanish.

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: And then after...?

Chávez: And then afterwards it was just English.

G - B: Do you remember how long it took you to learn enough English to get something out of your education or not?

Chávez: I don't remember hardly anything when we started. Really I don't. I remember that my brother was in my classroom because he was older but, pretty soon he was moved to the second grade, I guess. Because he was already older than me. And, I was with Sister Lily Osa. That was her name. My cousin was telling me that she was from Cuba.

G - B: Originally.

Chávez: From Cuba, New Mexico. I never thought that Sister Lilly Osa...

G - B: Was from there.

Chávez: I thought she was a foreigner. There's no wonder she knew real good...

G - B: For she knew Spanish.
Chávez: She knew Spanish.

G - B: And she could talk to you and the rest of children in Spanish.

Chávez: I guess that's what she did. Because she was there for the longest time. And I had her in Spanish in college.

G - B: Oh, you did. Where did you go to college?

Chávez: I went to U. of A. and UNM (University of New Mexico).

G - B: And UNM. When did you graduate? What, probably when you were seventeen years old, right? Sixteen or seventeen, from Catholic school or public school?

Chávez: It was a public school. But, it says in that book, I don't know if you have read it, that it was part parochial. They said part parochial and part public. But when I went it was public. Because the sisters used to work for the state.

G - B: Did a lot of the young people your age graduate from Peña Blanca? Or did a lot of the students not finish?

Chávez: There it is in that book. All the classes, one after the other. One year after the other, but we were the first class.

G - B: To graduate? You were in the first class?

Chávez: To graduate. Yes.

G - B: Okay. Now, did you start teaching right away or did
you go to college?

Chávez: I went to college, a little before I started.

G - B: When did you know you wanted to be a teacher?

Chávez: I think since I was little, I guess.

G - B: You think so.

Chávez: I was always playing school.

G - B: Oh, yeah. So you liked school?

Chávez: Very much, all the time.

G - B: You think you knew real early that what's you wanted to do?

Chávez: I guess so. Because that's all I used to do.

G - B: And do you remember why you got interested in being a teacher?

Chávez: I guess I saw so many teachers before me. And going to school and teaching, I said, "Why can't I do it?"

G - B: So, the teachers that you had, and especially the Sisters, were kind of important.

Chávez: Very. Because we used to help them in doing all the work there. You know they said, "When you become a teacher, you do this." "When you become..."

G - B: Oh, okay. So, they were training you, not only to learn but to be teachers already.

Chávez: Yes. To be teachers.
G - B: And how did your mom and dad, did they support you? Did they want you to be a teacher?

Chávez: My dad used to say all the time...

G - B: ¿Qué le decía?

Chávez: She's going to a teacher.

G - B: Esa es una maestra. ¿No?

Chávez: My momma used to say, "Well, see how interested she is, she doesn't like to miss school. Whether it's too cold or too warm, it doesn't matter. She goes to school."

G - B: Nos dijo la última vez, no, even if it snowed. You would go to school.

Chávez: Yes. Even though.

G - B: ¿Y qué hacia con los pies? ¿Qué hacía?

Chávez: Los pies. My dad used to put those gunny sacks...

G - B: Sacos de guangoche.

Chávez: Sacos de guangoche around them and he used to put these wires in them. When I got to the arroyo, before I got to school, I took them off so they wouldn't see them.

G - B: So, the other kids wouldn't see. But, you never wanted to miss school?

Chávez: I never did. I always wanted to be in school. I even missed it in the summer time.

G - B: And I bet you were the smartest student in class.
Chávez: Well, I tried my best. I always wanted to be competitive.

G - B: You were always competitive?

Chávez: Very much. And still I do. I say I always like competition. Especially one of the teachers, Sister De Goriana, she was so nice. She always had, like I told you, always something different for every month. You know, encouraging the children to see who could be the leader or the highest one or whatever. And I used to do that, too.

G - B: When you went to college, probably, that wasn't real common for the people in your town or for women, especially to go off to college. How did your parents feel? Did they encourage you? Did they want you to go college?

Chávez: Oh, yes. Especially my dad, he was always interested in everything I did. When we started teaching, you know, the parents used to sit and talk around like they did out in the country, "I wonder if my daughter is coming pretty soon. She's teaching over there." And the other parents used to say, "Mine is over there."

G - B: Oh, so, there was several teachers from your town, community? How many years did you go to college before you started teaching?
Chávez: I really don't remember. I finished the twelfth grade, I started right away. Because I didn't start teaching the first year. I went to U. of A.

G - B: First, for awhile.

Chávez: Oh yeah.

G - B: But you didn't get your degree right away, no?

Chávez: No.

G - B: Then you went to teach?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: Tell us, do you remember your first teaching job?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: Where was it?

Chávez: Plainly.

G - B: Tell us about your first job.

Chávez: I applied for a position, and they didn't have a place for me.

G - B: In Peña Blanca?

Chávez: In Peña Blanca. If I have that book, I can show you the person that was the member of the board and superintendent. It's right in there. That's nicer and I can tell you the people that helped me out.

G - B: We'll do that the next time.

Chávez: And, let me see.
G - B: You applied for the job at Peña Blanca and there was no job.

Chávez: Yes. And then I came here to Albuquerque, to look for a job. Then, I found a job, where was it. Well, I went to several places and finally, I got to this family, she had just had a baby. And I said, "I'll work here for a little while to help my aunt," because my aunt was alone with her children. Her husband died three years before that. I was there and I says, "Auntie how can I help you?" And I said, I better work a little bit until I can find something better. So, she used to live on First Street. The evening we used to go window shopping, my cousin and I.

G - B: Downtown?

Chávez: Downtown, it was just a block from where she lived, you know. We were walking, as we were walking, I met Rebecca, the one that I tell you she was a superintendent I met Rebecca, "Oh!," she said, "I'm glad I met you." "I am, too." I says, "You know what," she said, "Do you want a job." "Of course." I said. "I have a place for you in Vallecito." "Good." "There's another teacher there from Peña Blanca. She's there," she's says, "and she has too many children. She has fifty of them and we need a teacher there."
"I'll go right away." I says. So, I don't remember how
I got there to Peña Blanca, right away. Oh, a cousin
helped us and they took me to Peña Blanca.

G - B: And is Vallecito close, was it close to Peña Blanca?

Chávez: No. You go through San Ysidro, down that way and then
to Vallecito.

G - B: To Vallecito. So, that was your first job?

Chávez: That was my first job.

G - B: Do you remember the first day you got there and what it
was like?

Chávez: Oh, I was so happy because the one that was there, we
were in school together.

G - B: So, you knew the other teacher?

Chávez: I did. Right away, I got there, I got room and board
right in her house. You know, I started, it was a one
room...

G - B: School house.

Chávez: School house. Like a big hall, you know. And I said.
"Well, how are we going to teach here? I guess you
look at me and I look at you." And I said, "We had
team teaching since the very first."

G - B: This is new concept, but you were doing it years ago.

Chávez: Yes, yes. And then I said, "How in the world are you
teaching here?" There were no books, pencils, paper, nothing at all. I mean just a little bit here. No stores to buy any material or anything.

G - B: So, how did you manage?

Chávez: Well, let's see the first month I taught there, I think, I came over here to Albuquerque. You know, I think for a nickel they used to give five pencils or so. So, I bought some. My dad helped me out, you know.

G - B: With your own money.

Chávez: Yes. And I bought a lot of things. Tablets also, I think two for a nickel or six, you know. They were cheap, but still. So I took a lot of that material, and I started to gather boxes to make flash cards and charts, because I had a lot of material. I had a lot of pictures when I came here. I forgot to tell you where I finished high school...

G - B: At Albuquerque High School.

Chávez: Albuquerque High, and then I got sick for Christmas time I think and I went back. Then I went to work there in a dude ranch for...

G - B: In the mountains there?

Chávez: Out in the mountains, yes. And they used to pay us a dollar a day, but it was good at that time. I gathered
a lot of magazines, pictures of fruits, and this and...
I had all that material and I took it over there. Then
I asked this member of the board and she was
superintendent. I asked her if we could use the hall
for dances so we could raise money. So she says if
it's for that purpose, you can. Because they told me
that, "They won't let you." I told them, "I'm going to
do that." I says, "So, we can get more materials for
this place." And, she says, "They won't let you."
"Well, I'm going to try." So, I wrote to her, you
know, here. She was in Bernalillo and she answered me
and she said, "Go ahead." so,...

G - B: So you started having dances?

Chávez: Yes. On weekends. They were taken care of by the
director of the place. There was a director in each
little place.

G - B: That would be like the board of directors of the school
board, something like that?

Chávez: No. It was from the community.

G - B: Oh, okay.

Chávez: He was the director of the community, and then I told
him that we're going to do that and for him to handle
it. So, he handled the dances and everything. They
had the musicians from there and everything.
G - B: So you were starting to make some money...

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: ...to buy your materials for your kids.

Chávez: So, we did. I didn't even have a desk nor a chair. I used to sit in the window sill. Those windows sills were high, you know. I said, "Well, we'll do that." And then we got tables. I said, "Let's get tables."

G - B: With the money that...

Chávez: Yes. Tables, you know, before it was just desks. But, I thought of tables better, so then the children could write. We got lumber, and we made tables and benches, paint and all that. Then we put up a partition.

G - B: So, then you could split into two classes.

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: And the two teachers, each one.

Chávez: Yes. In no time. We did that because the people helped us, you know, and we made pretty good money. They had the CC Camps there.

G - B: So the people helped you. Tell me about your second job, in the log cabin. Remember that one? Up by Cuba, ¿Qué no?

Chávez: Wait a minute. After that, yes. Wait a minute, no, no, no. Not then.
G - B: So you stayed in Vallecito for awhile.

Chávez: Yes. Yeah, I think I stayed about three years, then I went to Cuba. I went to this little place. It was right on the mountain. So, when I came to that log cabin, it was so cute. They used to say, "Why do you like that place?" "I don't know," I said, "but it's nice. As long as it's a nice building." It had little windows like that, all like this, and on this side I could see Cuba from there, you know.

G - B: So, you were up in the mountains looking out over the valley.

Chávez: And I said I used to read about Lincoln's Cabin, but I never thought that I was going to teach in it.

G - B: In a cabin. I remember the last time we talked you told me that when you got to this little place that you were shocked at the living conditions.

Chávez: Oh, yeah. We didn't have any water. They used to get it from the springs, you know.

G - B: And when you got to school there were no children at the school.

Chávez: Yeah. The first day I couldn't find anybody.

G - B: So, You went out and looked for them?

Chávez: Uh-hum. And they were living right in, like little huts, you know, out by the mountains, you know, right
like that, and there were a lot of them. And then on the other side, there were more, right, but I never met those. Because, these ones from this side I got the children that were living, you know. And I told them to take me. So, we went all around and found, finally I had about twenty-five children there.

G - B: Why weren't they going to school these children, when you got there?

Chávez: Well, that's when we started school.

G - B: You had just started, so they didn't know that there was a school, yet.

Chávez: I guess not, I guess.

G - B: And so these people were very poor.

Chávez: Very, very poor.

G - B: So, you rounded up all the children, and did they speak any English?

Chávez: Yeah. They did.

G - B: They did.

Chávez: They did. They had a teacher there, an old teacher that, I tell you she used to be scared with that man that they used to say, "Here he comes." And the children used to scare her, and they had a holiday there. And then when that man came, I said, "They won't do that to me."
G - B: Because you weren't afraid of anything. Right?

Chávez: No. I wasn't afraid of anything.

G - B: So, you got these kids together, and you started to teach them?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: And, then you got rained out?

Chávez: Yes. I had to get out, and the lady of this house had an adobe house, and she let me have that room. So, the rest of the children that were on the other side, I think they took them to Cuba. And then I taught these ones from this side.

G - B: So, you had to move to another building to teach.

Chávez: Yes. Oh, I had a very nice cosy room.

G - B: Now, that you were a young woman, and you were out there in the boondocks, teaching school. Weren't you afraid to go out there all alone?

Chávez: No, I didn't go alone.

G - B: Away from your family. Oh, you didn't.

Chávez: I took my mom.

G - B: Okay.

Chávez: My mom went with me. I wouldn't be there right by myself.

G - B: It was too far. You weren't afraid, but your mom went
to support you and help you.

Chávez: No, I wasn't scared. No, those are the people in the same place, they had a two room house. And this family accommodated themselves in this room, and we took the other one. So, we were with the family there. And then this other family here. The people were so nice you know, that at that time, you weren't scared. We didn't even have a lock on the door.

G - B: And was your mom proud of you that you were a teacher?

Chávez: Oh, yes.

G - B: Because being a teacher you had to be an important person in the community, ¿Qué no? I mean, wasn't the teacher like the center of everything.

Chávez: The center of attraction. My dad used to say, because I used to like to sing. I used to take books there and sing, and my dad used to say, "Oh, it's so nice when you're around here and when you go we're so sad."

G - B: They were sad because you'd go out?

Chávez: Because in the summer time I stayed there for awhile. And there I come, because I went every summer. I even took correspondence to finish my degree.

G - B: So you went to college in the summer to get your training.

Chávez: Yes. Yes. And, I took correspondence by the sisters.
A lot of correspondence. I think I took about thirty credits in correspondence.

G - B: And your parents were real proud of you that you were the... "Nuestra hija, la maestra."

Chávez: Very, very. Yeah.

G - B: Did they use to brag to their friends and family that they had a teacher in the family?

Chávez: I guess they did, but there was so many there. Let me show you.

G - B: Sure

Chávez: Can I move it a little?

G - B: Oh, you had something ready for us here.

Chávez: You know Chris was telling me about all these things that I didn't remember.

G - B: These are class lists of your students. Mire, aquí está una tocaya mia. Erlinda Baca, asina me llamo yo.

Chávez: All these were teachers from Peña Blanca.

G - B: From Peña Blanca. Really?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: Oh, my goodness. Look at this Diana, there's thirty, thirty names here.

D - R: My goodness.

Chávez: There were thirty...
G - B: And these were all people that finished high school and then went out to teach in different parts of the state.

Chávez: Yes. Here's the other list.

G - B: Fifty. She has fifty names here.

Chávez: And I still didn't finish. There were some more that...

G - B: Did you just write these names from people that you remembered?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: You sat there and remembered. Now, all these people were taught and educated by the sisters?

Chávez: By the sisters. All of them. When the sisters came to Peña Blanca. They were brought by Father Lamy. He brought, my cousin was telling me, eight sisters. Somewhere I wrote it. Eight sisters but only three stayed. They were Franciscans, Loretto and...

G - B: And Dominicans.

Chávez: Dominicans and priests that came out of there, Father Ramón, Telesfor García.

G - B: These were young men from Peña Blanca that went on to become priests?

Chávez: Yes, and sisters. I don't know, I just wrote it down.

G - B: Some of the women. Clotilde?
Chávez: Oh, Clotilde...

G - B: Martinez you have, that became a sister, I guess, no?

Chávez: Oh, I don't know, I just took notes when she was talking to me. There were a lot of sisters that came out of that school.

G - B: So, priests, sisters and at least fifty teachers came out of your town.

Chávez: More than fifty because there were more that I didn't...

G - B: These are the ones you could remember.

Chávez: That I could remember, yeah.

G - B: Well, it sounds to me like Peña Blanca put out enough teachers for the whole state, practically.

Chávez: For the whole state. That was what they always used to say in the places that we went, "Where are you from?" "From Peña Blanca." "Why do these from Peña Blanca come over here." And I'd say, "Yes. Secretaries..."

Two of these left the job once, I think, teaching and they went to the capital in Santa Fe. It was the two of them that were teaching at Placitas, then we took over. Let me see. And there was Sam Montoya, he became a lawyer. They used to stand him up on a stool so he could recite. He was short, you know, and he was so smart. He even won an essay on Lincoln. He used to
be so smart. I think he graduated with us because there was, Raquela and Miguelito, the ones that finished with us. They jumped them from the sixth grade to the eighth grade, they were so smart.

G - B: Now, tell me a little about your teaching years in Placitas.

Chávez: Oh, in Placitas. I stayed there eleven years. We started in a one-room school, Raquela and I, and then that summer, I don't know what, the WPA was having projects in every little place, and they built the new school. So, Raquela liked the old school for the older ones and Frances Baca and me took the new building. So, we had enough place there for all the children. We used to have about eighty or hundred children there.

G - B: Tell me, sometimes, I imagine that some of these children would come to school and they didn't speak English. And your job was to teach them, English? Was that hard to do?

Chávez: Yes. It wasn't hard for me. I don't know. I used my guides and everything. And in no time, in about two or three weeks those children could understand you. Because I never spoke...
Side B:

Chávez: You don't need to punish children. If you're just firm, keep your rules, and the children will obey better than punishing. I just hated punishment, because there were some teachers, I remember, "You write so many lines and this and..." "Well," I'd say, "give them a task to do better than punishment." You know. "Change them, to do something for you rather than,..."

G - B: Punishing them.

Chávez: Cruelty. They were like that.

G - B: Did you think that it was very important for you to teach these children English? Did you think they really needed it and it was essential to teach them?

Chávez: Oh, yes. At that time we had a supervisor, she was such a big help. She brought us a lot of material. Both, together, we were making charts for phonics. And she said, "We'rl work together." She did a lot and gave us a lot of help. Mrs. Logan. I don't know from where she came, but we had her in that county. That's when everything started to spring up in a Sandoval County.

G - B: Did you ever wish or think, "Maybe we should be teaching these children to read Spanish, to read their
own language. To read and write in and learn...

Chávez: Not at the time.

G - B: At the time you didn't think that?

Chávez: No, not at the time.

G - B: Nobody was thinking that way? I know that later, we'll get to that. Do you know why? Do you have any ideas why...

Chávez: Because they spoke Spanish at home. They spoke Spanish at home, so we thought they should speak English in school. So they could read and understand. And they did. With pictures and drills and puzzles and audio pictures and all that, that helps a lot.

G - B: And did you think that if these children didn't learn English that they were going to suffer or lose out or, why did you think it was so important to learn English?

Chávez: To get better jobs, I guess. I remember when I finished, I had a supervisor from Placitas, he was my supervisor from Head Start there in Bernalillo. He said, "Am I hiring my teacher." "What?" I said. "You were my teacher in Placitas." "I was!" I said. God, I could be in that place," I said, "but I don't drive. I could be handling this." Because we had a meeting with... they always used to bring some outsiders and speakers and this lady, she looked Italian and then she
reviewed us, the aides that I had, and me. And when she saw the education that we had, she said, "Why aren't you the supervisor...".

G - B: Of the Head Start Program.

Chávez: Of the Head Start Program. You know what I said, I just want a part-time job. Just to keep it up, I just don't want to go home and say this is it. I just want part-time. And I could have gotten that job, I said, because I was the originator of head start. I started it at the UNM.

G - B: Now, let's go back a little bit. You became a teacher, you taught for many years, but somewhere along the line you got married and had a family? Did you stay home to take care of your kids for awhile, or did you keep teaching?

Chávez: I kept on teaching.

G - B: You had your children and you kept on teaching?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: So you were a working mother most of your life.

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: And was that easy?

Chávez: And my children were with me all the time. They went to school with me.

G - B: With you? Sometimes you were their teacher, too?
Chávez: Yes.

G - B: They were your own students?

Chávez: The oldest one, he was. I was his teacher up to the fourth grade. And the younger one was in first and second. And they were in the same building with me. So, I never hired any babysitters.

G - B: Was it hard though, you had a family, you had a home to take care of and you worked everyday? How did you manage all that?

Chávez: No, my husband helped me a lot, and since I didn't drive, he helped me, if I needed. Because I was principal at Placitas, he was the one that helped me.

G - B: With the housework and with the children and taking you out...

Chávez: With the housework, and going for meetings and all that. And going to school afterwards, too.

G - B: And he didn't mind that you were a teacher.

Chávez: He didn't mind." No.

G - B: Did he like it that you were an important person in the community? You were a public figure. Did your husband like that?

Chávez: Yes. And afterwards he used to work here, and I did in Placitas it was not very far from here and to here. Then we built the house. That's when my oldest son was
born, that's when he built this house.

G - B: This house?

Chávez: So, he was a contractor here.

G - B: So, did you feel like he always encouraged you to be a teacher and to improve your career?

Chávez: Yes. He helped me a lot. I could move around because I didn't know how to drive, so he helped me a lot in my education.

G - B: And he'd never say, "Stay home and take care your family?" He was proud that you were a teacher too?

Chávez: Oh, yes.

G - B: So, you always had a lot of support?

G - B: Both of us were working all the time, up to when I retired.

G - B: Did you love teaching? It sounds like you did?

Chávez: I did. Because I don't know, if I wouldn't have, I don't think I would have enjoyed it. Because every year, what do you think I did for teachers convention?

G - B: You probably came to town to Albuquerque every year.

Chávez: Came to town to see new things, and every year I taught the same skills but as something new.

G - B: The teachers convention was important for new information? And did a lot of teachers...
Chávez: Very important. For new information. I bought a lot of material there. I was always buying.

G - B: From your own pocket?

Chávez: From my own pocket. I was always buying a lot of material and finding things for language and modern things, always. And it's every year. I taught the same skills but with a different form of finding ways, not to...

G - B: To be better?

Chávez: You get children bored if you're using the same thing every year.

G - B: Every year. How old were you when you graduated from college?

Chávez: It was in forty-six.

G - B: In forty-six. You were a mother, a wife, a teacher and in the summer, a student probably. Did you go in the summers?

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: A student at the university.

Chávez: I was just talking to my son the other day, and he says, "Oh, momma." The one that I was showing you the picture, the youngest one. He went to UNM, two years. But, he got sick, so he couldn't keep on. But he wants to finish.

30
G - B: To go back.

Chávez: They hired him at Longfellow with day care and he had to make lesson plans. So, I started taking out my books, and I said, "Here's the way." He's very smart, Henry. I took him to school when they introduced modern math. I taught head start the first year. That's when modern math started. I wanted to take a course in that, so, I finished Head start in Peña Blanca. I went to the UNM, and in two months, we experimented Head Start and then I went to college at UNM, U. of A. and I took that course, the beginning of modern math. And this one that I showed you his picture, he went with me. They let him stay in my room. How old was he? He was going to go in the first grade, I think. Or second. He learned along with me.

G - B: So, you taught him. Oh, that's wonderful.

Chávez: He would say "let me take the test?" "Momma let me take the test. I already learned it."

G - B: Oh, that's great.

Chávez: He was telling me the other day. "Momma I remember that I went to college with you since I was little." And they let him stay there. They let him. They said how can you keep that child so quiet? He was very
interested in what we were doing. Because they had charts from one end to the other. Oh, that modern math was interesting and I said, "Now, it's going to be modern math this year in my classroom."

**G - B:** So you then went and taught them modern math.

**Chávez:** I even have the first books that we taught, modern math. I tell you, when we finished that year I had children adding a whole string of numbers, but they didn't keep it up. Why didn't they keep up modern math? They start one thing and they didn't... I was so proud of one the boys, he says, "Look, Mrs, Chávez, I can add." He used to put, "Twelve, three, four, five, six," he used to... up there he'd put his answer.

**G - B:** Really fast, huh?

**Chávez:** You know, that's kind of hard for little ones to do that.

**G - B:** You had a lot of teaching experience at Cochiti? Also, right? At the pueblo.

**Chávez:** Oh, yes. We were not at the pueblo.

**G - B** It was the town then? But, you had children from the pueblo teaching... at the school.

**Chávez:** Yes. This is Cochiti here, across the river. This is Cochiti. Over here is Peña Blanca. Here's the river but on this side was Sile. It was this place and this
place in Cochiti. They allowed us to make a school out on the hill from Peña Blanca. Peña Blanca was here, up on the hill, that's Indian land. They built the new school. That's why they built a new school.

G - B: And that's the school you taught at?

Chávez: Yes. The Cochiti, we were going to do it with Santo Domingo, but they didn't want any other people but them. So, Cochiti allowed us to mix all these children so they'd learn to get along with each other. We had Anglos, Negroes, Indians, Spanish.

G - B: In the same school?

Chávez: In the same school.

G - B: You had different language problems? For example; some you had to teach English too, or they all spoke English?

Chávez: I thought I was going to have a hard time with the Cochiti. They knew English, already.

G - B: So, all the children knew English.

Chávez: With all these programs that we had, they lost their language. The children do not know Indian, anymore.

G - B: But then you tried to teach them their languages, right? Later on.

Chávez: Yes. Yes.

G - B: When the new ideas about...
Chávez: They put a teacher, an Indian teacher so he was teaching Indian. I was teaching Spanish, and an Indian teacher was teaching English.

D - R: Can we get some photos out? I think we’re about to run out of tape.

G - B: So the attitudes changed. Now, we were talking about teaching them their own languages because they had lost them? Do you think maybe that they taught English too well? And that we forgot the native languages?

Chávez: Oh, yes. Yes, I think we went overboard with English because we had so many programs.

G - B: And then we ignored the Spanish and the Indian languages.

Chávez: Yes.

G - B: Maybe you can tell us about these pictures? These were at Cochiti, no?

Chávez: Yeah.

G - B: Cochiti in nineteen seventy-three and seventy-four, this one says.

Chávez: Yeah. This one is in seventy-four. We tried open concept when we were here. But, it didn't work very well. There were only two teachers there. We were trained over here that summer for open concept. I even had my guide for kindergarten, I got one from there.
G - B: So these were children of all ages, then? Or not?

Chávez: No. I think I had first and second. It doesn't say there?

G - B: Yes.

Chávez: First and second graders, I had there.

G - B: This is a picture of you, now. That's when you were a teacher. That was one of the school pictures, right? We're going to put this one here. I think that's a good picture of you. I like that.

Chávez: Yes. I even have that big one. A better one that I got in seventy-four.

G - B: And this one is you at your desk.

Chávez: That's in Peña Blanca.

G - B: In Peña Blanca.

Chávez: Last year. They took that picture when they put in that year-book. The Sisters used to make those. They had them up there. I had all my material there. That's when they came and...

G - B: And here's one of your number charts back here.

Chávez: Yes. A few things I guess that I had on the wall.

G - B: Let's put this one on next. Here, too. There's Mrs. Chávez at her desk. And here's one of some children. It's a classroom...
Chávez: I don't know, I can't tell who that person is, if that's the supervisor. I think it must have been Cochiti. Because I see new furniture. I think that's Ida. Isn't that Ida?

G - B: Ida Carrillo?

Chávez: Ida Carrillo.

G - B: I might be, yeah. That might...

Chávez: That's Ida Carrillo when we were working with, ah, SWETSO.

G - B: Oh, so, that was Southwestern Educational Lab or something. In the seventies.

Chávez: I don't know where I got that picture that I found. That's what it is, that's Ida. We were working together, and they gave a demonstration over here at UNM with my children.

G - B: That might be one of those demonstrations?

Chávez: I don't know. Let me see, I brought my class.

G - B: When did you retire?

Chávez: In seventy-four.

G - B: And how many years total did you teach?

Chávez: Thirty-three.

G - B: Thirty-three years. If you compare the one-room school house when you first started to the more modern
classroom, which did you prefer, which did you like most and what were the differences?

Chávez: Well...

G - B: Would you say one was better than the other?

Chávez: You know what the building doesn't count. It's the quality of teaching that you give. You can teach anything, it doesn't matter, look at walls if you got the good material and teach the children. Never look at the building.

G - B: Is it hard though to have mixed-grades like you used to in the one-room school house. You had first, second and third, fourth, you'd have all the grades together. Was that hard? That must have been a challenge.

Chávez: I had that in Gilman. That's only one time that I had up to the eight grade. No, I combined them. That's what I thought. I could never make a program. I said, "How in the world am I going to teach." For instance, you had some smart first graders, you can mix them with the second graders and put two or three in third. Maybe, you could put these two in third and forth, you had to combine them.

G - B: Combine.

Chávez: Combine them like that, because I taught there and they said the year before they had two teachers and when I
went, it was only me. The ones from the camp they had graduated too, that's what they told me. They were going to help me with the older ones, they said, "The little ones are the ones that need more help." "So, we're going to help you with the upper grades because we went to college." They said. "Okay," I said, "if we can work it out that way." But when they saw how I combine my grades and all that. I had it at a certain time I taught all the little children first. Then at a certain time, because these children went home even for recess. The first day I was scared. I said, "What happened to my children?" They went out to recess and they went home for a snack.

G - B: They went home.

Chávez: And I said, "Well, where did the children go?" "Oh, we forgot, Mrs. Chávez" they said. "They come home for a snack." "Oh, they have a different rule here." It was terrible. I had lost my children and they said, "They went home." And they went for a snack. Don't bother. You go and rest, let me go to my trailer. So, I went and rested there and drank some coffee. While the children were taking a nap.

G - B: And this is at which school?

Chávez: At Gilman. In a lumber camp.
G - B: Up by Cuba? Or where's that?

Chávez: Going there to Cuba, someplace there.

G - B: What do you think of the education system today? Do you know anything of what's going on? Do you think they're doing a good as job as you did? Or your generation did?

Chávez: Well, there's a lot more than what we used to have now, but if they would make use of it. More material, like, my son was over here, he learned how to use the computers and all that. But still, like everybody used to say, "the best tool is the teacher." If they go all by machines not too much will go on here. Don't you think so?

G - B: Yeah.

Chávez: They will depend like on these adding machines and all that. Don't you think?

G - B: The calculators?

Chávez: The calculators, that's why the children aren't learning math.

Diana: They can't add those numbers up in columns anymore.

Chávez: And another thing, they don't stress the tables. I remember the sisters, we used to have contests with boys and girls... *(phone interrupted)*

Chávez: ... del bingo.
G - B: Otra vez él del bingo.
Chávez: Sí, no más que molesta.
G - B: Oh, aquí perdí un retrato. One last picture, two pictures, Diana, they're little, of Mrs. Chávez. One with her nephew and then one when she was a teacher in a very elegant dress. Do you remember that? When you took that?
Chávez: I remember that.
G - B: Let's see those. So, what advice do you have for the teachers of today?
Chávez: Ay Señora, you want me to remember.
G - B: To be good teachers, what does it take? Corazón, ¿no?
Chávez: Well patience, first. That's the most important. If they don't have patience tell them to get out. Get out of the classroom. Because if they don't have patience they'll get nervous. They always use to say, "How can you have patience with all these children?" The mothers from Cochiti, every time they had a meeting, they were always saying, "Give Mrs. Chávez help. Look at all the children she's taking care of." And they'd say, "Oh, you sure have patience." Yeah, I'd say...
G - B: So you think that's one of the most important...
Chávez: The most important thing is to be calm and have patience with the children. And I used to love this
G - B: The first grades are the harder ones.

Chávez: No. I mean, bebitos.

G - B: Babies, babies. But, you like them, first, second, third grade.

Chávez: Yeah. When I'm teaching them. Because they're so interested in learning. Oh they're so anxious.

G - B: They want to learn?

Chávez: They want to learn and once they learn, like I told you, the little boy I used to teach, he became a public speaker. We use to play public speaking, and I used to make them a horn to practice public speaking. He's teaching right here in Albuquerque now. And he said, "You know what? I learned to speak." He was a third grader. Oh, he used to say, like a politician, he used to say like stories and all that. He said, "You gave me the idea." And he used to like it and I said, "well that's very nice." I had some children in Placitas and I used to teach them like that. Even at this age. "Come on." I'd say, "come on and speak up. Whatever you have learned. Come on and say it." We used to have that on Fridays. This little boy, he didn't know what to say, and he said, "I want to do it." And I said, "Okay, come on." And he said, "Patito, patito,
color de café, tu no me quieres, ya sé porque."

G - B: So that's something he had learned at home.

Chávez: I guess. Oh we laughed. But, he wanted something to be proud of. He had something that he knew to join the rest. But I thought it was so cute. He had bangs and his hair was straight. He looked like a little Dutch boy. But I thought he was so cute. He'd say "Patito, patito, color de café, tu no me quieres, ya sé porque."

Where did they tell me where he was? Oh there's one. That one I had in Head Start that I was talking to a cousin of mine. She told me all the stories about all the children, what they're doing. I had this one in, well, I had this picture of head start? These are the children from there. They took pictures of Head Start too.

G - B: So you're proud of all the young children?

Chávez: Let me tell you. We used to stop for him over at my cousin's. Because the ones in Cochiti wanted me to take kindergarten. The principal there said that the kindergarten teacher had too many up there. No, they said, this is the nickel school and the other one is the dime. We want them to build up there. Foolish. I had no more experience than the one that was there. Well, I had that kindergarten, and I even had my
certificate for kindergarten. I had more experience than the one that was teaching there. Well, that's what they thought. I said, "Oh, no." And when these ones went over there from here they were not even kindergarten, they were Head Start. Because my niece worked over there with the kindergarten as an aide. She says, "These little children that went from here, knew more than the ones that were there in kindergarten." "Of course," I said, "We didn't have so many. Then I had so much help." My aide used to be a teacher, Mrs. C de Baca, and then the other aide that worked for Ben Power, she did the cooking and all that for our children, and I had a lot of help with just a few children. It was just so nice to teach there.

G - B: Did you in the different communities that you were at, did you always get a lot of support from the community and the parents and the families?

Chávez: Very much. Oh, in Placitas. We talked only a little bit about Placitas. In Placitas, all the people helped me out. If I had that picture -- I wish. I would have it -- I don't know what I did with it. There's a picture that Mrs. Logan took for the Cuarto Centennial. There's a Mrs. Scarcida and another one. There were the
musicians. The elderly people helped me every night until nine, after school, after supper, how to teach the old fashion dances. And then Lilly Montoya, she was teaching here, she started with me because Rebecca said, "You start with Mrs. Chávez," her first year there at Placitas. She had aunts that had a lot of material for programs, and she had the story of the coming of Coronado. We even had the horse coming and we had the whole thing, coming on a horse and all that. The whole story. We had it and then the dancing, the coming of Coronado, and then the fiesta and all the dancing. We couldn't even hear the music because of all the cars from Albuquerque.

G - B: So, many cars...

Chávez: With cars from all over. It was on a Sunday. We made it outside. And then the procession that I used to have was old fashion.

G - B: So it was a real community affair?

Chávez: A real community affair.

G - B: The people helped you do it.

Chávez: They all helped me.

Diana: I bet we can find the pictures. I think we should look.

Chávez: Oh that picture, and it's a big one. Because, Mrs.
Logan, she was the one that took that picture. So you would say, I'm not telling you a lie that when we got it, Lilly and I worked real hard at that time. For all the schools were giving old fashion programs at that time. No it's the centennial, when is the centennial again?

G - B: Now.

Chávez: I wish they would do it now.

G - B: The schools are doing some things.

Chávez: Are they?

G - B: Yeah.

Chávez: It would be nice.

G - B: Yeah, a couple of weeks ago they had it all over the news, all the different programs.

Chávez: I don't know what the other schools did but, we made a big one. In Placitas all the people helped me. And then at that time the government was giving commodities. So I ordered commodities for all my children. They gave me a lot. I said, I have a lot of food so why not make a kitchen here and feed the children? So, I did. I had a big hall. So I put a kitchen in there and I started buying material, then I went to Bernalillo to one of the members of the board. They used to have a store there. I don't know if they
still have it in Bernalillo. I went in there and I
said, "You know what, you're a member of the board. I
need pots and pans and all that, and we don't have the
money to buy them. I have made raffles but we need..."
"There's the store, take everything you need." I got
everything. "I'll charge it to the counties." he said.
He was a member of the board. So, I got all the
material.

G - B: So you started a school lunch program?

Chávez: Yes. I had a small stove. When they came to inspect
us they said that I had to have...

G - B: Were you cooking the food, too? Or did you have
someone to help you cook?

Chávez: Two mothers volunteered every week.

G - B: So you were the teacher. You bought the materials.
You organized the cooking. You probably did some of
the cooking. You did everything at these schools.
Did you build your own fires? When my mother was a
teacher she was a janitor, too.

Chávez: Yes. We were janitors. I used to go in the mornings, I
remember. I always liked to live near the school. I
used to get up and put on my coat, when it was so cold,
and build a fire before, and then I went home and I got
ready...
G - B: So the children wouldn't be cold when they got to school.

Chávez: And I had a very nice room with the sun. There were windows, big windows and it used to get so warm. And it had a big, big, big room there.

G - B: When you went to recess, did you go out and play with the children?

Chávez: Oh, yes.

G - B: Did you'ld play baseball?

Chávez: I taught basketball.

G - B: Basketball.

Chávez: You see me in that picture. Raquela used to teach baseball and I taught basketball.

G - B: When we would go out for recess, my mother, she was a teacher, of course, we would play baseball. We would play capture the flag, and she would be out there with the kids playing everything. You know, she was forty, forty-six years old playing with all the children. She would set the example, and she was so competitive and we would all want to be like her.

Chávez: Where did she teach?

G - B: In Rosebud, way out in Northeast New Mexico, one-room school house. But she was the model and we would all get out there play. She played hard.
Josephine Córdova
March 7, 1992

Side A:

G - B: Ibamos a intentar hoy para este proyecto...

Córdova: Ojalá que pueda oírlas bien.

G - B: Okay si no oye, me señale con la mano para que le hable más. Me puede oír ahora?

Córdova: Sí.

G - B: Okay. Mrs. Córdova, vamos a comenzar hablando de su vida. Díganos un poco de cuando era niña, de su familia, de su juventud. ¿Se acuerda, de algunas de esas cosas?

Córdova: Me acuerdo de todo.

G - B: Okay. Pues, a ver, ¿dónde nació, usted?

Córdova: En mil noveciento siete, mil noveciento siete, el primer día de mayo, pero yo, nosotros nos criamos muy pobres porque mi papá se murió en un accidente. Había agarrado un rancho de "Homestead" en ese tiempo y luego se fue por leña con los caballos y tuvo un accidente terrible. Se quebró las piernas. Pues lo trujieron en diferentes hospitales pero ya no le pudieron salvar. Se murió. Y luego había agarrado como le dije, un rancho del "Homestead Act" y ya había puesto muchas mejoras. Había hecho todo lo que podía y luego vino
aqui a Taos. Había un hombre que se llamaba Alex Gusdorff y vino y tenía un banco y mi papá le pidió con que mejorar el rancho. ¿Pues que creé que pasó cuando papá se murió? Fue y nos quitó el rancho, ya mi daddy había hecho casa y ya tenía todo preparado para nosotros. Pues, nos dijo que nos saliéramos, sin nada.

G - B: ¿Cuántos eran en la familia?

Córdova: Tres y mi mamá.

G - B: Entonces tuvieron que dejar el rancho?

Córdova: Tuvimos que salir. Pero, un hermano de mi mamá le dió un lugar donde hiciera casita por mientras. Para que viviéramos un tiempo. Y allí estuvimos. Y después de allá para acá mamá era muy mujer. Nos comenzamos a desarrollar, ella no nos dejó, nunca nos abandonó. Ella era responsable también por mi educación.

G - B: Díganos un poco de su early education; grade school, donde fue a la escuela. ¿Cómo era la escuela?

Córdova: Pues, lo que pasó conmigo fue que nos cambiamos para Arroyo Seco y allí estaba un señor que era muy educado y se llamaba Floyd Santiestevan. Y yo iba en el libro siete. Y luego me dijo, "Tú no perteneces aquí. Yo quiero que tú te vayas a Taos a la escuela, dijo, porque tienes muchas ventajas si te vas a Taos a la
escuela." Yo creía que era una niña todavía. Fui y le dije a mamá. Me dijo, "Yo no te voy dejar ir, no voy a dejar ir a mi baby," dijo. No, y se soltó llorando. Pero luego fue mi hermano, he was my half brother and he was a lawyer. Y ya le dije yo a él que quería Mr. Santiestevan que fuera a la escuela a Taos. "Pues, vente conmigo, yo tengo muy buena casa, dijo. El estaba soltero. "Yo tengo muy buena casa, yo te cuido" dijo. "Y ya para la edad que estás te quedas hasta que acabas la escuela." Me vine con él. Al fin, mamá admitió, pobrecita mi mamá. Admitió y me vine. Oh, pero él era tan bueno. El fue responsable por parte de mi educación.

G - B: Usted me dijo hace un rato que usted desde muy niña sabía que quería ser mestra.

Córdova: Oh, sí. Yo enseñaba a los niños chiquitos. Allá andaba entremetida diciéndoles que me hicieron así, que hicieron de otro modo. Y me obedecían muy bien.

G - B: ¿Desde que era niña, usted ya jugaba como que usted era la maestra?

Córdova: Sí, yo era la maestra. Yo era la maestra. Caminábamos y ibamos a pepenar piñon todos. También jugábamos, nos bañábamos en el río, y todo era educacional. Porque yo
les decía que todo esto era algo que tenía que aprender.

G - B: Usted, ¿cuándo era niña tenía así como "Role Models?"
¿Había alguien que era maestra que usted quería imitar?
o, ¿Se acuerde de eso? ¿Cómo quién la inspiró a ser maestra?

Córdova: Pues yo no sé. Yo desde que era niña yo quería enseñarle a mis hermanos, eran mayores que yo, y yo les decía, "Ustedes están mal, yo sé, yo sé que ustedes están mal. Yo estoy bien." Falta que no debía hacer eso.

G - B: ¿Cuándo, usted fue a high school aquí en Taos con las hermanas o al public high school?

Córdova: No. No con las hermanas, fui a la pública.

G - B: ¿Y se graduó del twelfth grade?

Cordova: Oh, sí. I came out second.

G - B: In your class? And when did you become you become a teacher? When did you become a teacher?

Córdova: Right after I graduated because the people from Arroyo Seco wanted me to be a teacher. They really wanted me. They all loved me so much that they wanted me to go and teach their kids.

G - B: So, you went there?
Córdova: Y de una vez comencé a enseñar but I could do it. I could do it.

G - B: ¿Qué hacía, cómo enseñaba? Usted era una mujer joven de diecisiete, dieciocho años...

Córdova: Pero yo sabía leer.

G - B: Ya sabía leer.

Córdova: Ya sabía leer. I have wondered, porque después desarrollaron los phonics, y yo usaba phonics, entonces. You know, cortaba las palabras y les decía yo que tenían que cortar las palabras para saber que eran lo que iban a leer.

G - B: ¿Cuándo usted decidió irse, cuando la invitaron a Arroyo Seco, su mamá estaba muy contenta de que su hija iba a ser maestra?

Córdova: Oh, estaba tan contenta. Pues me había estado cuatro años afuera. O, pero mi hermano era un hombre muy educado, era un abogado. Era muy estricto, era estricto, muy estricto. Una vez tuvimos, cuando vine en el grado octavo, decidieron tener una contesta, el grado octava en contra del high school. En deletreos, spelling.

G - B: A Spelling Bee.

Córdova: Y yo, I got first place.

G - B: Oh, so you were a smart one, huh?
Córdova: Junior high. I got first place and I, well, yo no era orgullosa. Se me hacía que eran cosas que tenían que venir, you know. Yo no era orgullosa o que pensaba que yo era mejor que los otros, nunca, nunca, nunca.

G - B: Okay, se viene a Arroyo Seco a ser maestra. Tenía allí muchachos o muchachas grandes, me imagino. ¿No?

Córdova: Oh, sí.

G - B: ¿Usted era la única maestra o había más que una allí? Was it a big school?

Córdova: Wait a minute.

G - B: Your first job.

Córdova: I think there were about two more teachers.

G - B: Did you work with the little ones or the big ones?

Córdova: Yo tenía los chiquitos.

G - B: Los chiquitos.

Córdova: Eso era mi placer mío.

G - B: Le gustaba enseñar a los chiquitos?

Córdova: Oh, sí. Y luego los padres de la familia era tan amorosos conmigo. Estaban tan contentos porque estaba enseñando a sus hijos. Que al fin de la escuela, ellos mismos planearon tener un picnic y que fueron todos los niños y yo. Y de modo es que todos tenían caballos y yo también. Iba mos a caballo y los padres de familia

G - B: Y estos niños, ¿no hablaban inglés, no? Puro español?

Córdova: O no. Pues puro español, entonces comenzaban con los...

G - B: ¿Qué usted tenía que enseñarles?

Córdova: Tenía yo que enseñarles. Well, like phonics.

G - B: ¿Se acuerda de como les enseñaba inglés? ¿Qué hacía para enseñarles?

Córdova: Un momento. Tendría que pensar poquito.

G - B: Y en las escuelas, le decían a usted, "You're here to teach the children English, don't speak Spanish." ¿Le decían? ¿Les decían que no hablaran español en la escuela?

Córdova: Al principio, no. Porque para comprender a los niños tenía uno que escucharlos y no sabían nada en inglés. Pero yo les ponía palabras en la pizarra y luego les explicaba que esa palabra contenía lo que estando diciendo en español.

G - B: ¿Entonces en la clase usted usaba el español junto con el inglés?

Córdova: Sí, tenía que al principio, al principio.

G - B: Pero tenían reglas, por ejemplo, que los niños no podían hablar español? Los castigaban, alguna gente
dice cuando era niños los castigaban que hablaban
español en la escuela.

Córdova: Oh, yo nunca hice eso. Yo no, yo no. Mi corazón
estaba lleno de amor por esos niños. Yo nunca castigué
a nadie. Yo no me recuerdo que en cuantí -más años que
vive, que yo castigara nadie, nunca.

G - B: ¿Y cuándo empezó a estudiar en college? ¿En Highlands?
¿Usted fue a Highlands? ¿No?

Córdova: Yo fui a Highlands.

G - B: ¿Cuándo íban, en verano?

Córdova: No. En el verano nomás.

G - B: Entonces enseñaban en invierno y en el verano iba al
colegio.

Córdova: Al colegio. También no hubiera ido si no hubiera sido
por mi hermano, éste que era abogado. El me bordaba.

G - B: ¿El pagaba?

Córdova: Si, me ayudaba. El me ayudaba. Había veces que
necesitaba dinero. "Mándame diez pesos."

G - B: Y dígame, ¿en college le gustaba? ¿Qué hacían allí?
¿Se acuerda de eso? ¿Se acuerda de Highlands? ¿Cómo
era?

Córdova: Oh, yes. Pues, era muy diferente a lo que es ahora,
you know. Como hacían las casa de antes y todo eso.
Creo que no nos fijábamos mucho en lo que parecía el colegio, en las amistades.

G - B: ¿Allí hizo muchos amigos?
Córdova: Oh, Carlida.

G - B: ¿Y cuándo se casó usted? ¿Cuántos años tenía?
Córdova: O, ya no me acuerdo. Yo me estuve mucho soltera. Yo no quería casarme.

G - B: ¿Por qué?
Córdova: Yo quería libertad. Yo quería libertad.

G - B: Y usted tenía trabajo y tenía dinero y hacía lo que le daba la gana.

Córdova: Y tenía a mi mamá para mantenerla.

G - B: Usted mantenía a su mamá. Trabajaba para mantener a su mamá.

Córdova: Para mantenerla a ella.

G - B: Por eso no quería casarse.

Córdova: Y ella tan contenta. Tan contenta. Pos, yo estaba muy contenta con mi mamá. Si, pero no recuerdo en que año...

G - B: Y cuando se casó, ¿Usted dejó de enseñar o siguió siendo mestra?

Córdova: O no, yo nunca dejé de enseñar.

G - B: Nunca lo dejó.
G - B: ¿Y cuántos hijos tuvo usted?

Córdova: Cuatro.

G - B: Y dígame, ¿había mucho trabajo, ser maestra, tener familia, mantener la casa? ¿Cómo lo hacía todo?

Córdova: Yo lo que hice, no más comenzaron a nacer mis niños fue emplear una india del pueblo. Y ella se llamaba Pablita. O, y era tan buena mujer que, mujer tan fina, pronto aprendía hacer todo. Y mamá aquí con ella. Mamá cocinaba y ella hacia todo el negocio de la casa. Y se estuvo muchos años conmigo.

G - B: ¿Entonces entre las dos, la mujer esa Pablita y su mamá le ayudaban con la familia?

Córdova: O, sí.

G - B: Y usted enseñaba.

Córdova: Y yo enseñaba.

G - B: ¿Y su esposo, él la apoyaba usted en su trabajo? ¿El quería que usted fuera maestra?

Córdova: Oh, sí. Porque él era, como le dijiera, el estaba a cargo de un rancho en Wyoming. Y él estaba completamente a cargo. El era el manejador del lugar. Cada vez que venía el pobre se estaba un tiempecito y luego se iba.

G - B: ¿Oh, entonces usted estaba casada pero también tenía su espacio? ¿Y vivía más o menos sola con su familia?

G - B: ¿Y usted cree que la maestra en una comunidad como Arroyo Seco, era una persona importante en la comunidad? ¿Qué la gente la respectaban?

Córdova: Mucho, mucho, mucho, mucho. Le doblaban a uno la rodilla. Le doblaban a uno la rodilla. Y casi todos eran parientes o eran sobrinos de mamá o primos o algo.

G - B: ¿Así que eran como una familia?

Córdova: Como una familia.

G - B: Y usted veía su trabajo como enseñar a estos todos...

Córdova: Sí, como de casa.

G - B: ¿Siempre enseñó en Arroyo Seco o en otros lugares también?

Córdova: O, de Cerro, había mucha política. Donde ... ¿te han dicho?

G - B: No. Usted digame de la política. Digame usted.

Córdova: ¿Quieres saber de la política, uh?

G - B: Sí.

Córdova: Es difícil, en mí, I'm going to start this, it's too much. O, estaba este mismo hombre, Floyd Santiestevan, que había sido mi maestro y que me quería tanto a mí. Y luego no se por qué se disgustó. Yo creo que con mi
hermano, la política. Porque peleaban en la política en esos años y decidió igualarse conmigo y me mandó para allá a un lugar que le decía Vilsilvias Sunshine Valley, donde había muy poquitos alumnos. Y para allá me mandó él. El era superintendente. Y luego me dijo mi hermano, "No la agarres. Quédate en tu casa." "Aquí", me dijo "en Arroyo Seco te quiere la gente mucho y por qué te vas a ir para allá, para tener que dejar a tu mamá y todo." Y no. Al fin me dejaron allí para un tiempo. Pero a mi me gustó Cerro.

G - B: ¿Usted fue para Cerro también? Mi mamá enseñó en Cerro. ¿Ella antes de usted o después? ¿No, no sabe?

Córdova: Si. Yo creo que antes.

G - B: Antes. Y luego usted fue a Cerro.

Córdova: Si, yo fui a Cerro.

G - B: Y la señora esta, Virginia Gonzales, que entrevistamos, También ella enseñó en Cerro. Las tres...

Córdova: Ella enseño en Cerro. Así, nos traían...

G - B: ¿A donde querían las mandaban?

Córdova: Pos era todo política. Era todo política en esos años.

G - B: Entonces ellos decían, "Usted allá y usted..."

Córdova: Y allá tiene que ir.

G - B: Y si quería el trabajo, tenía que ir.
Córdova: Si tenía. Eso era lo único que sabíamos hacer.
   Enseñar.
G - B: ¿Y cómo era El Cerro?
Córdova: Oh, Dios mío. Si me pongo a platicar no acabo, no
   acabo.
G - B: Platíquenos un poquito.
Córdova: Cuando fuí a Cerro había un hombre que se llamaba José
   León y tenía una tiendita. Y me dijo mi hermano, y
   tenía muy bonita mujer, muy buena. Dijo "Vete a la
   casa de José León, allá te bordas. Lo mismo como si
   fueras a tu casa," dijo. Porque él es muy amigo mío.
   Y bueno pues muy buena la mujer. Una mujer muy fina,
   Cornelia se llamaba. Y luego, una noche fue el señor
   Leon, me tocó la puerta de mi cuarto. Abri yo la
   puerta y era él, y me dijo, "¿Puedo hablar contigo?"
   Y le dije yo, "Si acaso es algo importante. "Entre,"
   le dijo yo. Entró y me dijo, "La gente de Cerro es
   toda bruja. Todos son brujos, todos son brujos."
   Dijo, "Yo no ni mi esposa. Pero los demás, es un
   brujerío," dijo, "que le hacen mal a la gente," dijo.
   "Y tú," dijo, "te voy a admonestar," me dijo, "que no
   vayas a ir a comer a ninguna casa porque te van a
   brujar. No vayas a ir a comer a ninguna..." Primero
   me dió miedo. Y que, los muchichitos eran tan finos y
tan buenos y luego las mamases y los papases. Pues como estaba yo enseñando con una señora que se llamaba Natie Montoya. Maybe you'll interview her sometime. Estábamos enseñando juntos y me dijo, "vámanos a comer en casa, no estés yendo a comer allá, vamos. Mi mamá siempre tiene muy buena comida. Y yo dije, pos me van a embrujar. Pero me fui. ¡Y que tortillas hacía esa mujer! Y buñuelos y...

G - B: Aunque que fuera bruja, come uno.

Córdova: Sí. Pues me decía yo, "pues más que me embrujen. Y lo siguieron las mamases, pues eran tan buenas -- yo era muy buena con niños -- invitándome a comer. Y el hombre tan enojado conmigo. "Te van a embrujar. De aquí vas a salir toda torcida y que quien sabe como te vas a ir." Y la gente me adoraba, me adoraba...

G - B: ¿La maestra era importante, no?

Córdova: Sí, sí. Y le dije yo, "No, déjenlos que me enbrujen. No se preocupe usted por mí," le dije yo. "Yo tengo que vivir mi vida y no se vaya a preocupar usted por esto." Le dije yo. "Yo voy a ir a comer donde me inviten." Allá andaba yo de casa en casa comiendo, pues me invitaban por donde quiera. Y tan buenas cocineras. Tenían vacas, y hacían natillas, hacían quesos y hacían todo esto. ¡Y que comidales!
G - B: ¿Qué hacía programas en el escuela?

Córdova: Toda la vida.

G - B: ¿Qué hacía, digame de su school programs? ¿Hacía plays? Christmas plays?

Córdova: En que me acordaba. Siempre, siempre. Todos los años.

les hacía. Well, para que Christmas les hacía el Christmas Program the birth of Christ. And it always came out so beautiful. Por años. Casi eso hice hasta el último, para Christmas. Pero tenía otros programas. Habia veces que nos gusta mucho una historia en un libro, le decía yo, "Bueno tú vas a ser ese. You're going to be John and you're going to be Mary, you're going to be, and we're going to have a play." Y desarrollaban unos plays lindos y lo invitábamos a los padres de familia.

G - B: Entonces la escuela era el centro de la comunidad.

Córdova: La escuela era el centro. La gente sabía, era tan buenos, oh, que gente tan fina.

G - B: ¿Era, era duro ser maestra?

Córdova: Para mí, no.

G - B: Pero además de, usted tenía, por ejemplo, que limpiar la escuela y hacer la lumbre, todo eso o, ¿tenía alguien que le ayudara?
Córdova: Bueno, pos ahora le voy a platicar lo que pasó. Antes que se me olvide. Estaba un maestro que se llamaba Will Hickcome. Y estaba en Vilsilvia. No estaba lejos de Cerro. Y luego este muchacho, estaba a cargo de hacer la lumbre en la escuelita esa donde estaba Mr. Hickcome enseñando. Y una mañana andaba enojado con el maestro. Y fue y le robó un cartucho a su papá y lo puso en la lumbre. Y lo puso los palitos a los troncotes, muy buen puestecitos. Dijo, “cuando el maestro entre,” eso está aquí en mi libro, “cuando el maestro entre, va a ver que están listos los palitos puestos. Va a prender un fósforo. Este va a quemar la escuela.” Y lo’, ya. Y luego se salió a jugar. Luego llegó el maestro, Mr. Hickcome llegó. Fue a hacer la lumbre pero se puso como muy espantado cuando vio que estaba tan bonitos puestos los palitos ya vino se puso a escarbar. Y luego halla en que estaba un cartucho, ready to burn the school. Oh, what he did, he expelled Virgilio. He expelled him right away. Y Vilsilvia estaba cerquita de Cerro. Y yo enseñaba en Cerro. Pues al papá le importó poco, no le importó que lo corrieran para allá donde estaba yo. O, yo voy a mandar a Virgilio con usted a la escuela porque usted es tan buena y yo conocía a su gente y para allá y para
acá. ¡Y como me dió miedo, yo ya lo sabía que había puesto, él quería admonestar. Yo dije, éste nos va a quemar aquí". Y dijo "Lo quiere o no lo quiere?" "Si lo quiero," le dije, "Déjemelo aquí, si lo quiero." Yo dije, "vale más dárselas en el hombro que pelearlos." Y se quedó, he was a wonderful kid. ¡Y que muchito tan fino y cuando tuvieron la guerra en Japón lo tenían prisionero, le clavaron un clavo en la cabeza y lo mataron.

G - B: ¿Oiga, pues a lo mejor él tenía razón por querer o por estar disgustado con el otro señor?

Córdova: Pues, que yo no sé. Yo no sé que pasaría. Pero se me hace como él era maestro anglo, quién sabe hasta que la raza estaria en contra de él. Parecía que no lo querían. Pues él fue...

G - B: ¿Usted tuvo problemas con ese tipo en su "career" en su teaching career o siempre estuvo con gente que la apreciaba?

Córdova: Yo nunca tuve una sola problema en los años que yo enseñé.

G - B: ¿Y después de Cerro donde enseñó?

Córdova: Let me see. En Arroyo Seco.

G - B: Otra vez.

Córdova: Ya me vine para Arroyo Seco.
G - B: Y allí se quedó hasta que...

Córdova: Y allá me quedé hasta mucho tiempo.

G - B: ¿Y luego después de Arroyo Seco?

Córdova: Y luego después de Arroyo Seco...

G - B: ¿En Taos o dónde?

Córdova: No, no, no, no. Después de Arroyo Seco... O, fui a Cañon. Aquí cerquita de Taos. Y en Taos, ya después agarré en Taos. Y allá me quedé.

G - B: ¿Y, le gustaba más estar en Taos o en Las Placitas, no?

Córdova: Pues los niños son amables donde quiera. No hay diferencia. Para mí no había diferencia. Los niños siempre fueron amables contigo.

G - B: ¿Y la política? Mejor en algunos lugares que en otros.

Córdova: O, la política. Si, la política, sí lastimaba a uno. La política cambia mucho.

G - B: ¿Y cree usted que había, nunca vió usted discrimination, por ejemplo, contra la gente mexicana, aquí?

Córdova: No, lo que pasó con...

G - B: Con los maestros.

Córdova: Let me just think for a moment. Me mandó el superintendente a enseñar a Visilvia donde estaba este Will Hickcome. Para allá me mandó. Y luego fui yo y
le dije, "Yo no me voy a enseñar allí. Por qué me voy ir yo enseñar allá?" dije yo, "Tengo mi escuela en Cerro." Y no, insistió, se enojó mucho. Dijo, "Yo soy el superintendente," dijo, "yo puedo mandarles donde yo quiera." "Yo no la voy a agarrar", le dije. Luego fue una comisión de Arroyo Seco. Fueron como seis hombres y le dijeron, "nosotros la queremos en Arroyo Seco." Tuvo que mandarme a Arroyo Seco. That was my home town.

G - B: Okay, vamos a hablar un poco de su libro. Okay. Quiere tomar agua? Can we get a close up of it? And...

Córdova: Where do you want me?

G - B: No. Just sit there.

Córdova: Ya no me quedan libros. Ya está tan viejito mi libro. Ya no me quedan.

G - B: And then there's a photo of her in the inside cover.

Córdova: You know, maybe we sold two thousand.

G - B: We want to talk about the book, now. Okay? And anything that you think of, you can talk about. Lo que usted quiera.

Córdova: There's a lot of my teaching days in that book.

G - B: Okay. We'll be looking at that.

Córdova: Have you read it?

G - B: I've read it years ago. I had to read it again now to remember, but I have read it.
Córdova: I wonder if Carlida ever read it. Maybe not.

G - B: Oh I wished we had bought her a copy. She would've been so happy.

Córdova: She would have enjoyed it.

G - B: Tell me about the title. What's the title?

Córdova: No Lloro Pero Me Acuerdo.

G - B: No Lloro Pero Me Acuerdo, me gusta mucho ese título.

Córdova: Well, a mí me gustó.

G - B: Is it a saying?

Córdova: No lloraba pero me acordaba de todos los trabajos que habíamos pasado cuando era niña.

G - B: Y no es un dicho, es nomás un título.

Córdova: No, no es, eso lo fabriqué yo.

G - B: Que bonito, que lindo, no. No Lloro Pero Me Acuerdo.

Córdova: I don't cry but I remember.

G - B: Why did you do this book? What encouraged you to do the book?

Córdova: I always wanted to. Since I was a little kid I used to think someday I would write something about my mother and my dad.

G - B: And did you used to write a lot?
Córdova: I used to write a lot pero al fin se perdía lo que escribía, mucho, mucho perdí. Pero yo escribía todo el tiempo. Todo el tiempo escribía.

G - B: And in this you wrote it, you started to write?

Córdova: More English.

G - B: Did you write in Spanish?

Córdova: Because my mother taught me how to read Spanish. She was my teacher. She taught me how to read Spanish.

G - B: And you used to write in Spanish?

Córdova: Sometimes.

G - B: But then this book you decided to write it... Why did you write it? Why?

Córdova: When? Why? Because I wanted to leave something to my family about my life. I did it for them.

G - B: When did you write this? When?

Córdova: I don't remember.

G - B: Well, it was published in 1976.

Córdova: '76.


Córdova: Oh, yes, yes.

G - B: And tell me how you got this, how did you get it published? Do you remember? It was published by
Taylor Publishing Company. How did you get it published?

Córdova: Yes, I don't remember.

G - B: Do you remember?

Córdova: No.

G - B: After you wrote it, who did you give it to?

Córdova: I don't remember, now, right now, I don't remember. I don't remember. Because I would be lying by doing this. That's not true.

G - B: Okay. And how many copies did you say were sold of your book?

Córdova: Two-thousand.

G - B: Two-thousand copies. And do you think it's a contribution, a cultural contribution?

Córdova: Tell me again.

G - B: Do you think it's an important contribution?

Córdova: For the people, Oh, yes! I think so. I don't think very many people liked books like these. I don't think so.

G - B: And did you write just about your life and the things you learned from life. What did you write about?

Córdova: Just our lives.
G - B: Mrs. Córdova, when did you graduate from college? Did you get a bachelors degree?

Córdova: 1927.

G - B: So, just by going in the summer...

Córdova: No, not from college from high school.

G - B: And then when did you finally graduate from college? Do you remember how long it took you?

Córdova: Well, it took about four years, I think.

G - B: Did you go straight through?

Córdova: No. I used to go when I could afford it. I couldn't go straight. We were poor.

G - B: And after you had your family, your children did you go to college? When you had a family? Were you still going to college?

Córdova: Oh, yes. Yes, I had my mother and my mother was so wonderful she took care of my kids.

G - B: So, would you move them to Las Vegas or would you, did you leave them there?

Córdova: I left them here because I got an indian lady to come and help my mother. She stayed with us, for about eleven years. She lived with us. She was very happy. Pablita.

G - B: ¿Entonces usted se iba a Highlands a estudiar sola?
Córdova: Sí, mi mamá se quedaba aquí con la indita y los...

G - B: Y los niños.
Side B:

G - B: Mr. Tyreman. I think Mr. Tyreman.

Córdova: Oh, yes. I think, I love him.

G - B: Now, you remember?

Córdova: Carlida did too. We were together there.

G - B: And what did they teach you?

Córdova: Oh, you reminded me of Carlida.

G - B: You were good friends?

Córdova: We were good friends.

G - B: You don't have any pictures of the two of you, do you?

Córdova: No, I don't.

G - B: Oh, that would be nice.

Córdova: Carlida was very, very special. Did she ever mention me?

G - B: Yes, she did, to all her friends and she...

Córdova: What happened to her? She died so early.

G - B: Well, she got cancer and she lived ten months after they found it.

Córdova: Oh, but she had a nice family to help her.

G - B: We took care of her to the very end.

Córdova: ¿Y cómo se llamaba su esposo?

G - B: Canuto.

Córdova: ¿Cómo?
G - B: Canuto. Todavía está vivo.

Córdova: ¿Está vivo?

G - B: El vive aquí, vive con mi hermana. Ella lo cuida.

Córdova: ¿Y cómo está?

G - B: Está muy bien. Está muy, muy bien.

Córdova: Tiene quién lo cuide.

G - B: Sí, por eso está bien. ¿Qué era lo más especial para ustedes siendo maestra? ¿Qué es lo que más gustaba?

Córdova: Lo que más me gustaba, bueno, lo que más me gustaba cuando comenzaba a enseñar era el resultado de mi trabajo con los niños. Eso era lo que a mí me gustaba más. Ver al resultado, porque siempre estaban estos para responder. Aquí había uno que era muy malcriado y no lo podía hacer que aprendiera nada y aquí está bien. Aquí se portó bien. Let's see if I can find it. You can keep on talking to me while I find it.

G - B: Okay. While you look for that. How long did it take you to write the book? Do you remember?

Córdova: A summer.

G - B: A summer?

Córdova: I was retired. After I retired my husband was running the store. He went and put a desk for me over there in the back and he said, "You can stay here all the time
and I'll go and do the cooking and you write." Oh, it was wonderful.

G - B: Good. So he cooked and you wrote your book in one summer.

Córdova: Oh, yes. It was beautiful. I'll never forget him, the way he responded.

G - B: I think there's a picture here of a student. Let's see if I can... Maybe that's the one you were talking about now.

Córdova: I forget lots of things. Los años son muy pesados.

G - B: ¿Hay mucho que recordar, verdad? Está es su mamá. No sé, aquí había uno de un estudiante. De dos estudiantes y ahora no lo encuentro. This is all your family?

Córdova: That's all family.

G - B: This is you and your husband. Right here in this house, I guess. Is this your house, the cover?

Córdova: Yes. Yes. This is the house.

G - B: This house. Well, I can't find of that student.

(Interruption on tape)

Córdova: ...un día fue y me dijo, "Pienso que iba en el libro cuatro," y me dijo, "Miss Martínez," me dijo, porque era Martínez yo. "¿Porqué no me deja barrer la escuela, usted? Y qué me paguen a mí. Así puedo
ayudar a mi papá y a mi mamá." Y era un muchito. Y luego ay estaba Mr. Maes, was the principal. O, y me apené mucho, no podía dormir de noche. Y luego fui y le dije a Mr. Maes, "¿Hijo, y que va a hacer ese mocoso?" dijo. "No va a poder barrer." Y le dije, "Pues, give him a chance. Give him a chance," le dije. Y no, y dijo, "Bueno, ójala, le daré una semana," dijo. Luego me quedaba yo en la escuela a ayudarle barrer todo. "Oh, que buen trabajo está haciendo el Elizardo." "Que tal y usted fie viva hijo. ¡Que bárbara, este muchito está ganando dinero!" Y yo me quedaba allí después de la escuela a ayudarle. Barrer todos los cuartos.

G - B: Yo creo que había mucho de eso, no. Que los niños era pobres y que...

Córdova: Tenía que consideralos.

G - B: A pesar de eso, aprendían y querían aprender.

Córdova: O ya. Hoy todavía, cuando me dieron a mí, mi party aquí. What I was telling you about. No más se anunció en the radio, porque lo anunciaban mucho tiempo.

G - B: That you were retiring.

Córdova: Y venía Eddie a cantar en el radio o cantarme canciones. O, y todos los días "pon el radio," "pon el
G - B: Y ¡O! Y me cantaba tantas canciones. Todavía está vivo y viene a verme.

Córdova: Oh, that was beautiful. A que muchacho tan fino y luego se casó con una de las escueleras que yo tenía. She's a beautiful girl, linda es. También ella es muy buena.

G - B: Do you think you made a difference in the life of these Hispano children?

Córdova: Oh, definitely. Because I told him, y me dijo, que podía hacer en la vida, pues, "Hay voy a quedarme ayudándole a papá a sembrar. Ese es todo lo que hacen aquí en el Arroyo Seco," dijo. Y le dijo yo, "Que se vaya al servicio." Yo no sé si haría mal, pero yo creo que no. And he did, he joined the service y allí estuvo. Se estuvo mucho años en el servicio. O and he's a gentleman. He is a gentleman. Siempre lo aprecio, lo aprecio mucho a Eddie.

G - B: What do you think of education today? The state of education.

Córdova: I think that it's a means of support. I think it's a means of getting ahead in life. I don't think there are many people that are not educated anymore. Of
course, there are some but, they still can work, they can still make a living.

G - B: Do think education was important in the past? It was to you?

Córdova: It was to me.

G - B: And did you try to make it important to your children?

Córdova: Very much so. Very much so.

G - B: What did you learn? What advice would you give teachers today, from your experience as a teacher?

Córdova: What advice would I give the teachers?

G - B: Yes.

Córdova: Well, the first thing I would say, you have to learn to love the kids, no matter how poor they are. No matter how dumb they are. Or if they are vain. You have to open a way for them so that they can become good citizens. That’s what I think.

G - B: That was your job to create good citizens?

Córdova: Exactly. Exactly.

G - B: Is this what you were told as a teacher or is this something that you just believed?

Córdova: My mother. It all came from my mother. I think my mother was my best teacher.
G - B: I was just going to say, it sounds like she was your best...

Córdova: She was wonderful. She was a wonderful thing.

G - B: Did your mother teach you that you could do whatever you wanted to do in life. Or did she say, "Well, you're a woman and you're a Hispanic and you can't do everything because there are obstacles." Or did she make you believe that you could do what ever you wanted?

Córdova: Well, she knew that I would try. She had a lot of confidence in me. My sister was older than I. A beautiful lady. Not like me, ella es muy linda. And my mother had her spoiled. My mother used to be by the sewing machine, sewing beautiful things for her. I would get what, I didn't get very much. I didn't get very much. But she did, she did. And she lived a very happy life. She got married and she's still alive. She's ninety-three years old. I love my sister but she really took advantage of my brother and me. She really took...

G - B: You were the worker?

Córdova: And my brother. My brother was three years older than me. He used to work in the sheep camps to help my mother since he was a little kid. And Mr. Torres paid
him fifteen dollars a month. That's all he used to get.

G - B: Did you feel that you were lucky to be a teacher and to have a job? Or did you know that it was because you worked hard and you desired it?

Córdova: I was what I wanted to be. I wanted to be a teacher since I was a child. I used to gather all the kids of the neighborhood and I used to tell them that we're going to go school and it wasn't school but, we'd go along the river. I would tell about this and that and the other. They used to enjoy it. We had so much, we had a lot of times. But they followed me.

G - B: So, you were born to be a teacher?

Córdova: I don't know but they followed me. I can't say that. Maybe I wasn't very good, I don't know.

G - B: What is the question you think you 'd like to ask?

Córdova: Wherever I was I made them feel good. They were mis hijitos.

G - B: Sometimes as young girls, you know, a lot of you went out, way out there to be teachers. You were young, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen. You would go alone. Were you ever afraid? Were there situations where you might have been in danger? Or did people take care of you? Do you remember?
Córdova: I was never afraid of anybody. And do you know, we used to live by the river. And there was a road by the river and sometimes the boys that I knew in school would go by walking and they would wave. I would wave like that back, my mother would... Boy, I got it. "¿Para que les levantas la mano, que estás loca?" So, I used to wave back to them because they were...

G - B: She thought you would be encouraging them.

Córdova: They were just small kids. I used to get it.

G - B: So your mother's the one that took care of you. Was she real protective? With you?

Córdova: Oh, definitely. I think she was over protective. Too much. Very strict, and she was very strict with my brother, too. No, she sent my sister to Catholic School.

G - B: Pero, when you went away to college, then you had a good time?

Córdova: No, not really. I enjoyed my friends. I enjoyed my friends very much.

G - B: Did you enjoy your freedom?

Córdova: Carlida, Eloisa, I think I that's her name Eloisa Trujillo. And Grace. Grace Ambrose used to be one of my best friends. She graduated when I did. We were always very, very close. And then, my husband died,
her husband died. And she never got away from him.  
She would come and, come and go, come and go. Or call me in the morning and then when, just about two weeks ago, she had a pain somewhere and went to the hospital. 
When she went into the hospital she died. Boy, it just broke my heart because she was always around. She was always around. She was an Anglo. Oh, it really broke me down. When you lose a friend...

G - B: It's hard, isn't it. Diana you had some questions that you wanted to ask?

D - R: I just wanted to ask about the brujas.

G - B: More about the brujas.

D - R: To see if she, where the stories came from, in Cerro.

Córdova: I don't understand.

G - B: Dice que le interesa saber más de las historias de las brujas. ¿De dónde venían todas esas historias, y porqué le decía aquel señor aquel que todos eran brujas?

Córdova: ¿Todas comprenden español?

G - B: Sí.

Córdova: Allá en el Cerro cuando estaba enseñando, pues siempre estaban con el cuento, que había brujas y que toda la gente era bruja. A mi me decía el hombre, "...no vayas a comer allá. Porque si vas a comer vas a salir toda
enbrujada." Bueno y lejos en una loma estaba un palo que parecía que se aluminaba. Have you heard about that?

**G - B:** No.

**Córdova:** Que cuando la cáscara de un pino se cae, el pino relumbra en la noche, relumbra. Y luego la gente estaba mirando ese pino que relumbraba de noche. Ellos decían que era una bruja la que estaba cuidando a la gente. En el Cerro. Y aferrados. Y una vez, les dije yo a los muchachos de la escuela, "¿Por qué no van a ver cuando esté alumbrando más, por qué no?" "Oh, pero ahí está la bruja y nos va a matar." "No los van a matar.", les dije yo, "Vamos a tener un experimento. Y vayan, vayan un grupo y vayan a ver que es. A ver si está la bruja ahí." Se fueron y los padres estaban bien enojados conmigo porque les había dicho yo que fueran, y fueron y allí agarraron que estaba el palo bien, bien pelado. Se había caído la cáscara y la noche, relumbraba.

**G - B:** ¿Porque crée usted que esta gente creía tanto en brujas?

**Córdova:** La gente creía mucho en brujas.

**G - B:** ¿Y porqué será?

**Córdova:** Tonteras.
G - B: Porque no sabían mejor.
Córdova: No, pues no había brujas.
G - B: No había. ¿Pues usted cree que no había?
Córdova: No.
G - B: ¿No cree que la gente podía usar ciertas hierbas para hacer daño?
Córdova: Hablaban de eso. Pero yo no nunca creí. ¿Cree usted?
G - B: No.
Córdova: Yo nunca creí.
G - B: Mi mamá creía en las brujas. Mi mamá sí creía, ¿no?
Córdova: La gente creía, yo nunca creí.
G - B: Y aquí especialmente en los pueblitos islados. Es donde más creían.
Córdova: En las casas que iba yo a comer, decía yo, "Pues buena comida comí. No creo que no me embriajaran."
G - B: Que no cree usted que cuando se enfermaba la gente y no entendían porque se enfermaban. Estos les decían, "Están embrujados," Porque no se entendía lo científico y los...
Córdova: Y luego se ponían dos agujas en la puerta. Para que no pudiera entrar la bruja o para que no pudiera salir. Entraba la bruja y ya no podía salir hasta que no le quitaban la...
G - B: Y nosotros lo hicimos una vez porque había una señora que todos decían que era bruja. Vino a visitar la casa, entonces fueron y pusieron, pusimos dos agujas a ver si salía pero se enojó mi mamá. Se enojó con nosotros.

Córdova: ¿Y salió?

G - B: Pero cuando supo lo que habíamos hecho nos dijo, "Sin vergüenzas, haciendo eso." No. Pero la gente si creía mucho en eso, ¿no?

Córdova: Si, creían. Pero mamá no creía en brujas. Did your mother believe in witches?

G - B: Ella, yo creo que creía en unas de esas historias y era difícil enseñarles a estos niños si tenían todas estas creencias?


G - B: Y usted escribió-aquí de los penitentes. Usted tenía parientes o gentes que conoció muy bien en esa práctica?

Córdova: Yo me estaba bordando en una casa que eran muy penitentes, en Cerro. Aprendí yo mucho de ese hombre. Se llama, Rúben Martínez, el hombre. Y él me platicaba de los penitentes, todo que hacían.
G - B: Y nunca fue usted. Yo creo que con esa, ¿mi mamá se bordó con esa familia? ¿No sabe usted si ella se bordó? Porque también a ella cuando estaba en Cerro la llevaron a las tinieblas.


G - B: I think she did. She used to tell us stories, no. No, bien, bien. Pero muchas de las historias que le contaron a ella, ella las contaba como que las creía, como que ella verdaderamente creía que todavía había pasado.

Córdova: La gente creía. En El Cerro creían mucho en las brujas.

G - B: Señora, en el libro de Las Mujeres Hablan, usted escribió sobre una cautiva. ¿En su familia tenía cautivo. Nos puede decir un poco de eso? ¿Me dice algo? ¿Se acuerda?


G - B: Sí. Aquí también está esa. A ”Heavy Cross.” Is this the one that's reprinted?

Córdova: Want to read it? Or is it too much?
G - B: ¿No puede decírnos? No se acuerda del cuento sin leerlo?

Córdova: I can tell you about it. My great, great, grandfather vino de México. El vino de México y luego se estableció en Española. Allí se desarrolló y aprendió hacer todo. Después se vino para Arroyo Seco y compró ranchos en Arroyo Seco. Y luego fue donde estaban los mescaleros y adoptó mujeres, de esas indias que había. Adoptó mujeres y las trajo para que les ayudarán en el rancho. Trujo muchas, tuvo muchas. Todavía hay muchas. Mira, una nieta de esa mujer trabaja por mí. Y creían mucho en todo eso, creían mucho. You can keep asking me porque I get...

G - B: Este era el great grandfather, este señor aquí. Joaquín Garcia.

Córdova: Joaquín García y él dejó a su mamá en México. Se vino para Española. Allí encontró una gente muy rica que tenía muchos ranchos. Pues, ay comenzó a trabajar y aprendió mucho como trabajar...

G - B: Cree usted que en esos días había mucha separación entre los indios y la gente mexicana. O, ¿vivían muy separados o a veces había mucha mescla y vivían juntos?

Córdova: No, pues juntos. El trabajó. El tenía un atajo de indias trabajando cuando vino porque él agarró todo...
Arroyo Seco. Trabajó hasta que compró todo y Arroyo Seco todo era de él. De modo es que tenía que tener mucha gente. Se hizo muy rico. Tenía que tener mucha gente trabajando por él. Y casi eran indios.

G - B: Y muchas veces también se casaban con las familias y luego entonces los hijos ya eran mestizos. ¿Había mucho de eso?


G - B: You want to cut it and we can come back to the remaining tape.

(interruption in the interview)

Córdova: Cuando se robaron a Manuel de Atocha. Aquí están los...

G - B: Nunca lo pudieron...

Córdova: ...los versos que mi abuelita recitaba.

G - B: Aquí dice, ...los versos que recitaba su abuelita, ¿no? ¿Para que le devolvieron al hijo?

Córdova: Para que le volvieran el hijo.

G - B: Y decía, ¿se recuerde usted del resto? Y decía:

"Virgencita de los campos tráeme a mi hijo Manuel. Yo te entregaré al tuyo cuando lo traigas a él. Tanto a Manuel de Atocha, si me traes a tu tocayo, llevaré muchass flores durante el mes de mayo."
Esto era lo que ella rezaba, su abuelita, de su hijo, ¿no?

Córdova: Pobrecita de mi Granma.

G - B: Si tu madre no me ayuda creo que tengo razón. También su hijo estará cautivo en esa prisón. Si tú me traes a mi hijo algún día te he de dar a uno de mi familia que te sirva en tu altar.

Córdova: And you know who is the one? Arsenio.

G - B: ¿Cuál? El está sirvendo. He's a deacon and very active in the church.

Córdova: He's so beautiful, mi hijito. Estoy tan orgullosa de él que no...

G - B: Que él es... ¿pero nunca le trajieron el hijo, no.? Nunca lo devolvieron? Un verso, "Mi gente que ha servido con un humilde devoción, un muy grand favor te pido, no desprecies mi oración." Ella hacía las oraciones. Ella las...

Córdova: Oh, sí, oh, sí.

G - B: Si, y nunca, pero nunca le devolvieron a su niño.

Córdova: Pero my brother, the one that sent me to school, my brother Esquipula, went to, ¿con quién fue? Somebody else went with him and they searched over the mountains to see if they could find, a Manuel de Atocha, somewhere or other. Pero no lo hallaron.
 Nunca lo hallaron. ¿Los Comanches o quién? ¿No, se acuerda de quién se lo llevó? ¿Todas las familias tienen de esas historias, no? Muchas familias perdieron hijos, cautivos. Pero también se traían a muchos. También se traían a los niños y luego se... ¿Se los traían también, verdad?

Córdova: Ellos sí hacían horrores. Me acuerdo este hombre Joaquín. Esas eran sus esclavas en su rancho. Las mujeres que traía de allá.

G - B: ¿Cuándo usted era maestra, cuando era maestra en las escuelas y les enseñaba a los niños que... ¿Usted creía que era necesario enseñarles inglés a esos niños? How did you feel about teaching English?

Córdova: Absolutly. Absolutely. I wanted them to learn the other language.

G - B: Why did you think it was important? Did you think was very important?

Córdova: I thought it was very, very important. I did.

G - B: ¿Por qué?

Córdova: Because my brother had taught me that way. My brother the lawyer, when I went to school he used tell me that I better know both languages before I went to teach.

G - B: And did you think that our people would never get ahead if they didn't learn another language?
Córdova: I did.

G - B: Was it necessary to survive, you think?

Córdova: I thought so. I thought so. I thought that there should be an open channel, you know. So that they could learn both languages and prepare themselves for something.

G - B: Did you think that if they only knew Spanish that they would never have any opportunities in life, to get ahead?

Córdova: Well, maybe I didn't think that but I thought it very important that they should learn both languages. I learned very early.

G - B: Did you ever think that the children who spoke Spanish already should have been taught to read and write Spanish in the schools? Did you ever wish that you could do that?

Córdova: To teach them Spanish?

G - B: To read and write.

Córdova: I used to read the kids Spanish stories. Because they enjoyed them, they understood them.

G - B: So, you did do it?

Córdova: Yeah. I used to read them...
G - B: You did a little bilingual education back then? But, did they tell you. "Don't do this"

Córdova: But they were good.

G - B: No, but your bosses up above. Did they say, "Don't do that. Just teach English, just teach English." Or not? Did they let you, did they encourage you to teach Spanish?

Córdova: No. They didn't encourage anybody to speak Spanish. I don't think that Carlida would say that either.

G - B: They told you, "Your job is to teach them English."

Córdova: To teach them English, that's right.

G - B: And did you ever feel that the power structure, the people who ran the state were using you somehow to teach these children to make them more American. Did you ever think of that?

Córdova: That's a hard question to answer, because they had to get used to regulations that we had to follow. So I think I did, I think I did my best.

G - B: Did you ever think that the regulation might have gone against what you believed was right? Did you ever feel that?

Córdova: No, I don't think so.

G - B: You were pretty much willing to follow the regulations?
Córdova: I think so.

G - B: You thought they were best for the people?

Córdova: I think so. See, my brother was a lawyer and he was a very strong lawyer here in Taos County. He never lost a case and he used both English and Spanish. He was very good. He learned a lot about English.

G - B: So you saw him as the example.

Córdova: He was my example, he was my example. I don't think I couldn't have gotten anywhere without my brother.

G - B: Were there children or parents in the community who said, "We don't need English. We don't want our children to learn it. It's not necessary."

Córdova: No. They never complained, I don't think. I don't think they complained. Whatever it was we sent them. Sometimes they paid attention sometimes they didn't, but...

G - B: Did you ever teach Anglo children?

Córdova: Oh, yes.

G - B: Here in Taos or where?

Córdova: I taught them in Arroyo Seco, I taught them more in El Cerro.

G - B: There were Anglo children there? In Cerro?

Córdova: Yes.
G - B: And was it hard to have both? The student who didn't speak English and the Anglo children.

Córdova: They were so wonderful. I can't forget.

G - B: Were the parents, let's say the Anglo parents, did they ever complain because they had a teacher that was Hispanic?

Córdova: No. Oh, no. They loved me, they did. They did everything they could for me. But, that's the way I was. I never, I tried never to hurt anybody. I tried never to hurt anybody, not even my own children. I didn't believe in that. I think there's a child that you can use and be kind to everybody. And I think that you have, you have it made.

G - B: But, let's say that in the classroom if you had Anglo children and children who spoke just Spanish. Did you ever think that the Spanish-speaking children got behind or suffered in the schools? Or were you able to bring them all to the same level?

Córdova: No. I don't think so. I think they always understood that repetition is very important. It's good. Repetition is very, very important.

G - B: So, you would teach to the Spanish speaking children, also. You wouldn't let them fall behind.
Córdova: I don't ever think that the Anglo children learned any Spanish. I don't think so.

D - R: Erlinda, ask a question about why, why...

Tape 2 Side A:

Córdova: Oh, I did a lot of that. Whenever I came to the store. I used to buy them tablets and things like that so they could write because they didn't have any money.

G - B: And to teach them you had to help them out.

Córdova: I always helped them. And you would hear the same thing if you talked to any of them that went to school with me. You wouldn't hear anything different from what I'm telling you.

G - B: And did children sometimes come to school without food? Did you find that sometimes they weren't eating enough at home?

Córdova: No. It seemed that they were very well fed. Their parents were very responsible, very, very responsible. You know, they didn't can very much but they dried a lot of food. They dried a lot of food.

G - B: So, they were living off the land and they had enough food.

Córdova: Yes, yes.
G - B: It's not like if you teach in the cities where maybe people are poor.

Córdova: Calabacitas and things like that, you know.

G - B: And you didn't have school lunch programs then?

Córdova: I don't think. I don't remember that there were any children that were hungry before we gave them meals at school. Because sometimes, there wasn't a lunch room.

G - B: Did you go to the teacher's convention in Albuquerque?

Córdova: Oh yes! That where I saw Carlida.

G - B: You went to see her, your friend. And did you learn a lot. Were they important in your professional training?

Córdova: In a way. Yes. But's that where I met my friends. Carlida was very special.

G - B: ¿Se está cansando? ¿Está cansada?

Córdova: No.

D - R: Tú estas cansada.

G - B: Let's take a little break.

Córdova: You want to have a break?

G - B: Let's take a break.

(Interview resumes)

G - B: Well, your community loves you. I can tell that.

Córdova: Very nice.
G - B: Do your pupils still call you teacher?

Córdova: What?

G - B: ¿Todavía le dicen teacher?

Córdova: Oh, yes.

G - B: Ya, mayores de edad. Todavía... Because my mom had people that were fifty, sixty years old, "Oh, teacher!"

Córdova: How are you teacher?

G - B: With my mom it was the Martinez family that used to say, "when there's a will there's a way." That's the title of our book, Maria.

M-D-V: When there's A Will There's A Way.

Córdova: You sure made my day.

D - R: You made our day.

Córdova: I hope you enjoyed it as much I did.

D - R: Oh, we did. It was wonderful, thank you very much.

Córdova: Well, thank you for coming. I don't know.

D - R: We'll go and see Arsenio now and...

G - B: Yes.

Córdova: If you ever come back here let me know.

G - B: We sure will, we'll call you ahead of time.

Córdova: Okay.

(End of interview)
CARLOTA (CARLIDA) GONZALES
February 1, 1989
CARLIDA GONZALES
FEBRUARY 1, 1989

Interviewer’s note: This interview was conducted at the time that Carlota Gonzales, the interviewers mother, was having chemotherapy for ovarian cancer. It was conducted independently of the Oral History Project. However, because it included information on her teaching experience we have decided to include it with the other oral histories.

CG: No my dad was a farmer, y fue cantinero, pero se enfermó mucho de la influenza, very young, se enfermó mucho que no podía trabajar. But he guided the family and made a living. Agarró los ranchos del banco, y tenían que round-up, y les pagaban buen dinero. Mi hermano Ramón trabajaba en los... Cosechaban frijol, y mucho trigo, y mucho de este, y él trabajaba allá. La mujer nunca trabajaba. La Josephine la iba a educar. Y nomás se murió él, se casó ella. Y se casó mi hermano Ramón y nos quedamos, los medianos con mamá. Antonces era cuando me daba a mí tanta lástima con ella. Que en la tarde íbanos a la escuela, ella iba a limpiar casas y a lavar, pos no tenía education. She knew how to read and write, because ella fue a la escuela de las hermanas.

MDGV: ¿Y no les enseñó a ustedes como leer y escribir en español?
CG: No tenía tiempo. ¿Qué tiempo iba a tener? Y veníamos nosotros de la escuela, y tenía las puertas hondas la casa de ella. Las puertas quedaban muy hondas así. Y los días fríos, allí nos metíamos. No nos dejaba la llave, quizás tenía miedo que quemaranos, que nos quemaranos. Hacia fuerza llegar para cuando llegabamos. Y allí nos metíamos todos, amontonaditos a esperarla.

MDGV: ¿Helándose?
CG: Helándonos. Y me acuerdo tan bien, pobrecita... y decía yo entre mí, ay fue cuando yo pensaba, medianita, “when I grow up, I’m going to work and I’m going to help my mama” decía yo. “I’m going to help my mama.”
¿Cuántos años tenías cuando aprendiste el inglés?

O, aprendimos muy temprano porque vino la escuela de las hermanas. Las hermanas trujieron escuela de, ellas vinieron del “east”, Michigan, el midwest y abrieron la escuela católica. Y de una vez papá nos, porque, válgame Dios, en la pública, no nos hacían caso. Si teníamos...

¿Por qué no les hacían caso?

Porque no hablabamos inglés. Y de una vez nos puso empapá, ya te digo, como podía pagaba el dinero que tenía y les mandaba verduras, les mandaba carne a las hermanas. Y entramos a la escuela de las hermanas. Canuto vino del rancho. Yo estaba, yo pienso que él estaba en el tercero y yo estaba en el cuarto. Anyway, that’s where we grew up together.

¿Y cómo eran las monjas? Sabían español ellas?

No sabían, pero...

¿Entonces cómo se comunicaban con ustedes?

Creo que había una que sabía. Pero, by pictures. Uno de estos de muchacho, y nos decían, this is a boy, boy, boy. Hasta que aprendía la palabra. Y luego muchacha. De una vez lo agarraba uno.

¿No eran estúpidos?

De una vez lo agarraba uno y aprendía el inglés.

¿Y luego muchos de los niños hablaban inglés también, no?

Sí, ... de anglos. Muchos de los católicos iban allá. Y allá todos lo aprendimos.

¿Entonces aprendían de los otros niños?

Y luego ellas eran tan buenas, sabían que mamá tenía mucha familia y este. Y le mandaban a ellas de allá cajones de cosas, y agarraban muchachas pa’ que se bordaran ay que venían de Bueyeros, de diferentes lugares. Y les mandaban muchas cosas del “east,” cajones de jarros de comida y todo. Y sabes tú que les ayudaban mucho a mamá, con las muchachas le mandaban de todo. Y luego...
¿Les decían que tenían que dejar su español?

No. No más...

¿Les permitían usar el español en la escuela o no?

No me acuerdo que nos privaban.

¿Les pegaban?

O, él que se portaba mal sí, pero él que no, no?

Pero ¿por hablar español?

A nosotros nunca nos pegaron, y ni vide yo que les pegaran. Pero sabían que lo ‘stabamos apriendiendolo, vocabulario, en inglés. And they had patience. Como hay mestras, y hay estas. Nosotros hablábanos esas primeras semanas que vinieron.

¿Los trataban mejor que los maestros en la escuela pública?

Yes!

¿Y allí en la escuela pública, los castigaban por hablar español, sabes?

Yo a la escuela pública fui, antes que vinieran las hermanas. Yo no sé quizas yo era muy aggressive o yo no sé que demontres, tenía amiguitos, muchachas, gringuitos, amigos que me ayudaban, y les ayudaba yo, porque era muy buena pa’l matemathics y lo’ me ayudaban a mí, o les pedía yo ayuda y me ayudaban. Ay comencé. Oh, if we hadn’t gone to the Sisters School, I think we would have probably... Bueno, eso fue asina. Cuando trujieron mi escuela mía de De Haven a Roy, que las consolidated ya estaba un gringo de quien sabe donde de quintos infiernos ay, and he was very much against my being there. Y al fin un día me dio mucho coraje a mí. Decía al principal y al otro, “I’m not going to take this,” le dije. Me puso de, en lugar de ponerme de teaching, pos tenía los grades y podían haber enseñado en los grades, no en high school, y me puso de librarian y study hall.

¿Esto fue en el high school en Roy?

Les dije, “I’m not going to take this, I’m a good teacher, I’m not a study
hall or a librarian.” “Oh, no Mrs. Gonzales, don’t do that.” “No,” le dije, “I’m going to teach him that I can get me a school anywhere,” le dije.

Even if it’s a rural school, I’m happier there than I’m here doing this crap.

Pues que vine y apliqué de una vez, alcancé allí, creo que en Gallegos necesitaban una mestra. And I went over there, enseñé un tiempocita no más porque ya estaba para acabarse el termino. Y lo’ de ay comenzé a agarrar escuelas y luego, cuando no me quiso dar, wait a minute, pues antones, no, bueno cuando estaba en el último lugar que enseñé allá, Rosebud...

Cuando fue Erlinda, que quería entrar el ‘contest’ de la American Legion, I Pledge Allegiance to the Flag, y gana el premio. Juu, la esa, levantó un de esta...

MDGV: ¿Quién era esa?
CG: La McCoy. Te acuerdas que tenia los muchitos, and they were very smart. Que “why did I just sent her, my girl.” Por ay les dije, “She can go to hell, I don’t need her school.” Antonces fue cuando dijo, el Albert Romero, “why don’t you apply in Albuquerque, I’m sure you’ll get in, I’ll put in a good recommendation for you.” Era un buen amigo. He put that recommendation y estaba en la escuela en el verano, como en julio, estaba la escuela para abrirse, y yo dije, Juu... no tenía escuela, pos la había... Y estaba tan worried, cuando here comes a notice. I’m telling you I just jumped for joy.

MDGV: You wanted to move to Albuquerque, mom?
CG: Pues para quitarme de allá de los rural schools, sí.

MDGV: ¿Y porque no pensabas de quedarte en Roy? ¿No había escuela o no te...
CG: Porque el gringo también, ese...

MDGV: ¿O, él todavía estaba allí?
CG: Pues, no, salía uno, entraba otro. Y todas eran malacachas. No querían que los mexicanos, como ahora. Ahora sí las tienen ay, mestras. Al fin se
amanzaron. Yeah, I could have written a story of my own... Y cuando me fui a Taos. Que me dijo mi tío Isidro, “no más acabas el libro ocho, déjele hermana que se venga pa’ca, yo le agarro escuela pa’ que le ayude.” Y porrecita de mamá, pues tenia tanta familia.

“Si, le dije a mi mama.” Vino Canuto y... porque nos ayudaba mucho en todo, era tan bueno, como es. Y él y Fermín pienso, vinieron a traerme a Cimarron, que agarrara el bos a Taos. Ay Diosito, ese día se me hizo, pero no. Agarré ese... Me hice firme, y dije, no! I have to go! Llegué a Taos y me llevaron allá. Pero si no hubiera estado la Grace viva, mi Compadre Luis, que eran tan buenos, ellos iban a darme vuelta, y llevarme cositas buenas que comer. Y yo, la última noche que dormí aquí en Roy, antes de irme, soñé donde había llegado. Y soñé el cuarto y habían muchos santos.

Y yo como siempre he sido tan religiosa, izque dije yo, “voy a estar bien aquí.” Y me pusieron, y tenían nomás una hija, una nieta criada, en el mismo cuarto de ella.

MDGV: En qué casa era esta?
CG: De unos viejitos, Vigiles. En Cerro. Ay Diosito, salió la muchacha, she was jealous of me I guess. I guess I was no sé...

MDGV: Beautiful.
CG: I was beautiful.

MDGV: Tan bonita que todos...
CG: Y se enceló tanto de mí. Yo no tenía la culpa. O, me dio una batalla. Un día llegó mi tío Pitacio a verme, que venía de Colorado, y llegó por ay. Izque le dio tanta lástima conmigo, que me dijo, “¿Qué no quieres ir pa’ Taos?” Y era viernes. “Yo creo que sí voy.” “Acabo que te traen de allá,” me dijo porque le dio lástima. Y nos fuimos y québrase el carro, pronto que salimos. Pos tuvimos que volver pa’ tras. Pero la Grace y Primo Luis iban a llevarme, goodies para que tuviera. Iban por mí para que viniera over the weekends and stay there. Y su hermano de mi compadre Luis
pero yo no lo quería. Yo no lo quería. Well, I had my este back home, that I didn’t need... Mi novio que iba ser mi esposo algún día.

MDGV: ¿Tú sabías eso, eh?
CG: Yo sabía.
MDGV: ¿Ya se habían prometido?
CG: No, pero...
MDGV: ¿Qué si se hubiera casado con otra, mama?
CG: Well, se hubiera casado con otra, yo me hubiera casado con... no yo no me hubiera casado, yo me hubiera quedado soltera.
MDGV: ¿Era el único que amabas?
CG: El único que amé. I had other friends but...
MDGV: ¿Y cómo era la escuela en Cerro?
CG: Two teachers. Real nice.
MDGV: ¿Cuántos grados o qué?
CG: Teníamos primero, tercero, no había el ocho ni siete, yo creo, al seis. Muy atrasados los kids. Una vez estuvimos en una junta...
MDGV: ¿Atrasados en qué manera, mama?
CG: No sabían leer, ni escribir o nada, hija.
MDGV: ¿No en inglés, pero en español?
CG: Pues no les enseñaban, quizas de nada. Nosotros no fuimos a enseñar en español.
MDGV: ¿Ustedes enseñaban en español?
CG: En inglés.
MDGV: Por eso digo, claro.
CG: Y una vez tuvimos una junta, se juntaron todos los padres, and we were demonstrating what they had learned. Y tenía un muchito, chaparrito asina, y tenía doce años, pero chaparrito. Era tan malvado que no podía uno ni dar clases con él. Y fue la mamá. Y comenzó a hacer mal. Vine y lo agarré, fui y lo ahinqué allá trás. Y le di sus naígadas. Y cuando se
calló, dije yo, “quién sabe que haría yo a avergonzar a esta mamá.” Pero cuando se acabó la junta me dijo, “Le agradezco tanto oiga, porque ya no puedo con él.”

¿Y el niño se mejoró?

Se mejoró de allá pa’ adelante, sabía que su mamá no lo había...

En esa parte los niños no leían ni escribían en español ni inglés.

No.

¿Pero no habí escuelas por allí?

Sí tenían a two room schoolhouse. Yo agarré los chiquitos.

¿Era difícil enseñarles inglés?

Para mí no. Pues ya te digo, como me enseñaron las Hermanas a mí.

Tenía dos retratos, this is a house. Esta casa, se dice, this is a house. Este muchacho, this is a boy.

¿Entonces, tú usabas el español para enseñarles?

Yo sabía. Y aprendieron. Me dijo el director, hombre muy levantado él.

¿Era gringo o mexicano?

Mexicano. “Ay Señora Gonzales, “ el primer año cuando se acabó, “sabe usted que el día que llegó usted aquí a enseñar escuela, yo dije, ‘¿Qué va a enseñar esta niña?’”

¿Cuántos años tenías?

Dieciséiete. “¿Qué escuela va a enseñar esta niña?” Pero “hoy la congratulo”, me dijo, “por lo bien que ha hecho.”

¿Te llevabas bien con los niños?

O, sí. No más ese malvado. Todos se portaban muy bien, ese era un diablito, diablito, diablito. Como son los niños.

¿Y de Cerro adónde fuiste?

Bueno, Canuto me escribía casi todos los días, y mi compadre Eloy me escribía otro tanto y mi compadre Eloy me mandó a decir, “Mi Papá dice, O, sí quieres venirte a enseñar escuela aquí mi papá es director de la
escuela de Dehaven. El te la da.” “Sí, Sí, le mandé a decir, yo sí me quiero ir.” Pues pronto me ofrecieron la escuela mi suegro y me la dió.

MDGV: ¿Cuándo vivía papá en Bueyeros, tenían escuela privada allá?
CG: Sí, tenían escuela pública, allá enseñé yo.

MDGV: Pero antes, ¿cuándo era niño mi papá? ¿Antes de irse a Roy?
CG: No sé, eso no sé. A ellos los llevaron a Roy. Ya te digo que estaba en el libro segundo él.

MDGV: ¿Y luego tú fuiste a Dehaven de Cerro? Y luego por cuántos años estuviste en Dehaven?
CG: Uh, que bárbara, yo pienso que estuve diez años.

MDGV: ¿Solamente había una maestra? ¿Y todos los niños de los ranchos de allí asistían?
CG: Y todos echábamos lumbre en el fogón y todos traiban el carbón, y todos traiban la agua, y todos comíamos juntos. Éramos una familia. No éramos una escuela, éramos una familia y aprendíamos todos juntos. Los Gonzales’ no estaban allí pero tenían todos los… tenía Chester Gallegher, tenía los gringos, muchos. Los Mitchells no. Trabajadores de las gentes allí. Los de mi compadre Eduardo que esos llenaban la escuela. Ellos tenían rancho cerquita a la escuela. Estaba la Sarah, estaba Rómolo, estaba Sambran, pos ellos tenían la escuela, estaba la Mary Rose, estaba la Emilia. Ellos tenía como ocho.

MDGV: ¿Quién era?
CG: Mi compadre Eduardo Sandoval. Mi comadre Rosita era una mujer tan linda, del Valle era ella.

MDGV: ¿Entonces Sara García fue tu estudiante?
CG: Sí, y they loved me. Y izque no había mestra como yo. Estaban los de primo Doroteo. Estaba el Tone, estaba Epimeño, la Carolina y la Mary. Cuarto. Y él era el director. Ahora daba “pie suppers” para levantar dinero para el Christmas tree. Todas las mamás traiban sus pasteles para
ayudar y les compraba treats a los kids, presentes, y les daba a las mamases también presente por ayudar. And they were all so happy, lo mismo las gringas que las mexicanas. Y de los gringos, tenían Lonita Skinner, tenían Chester Gallegher, no sé quienes otros. But that was a school that had everything.

MDGV: ¿Cómo cuántos había allí?

CG: Pues había muchos. Estaban el Tone Martínez, Epimeño, Carolina, Mary, y luego de mi compadre Eduardo, estaban Sambran, Rómolo, Amelia, Sara, Mary Rose, a ver... ellos tenían suficientes para la escuela, como ocho niños.
VIRGINIA GONZALES
December 10, 1994
Gonzales: I was born in Taos, New Mexico in 1912. I attended schools in Taos, two years in my primaries grades were with the sisters.

G - B: In Taos?

Gonzales: In Taos. I went on and I finished high school in Taos. When I was going to school I always worked. I worked in the summers. I'd go to Highlands and I'd work at the library, or I'd work at where they serve the meals...

G - B: In the cafeteria?
Gonzales: In the cafeteria. That would give me money and I also worked like I said in the school library.

G - B: Okay. Now, when did you go out to teach, right when you finished high school?

Gonzales: No. When I finished high school I got a scholarship to Highlands University for outstanding grades. I got a job working for my room and board with the Blackmans. I was interested in improving my typing skills because if I could type and take shorthand I could probably get a job and continue my education. So, that's exactly how it happened.

G - B: Okay, let's go back to ... When you were in high school you knew you wanted to go to college and have some kind of career.

Gonzales: Right.

G - B: And was it secretarial work you were looking at or were you thinking already about being a teacher.

Gonzales: I was thinking about being a teacher but then I got side-tracked because some of my friends were in secretarial work and I was getting seventy-five dollars a month and they would get about a hundred and fifty dollars. So, I thought I'll just go out and do that. I got encouraged by a friend of mine to go to the...

G - B: A business school?
Gonzales: Yeah. For secretaries. What's the name of that school? The Kellehers.

G - B: In Las Vegas?

Gonzales: In Albuquerque.

G - B: In Albuquerque.

Gonzales: Anyway I went to do that because see, I already knew that I wanted to concentrate on teaching but then at the same time, like I told you, I got side-tracked. I went to the Western School for Private Secretaries, that was it. I had gotten a job working at the library at the school in the evenings. Then I told Mrs. Kelleher that I went to the Western School for Private Secretaries and that I wanted a job, you know, as a secretary. And she said, "Well look, I can send you to the airport police in Albuquerque." And I said, "I don't' want to go to there Mrs. Keleher because I sacrificed myself to come to school and to better myself and you're going to send me there just to type out cards like they do at those places at that time, you know. So, she said, "Well. That's all I can do for you." And I said, "Well, then don't bother, Mrs. Keleher, I'll get my own job."

G - B: Now, I want to ask you a couple of things about high school. When you were in high school did people
encourage you like your other teachers and your family, to go on, to continue your education?

Gonzales: Yes. My mother and my family were very encouraging and I had teachers that taught me in junior high, and they encouraged me. And that's how come I got started.

G - B: Now, when you graduated from high school in Taos, did a lot of women especially Hispana women graduate from high school? Or not too many?

Gonzales: Not too many.

G - B: You were one of the few probably?

Gonzales: One of the few. I was probably one of the very few that got a scholarship which I went to obtain.

G - B: How did your family feel about you, a young woman coming from a Hispanic background going away to college in those early years?

Gonzales: Well, my family was very supportive. The only thing that was kind of against, not against them or against me, but I was the support of my family. I always worked when I was in high school. I worked at the post-office after school. I worked Saturdays at Penneys or Woolworths wherever I got a job.

G - B: To help your family?

Gonzales: To help my family because I was an orphan.
and my mother depended on me a lot for support. So that's how I did.

Gonzales: Yes. I didn't leave. I went through the first year at Highlands, I worked for my room and board. I worked for an attorney, Henry Blackman and his wife and they were very encouraging also, so I had the encouragement from all.

Gonzales: My first teaching job was in Cerro, New Mexico. And I went there after I got back from Highlands. I was looking for a job, no, I was working at one of my side jobs like I used to work, and the superintendent of the schools and the supervisor Mrs. Miller called me in and said that he thought I would make a good teacher and they'd liked for me to try. So the only place that they had was Cerro, New Mexico, in northern Santa Fe County. So, I went to teach in Cerro. I was about eighteen years old I think, or nineteen. They used to have school directors then and they were the directors.
So I got into that. When I was teaching the first three grades I discovered one thing, that the people knew how to read in English but they didn't know what they were reading. So I thought, "No, this can't do, I have to give them vocabulary." They don't have the vocabulary. So, I started taking them outside and I'd say, this is the sky, the sky is blue, this is a tree, the trees are green, the trees have leaves, and this is grass. The grass is green and so on and so forth.

G - B: So what you had were children from Hispanic homes who really didn't know English. And they had learned to read the words but they didn't know what they meant.

Gonzales: They didn't know English. They were just repeating.

G - B: Okay. So, they were in school and your job was to teach them English. And to teach them...

Gonzales: Yes. First of all I had to have vocabulary building. The only way you can have vocabulary building is by taking these students and making them acquainted with their...

G - B: With their environment.

Gonzales: With their environment. So, now when the school director saw me doing that he said, "La mestrita está jugando con los muchachos." So, I took the director in and I said, "You're going to join my class because I'm
going to teach you English like I'm teaching these children. I want you to know what it's all about."

So, he joined my class.

G - B: He learned a lesson.

Diana: He didn't speak English either?

G - B: No, he did. But they felt that she was playing with them so she gave him a lesson. And after he understood what it was you were trying to do.

Gonzales: They didn't want me to leave.

G - B: I see. Now, let me ask you a question. These children didn't know a lot of English and you thought your job was to teach them English so you could educate them.

Were you able to use Spanish in the classroom? Or did they tell you, "No Spanish at all! You have to do it in English." How did you manage that?

Gonzales: No, no, I used Spanish wherever I found it necessary.

For instance, if there was a, say a dresser, I could tell them what it was. Say a bed, if they didn't know how to say it, I'd tell them cama, la cama. I'd make them understand by using Spanish wherever I needed it.

G - B: Were there from up above, let's say some school district, were there any specific rules that were given to you about what you were to do, especially as regards to language?
Gonzales: Mrs. Miller who was a supervisor for the Taos County Public Schools told me to try and teach them English because she knew that kids out in the rural districts were very backwards. She said, "just emphasize that English which ever way you can do it best." And so they had me do a demonstration in the county teacher's convention. I had charts with words -- picture, word, picture. I showed them how I had taught them vocabulary building and how important it was in the primary grades to place emphasis on the three "R's", reading, writing and 'rithmetic. And they got a good foundation, I prepared them.

G - B: Tell me a little about the parents and the kids at Cerro. Were they supportive? How did they treat you?

Gonzales: They treated me royally. They were very supportive, especially when they found out what it was all about. They wanted me to go back to teach the next year but I didn't go back to Cerro because I got a school at El Prado which was just walking distance from my house.

G - B: So, you went to Cerro one year?

Gonzales: One year.

G - B: Then you went on to teach at El Prado. El Prado was probably a little bigger then Cerro in those days.
Gonzales: Oh, yes. And then it was just seven miles out of Taos. I didn't have a car so when I didn't have a ride I walked.

G - B: To school.

Gonzales: To school.

G - B: And was there a difference between the children from Cerro and El Prado? Did they know more English in El Prado, for example?

Gonzales: They knew a little more English. They were not as backwards as the children in Cerro. And by the way, my father's first teaching job was in Cerro, New Mexico.

G - B: And my mother's first teaching job was in Cerro, New Mexico. So that's very interesting. Can you tell me a little about the background of your students, either in El Cerro or El Prado? What did they bring to the classroom with them?

Gonzales: They brought their knowledge of Spanish and they were very insistent, some of them, on speaking Spanish. So we had to make a little rule that no Spanish be spoken on the school grounds.

G - B: Did you feel that would interfere with their learning of English?

Gonzales: No, I did not feel that would interfere but it's a good thing because I wasn't that strict about it. If you
can't tell them in English, tell them in Spanish. For instance, this little boy got up, everyday we talked about the new experiences that they had at home, and so he brought a little cup and said this is a 'tas'. So, I explained to him that it was tasa in Spanish, cup in English. So we had a discussion about that and then the kids started bringing in their little dish sets and that's the way I used to respond as much as possible.

G - B: Now, if the children spoke Spanish out in the playground or something, were they punished?

Gonzales: Not by me.

G - B: But was that a rule for the school district? Or do you remember?

Gonzales: Well, it was kind of a rule.

G - B: But people didn't necessarily enforce it.

Gonzales: Right.

G - B: So you didn't think your job was to just push, push, push English. But, to teach them.

Gonzales: No, to teach them and to teach them in a very pleasant way, so that they would enjoy it. Like on Friday afternoons maybe, we'd make a batch of candy. We usually had wooden stoves, and then we'd make a class out of making candy.

G - B: And teach them how to measure things...
Gonzales: ...how to measure things and what went into candy and why we like candy more or less.

G - B: So you were teaching vocabulary at the same thing?

Gonzales: And they were learning vocabulary building.

G - B: Okay now, in those days the children as you say, brought their background in Spanish but they didn't know how to read or write Spanish, did they? Most of them?

Gonzales: No. No, they didn't.

G - B: Did you ever think that in the schools it would be good to teach them to read and write in Spanish?

Gonzales: Well, as a matter of fact, when I was teaching here at Cromley we used to give them the entrance examinations. I persuaded the principal to let me give them the test in Spanish, and then translate it into English. Because, for instance, I would ask questions about the ocean, about ships, about boats. Some of those kids brought up in this country, some of them had never even heard of a boat. There was a ditch close by so we would take their boats and put them in the ditch and give them the idea.

G - B: If these children had had an opportunity to learn to read and write Spanish first and then English, maybe
they would have progressed more or do you think there
would have been an advantage to that?

Gonzales: I think there would have been a definite advantage.

G - B: But no one in those days was really interested in
in doing that?

Gonzales: No. My mother didn't know any English but she knew
Spanish. I started writing things for her and I'd
write them in Spanish and then translate them into
English. So, I was doing that before I went to school.

G - B: Before you even heard of bi-lingual education you were
already doing that?

Gonzales: Right.

G - B: In your community, let's take El Prado or Cerro if you
want, Taos, did the teacher play an important role?
Were you an important person in the community?

Gonzales: As a matter of fact, the teacher was the most important
person in the community in those days. Now, it's not
that way any more and I don't have to tell you about
it. But the teacher was kind of held up on a pedestal,
you know.

G - B: Why do you think that was?

Gonzales: Well, because they were so appreciative of getting
outside influence, especially when they were interested
in teaching their children. Teaching them languages,
teaching them reading, writing and arithmetic. They learned new things in accordance with those three subjects because with that they could get out and work. And some of them worked in good jobs in town especially in El Prado and they were handicapped. They didn't know English.

G - B: So what I hear you saying is that the parents wanted the best for their children. They wanted their children to be educated.

Gonzales: Right.

G - B: Not like sometimes they say, "Well, it's a Mexicano." They don't want them to get an education and wanted them to go out and work. But you're saying they were appreciative of what you were doing for their children.

Gonzales: Sure.

G - B: Were there conflicts between the groups in Taos? Or was it mostly a Hispanic community or were there...

Gonzales: It was mostly a Hispanic community and the Anglos that we had were for instance in El Prado. There was the East family, the Brooks family and another family that I forget their names but they had the dairy business there. And they were just very grateful, they were very eager to have the Spanish...
Gonzales: So they would become integrated into the community.
You didn't have the hot kind of tensions that you'd have maybe in other towns?

Gonzales: No, not at all.

G - B: Did you do other things, beside teaching the three 'R's in your school? What were some of special things, programs, things that you did?

Gonzales: For instance, for Columbus Day we had what you'd call, little projects. For instance, in December, we'd have the the Christmas Story and the children acted it out. And we'd put plays for the community like the play of Jesus.

G - B: And the whole community would come?

Gonzales: And they would come. And they were very interested because some of them even brought food and everything. So, the school served as a, how should I say...

G - B: It was the center of...

Gonzales: The center of the everything.

G - B: A meeting place for all the people.

Gonzales: For all the people.

G - B: And the parents would come out and be supportive.

Gonzales: And the parents would come. Very supportive.
G - B: And could you count on parents then to help out with this or that?

Gonzales: Oh, yes. I definitely could in El Prado. I had a very supportive, particularly supportive group. Not that they were not supportive in Cerro but in El Prado, they were a little more advanced. See, I had for instance, now I don't know if I should mention names, but, C. B. Trujillo, who later became a legislator.

G - B: Es primo mio.

Gonzales: Yeah, I know.

G - B: Grace, su mamá era prima hermana de mi mamá.

Gonzales: So, they were very supportive. They bent over backwards in the summer. I had projects going on where I would involve the community. They got very interested.

G - B: Now how did you feel about yourself? Here you were a teacher in your own community, you know this is a respected position.

Daughter: Twenty years old.

G - B: You're a very young woman. Did that, I imagine that made you feel good to be...

Gonzales: It made me feel good and at the same time, I always felt very strong feelings for the underprivileged. Because I wasn't necessarily a privileged child. I
worked my fingers to the bone to advance myself. And I remember my father when he died. He had asked for me. He said to my mother, “if you can’t give them anything else give them an education.”

G - B: It sounds like the exact words that my mother said. The exact same words. And they gave it to you and then you felt that it was your responsibility to give it to others.

Gonzales: Yeah. I did.

G - B: And how many years did you teach?

Gonzales: Thirty years.

G - B: Thirty years. Now, you started teaching before you had a college degree. Is that right?

Gonzales: Correct.

G - B: So, you would teach and then would you go to summer school.

Gonzales: Then I would go to school.

G - B: In the summer time?

Gonzales: In the summer time. Like when I started teaching some times we would only teach seven months out of the year. They'd pay us seventy-five dollars a month, you know, and of course, that was very discouraging for me because here I had family and friends that were working in offices for civil service getting a hundred and
fifty dollars or maybe even three hundred, here I was with seventy-five dollars.

G - B: Do you think they were getting as much personal satisfaction?

Gonzales: Maybe not but, anyway I shifted temporarily from teaching to secretarial work.

G - B: And how old were you when you got your degree finally?

Gonzales: Oh, let's see forty, thirty-seven years old.

G - B: So you taught for a long time?

Gonzales: Oh yeah.

G - B: And then you would go to summer school and take a few courses.

Gonzales: Go to summer school. And then I worked in the interim, I did secretarial work. Like I worked for the State Office of Public Administration right on the corner of fourth and Central.

G - B: In Albuquerque. You taught in Albuquerque?


G - B: In Wagon Mound, right.

Gonzales: I taught one year in Wagon Mound. Then I taught bilingual education here in the city.

G - B: Here.
Gonzales: I was a traveling teacher from one school to another.

G - B: This is much later in your career?

Gonzales: Much later.

G - B: Now, did you take time out from teaching or working to raise your own family?

Gonzales: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, I didn't teach while the children were growing up. But then I decided to kind of retire. I debated with myself, should I continue without this work which I loved at that time or should I back to teaching. I always had teaching in the back of mind. So I thought, I have to go back to teaching because I'll have the same schedule that my children have. When it's winter time we teach and the summer time they're on vacation, then I'd be on vacation too.

G - G: So once you had your family teaching was more compatible with your needs as a mother?

Gonzales: That's right.

G - G: More than working in an office all year around.

Gonzales: More than working in an office all year around.

G - G: I would imagine that's why so many women have gone into teaching as their career to be home when their children are home.

Gonzales: Be home when their children are home.
G - B: How many children did you have?

Gonzales: Three.

G - B: Three.

Gonzales: My first born is Albert Victor and his daddy is Albert Gonzales, so we named him Albert. We wanted them to have the same initials that Albert and I had. So, it was Albert Victor, and the second one, Virginia Ann, V. A., and then came Carmen.

G - B: So, you ran out of V.A’s with Carmen?

Gonzales: So I ran out of names so I asked a friend of mine, "What should I name this child?" "Carmen Linda" he said, "Carmen Linda, she's so pretty", so we named her Carmen Linda.

G - B: Now when you decided you had your family and you started to raise them, you decided you had to go back to work. Was there tension there? Was there a conflict that women shouldn't be out working? They should stay home with their families? Either from your family or your friends or your husband? Or did you always feel that you had the freedom to choose what you wanted to do?

Gonzales: I always had the freedom to choose what I wanted to do. As a matter of fact, I got encouraged by my husband.
My husband, by my own family. I had nothing but encouragement.

G - B: So you never felt that people were saying to you, "you shouldn't be out there working, your place is in the home?" And did you always feel that you were able to do what you wanted to do with your life?

Gonzales: To a certain extent. As far as financially possible. When I went for the State School Board, that was the year that I retired from teaching, there were three other people, and I got more votes than anybody put together. Plus, I had always liked politics. And I had been supporting, over the years, members of the legislature or, any office that had very keen interests in education.

G - B: So you had always been involved in politics and campaigning and promoting education.

Gonzales: Promoting education, that's right. That was my main thing.

G - B: How did you decide to run for the school board? This is the State Board of Education, right?

Gonzales: Okay. The state board of education, I was very active in classroom teachers, national education, NEA, classroom teachers, all this. Mrs. Sena and other teachers, came to me, "You've got to run for the school
board. We have to have a teacher on that school board." And I said, "But, they're not encouraging teachers." "But we're encouraging you. You file."
"Well I don't have the time to campaign." We'll do campaigning for you to help you out." And that's the way it happened.

**G - B:** So probably all the teachers in the state went out and voted for you?

**Gonzales:** They went out and voted, not only voted for me, some of them were even sending me money for...

**G - B:** For your campaign.

**Gonzales:** For my campaign.

**G - B:** And while you were in the school, how many years did you run for reelection? Or do you remember how many years you were on the school board?

**Gonzales:** I was on the school board for twelve years.

**G - b:** Were you able to accomplish something?

**Gonzales:** Oh, yes. When I was on the school board, I was always very interested in bilingual education of course, and special education. So, I fought hard. Ever since I had been at the legislature lobbying, so many times, they were very familiar with me. I had a lot of friends in the legislative halls.
G - B: And were you lobbying just on your own? You just went there and talked to people, and said, "this is what teachers need?"

Gonzales: Yes. Just on my own. I'd get a group of teachers and we'd all go together and they'd give us a chance to speak up in the board meetings, you know.

G - B: So you were always fighting for education, right?

Gonzales: I was always fighting for education.

G - B: Do you think New Mexico did education well? In looking back, do you think that they put a lot into education and did it well?

Gonzales: I think looking back, they used to put a lot more into education than they do nowadays. Because nowadays there are other interests. For example, when I was in El Prado the only interest was education. Parents and everybody supported us.

G - B: Supported you.

Gonzales: Supported us very, very much so. I don't know, I taught school for thirty years. I taught here at Cromley across the street from the Capital and I would take my children and introduce them to the governor and to the legislators and the other men. I'd tell them, "We're very interested in this bill or the other bill," whatever it was.
G - B: This is the one I typed up. So maybe you want to look at what she’s looking at.

Gonzales: Okay, my relationship to parents was very good, always.

G - B: These are some of the questions that I can just ask you as we go along.

Daughter: This is the one here that she’s talking about authorizing bilingual, multiculture education and career.

Gonzales: This is the one that I was very interested in.

G - B: SB. 421, Bi-lingual, Multiculture, in 1973. So, you were in there fighting for those things about fifteen years ago.

Gonzales: Yes.

G - B: Now let me ask you, as a woman teaching in the public schools, most of the teachers we know in grade school were women, but, very often the bosses, I think, the principals tended to be men and the superintendents tended to be men. Do you think that women in those days when they were teaching, that you were encouraged, supported and in a lot of ways developed as much as you could or did you ever feel there were limitations merely because you were a woman?

Gonzales: No, not at all. I never felt that way because number one, I was very strong for the three 'R's. Reading,
writing and arithemetic. The parents used to request that the students be put in my class because they knew that when they got out they'd learned about reading, writing and arithemetic, since I was very strong on that. When people come and they leave school and don't know how to read or write and aren't very good in science, science was coming to the foreground, forget it, they don't have an education to get a degree. But the parents were very supportive and so were my bosses. I had one boss that was not very much in agreement with me but I was not a quitter...

G - B: So you found your ways to do what you had to do.

Gonzales: I found my ways to do what I had to do and what I wanted to do. And the main thing I had in the back of my mind were the children.

G - B: You did it all for the children.

Gonzales: I did it all for the children.

G - B: Okay, one question. In the state of New Mexico and I think it happened in different communities, but sometimes there was conflict between Anglo culture and Hispanic culture. Sometimes people feel that maybe Hispanics have not had as many opportunities or been able to advance, were you aware of those things and
did you feel that education was the way? That the most important thing for our people was to get educated?

Gonzales: Right. I think at that time it was and I still feel it is because if people don't have an education, I don't care what you are, if you're Colored or White or Anglo or Spanish or Indian or whatever, you have to have an education as the basis of our...

G - B: And you think that people can lead the good life for themselves.

Gonzales: Yes. Lead the good life if they have any ambition, if they don't have any ambition they don't find a way out of working around it. Now they have scholarships which help a lot and I always encouraged my students, even after I was out of the classroom. I used to go visit them and I encouraged them to apply for scholarships when I knew about it.

G - B: Do you think it's easier nowadays for people to get an education then back when you were trying to get your own college education?

Gonzales: It's probably easier but then I don't know whether there is the ambition or the initiative, I don't know.

G - B: Do you think that education doesn't count as much these days?
Gonzales: It counts as much and depends on how the person that's getting the education's uses it. For instance, when I was teaching bilingual education I was a traveling teacher here in the Santa Fe Schools, and I got so much support from the Anglo people I couldn't believe it.

G - B: In this county?

Gonzales: In this district. They even wanted to bring their children to my house so that I could teach them Spanish.

G - B: Now back earlier before you came to Santa Fe and before the more modern ideas about bilingual education and that kind of thing, in the earlier years, let's say El Prado, you thought your job was to first teach them English skills then reading, writing and arithmetic. Did you ever teach about their own culture? About Spanish culture to the students? What kind of things, programs or projects?

Gonzales: Oh, yes. Like for instance, the discovery of America, I would always teach them about Columbus or Queen Isabella. I would emphasize the Spanish end of it. The influence that the Spaniards had in the present world of today.

G - B: And did you teach like customs and canciones or anything like that?
G - B: You did teach them, and some customs. Some Spanish customs.
D - C: Some customs, yes.
G - B: But you never taught Spanish as a subject to improve their Spanish?
D - C: No.
G - B: That wasn't part of the curriculum.
D - C: No.
G - B: How do you feel, as you look back about your teaching experience, was it a good life, a good experience?
D - C: Well, to me at the time, it was the most wonderful experience. And now that I'm alone, I think, how did I do it? How did I do this thing? How did I, which I am glad I accomplished something.
G - B: You feel that you contributed.
D - C: I accomplished all by myself something that I wanted to. To take care of myself, what more do you want. And I thank God that I have my health. This morning my brother who is a doctor said, "Anita, you've never been to the hospital."
G - B: How wonderful.
D - C: I said, "No, Joe." "I've never been to the hospital. But, my heart's shaky."
G - B: And let me ask you, What's the best memory you have about being a teacher? Do you remember one incident that was very funny or very sad? That was something that happened to a child or some predicament that really stands out in your mind. Or there are probably a lot of them?

D - C: Well, I don't know.

G - B: You don't remember anything real special.

D - C: This will catch up with me.

G - B: Any bad things about your career?

D - C: I never had any troubles with anybody and we were always very, very close friends.

G - B: Now what do you think of today’s schools and what you hear from your grandchildren of today’s education?

D - C: Today?

G - B: You have any ideas or opinions?

D - C: I don't have any idea because I’ve been retired for thirteen years. There’s a lot of difference between now, at the time that you had your little ones, the first grade. And now, they are real lucky that they go to pre-school. That they are ready to start in the first grade.

G - B: You think that's important, the pre-school?

D - C: Yes.
Gonzales: Because I had worked so hard to get myself into the public schools and they wouldn't give me a job here in Santa Fe because of this or that or whatever.

G - B: Do you have any ideas what the real reasons were, why they didn't give you a job?

Gonzales: Well, the real reason was because I was in Taos, and I thought well, I'll just show them and so, I went on to... Let's see where was I?

G - B: When you got the job at Wagon Mound.

Gonzales: Oh, yeah. Sure I remember Mr. Freeward telling my uncle, "Why did she go to teach so far away, like in Wagon Mound?" And he said, "Because you never wanted to give her a job here in this district."

G - B: Would they say that you didn't have enough education or that they had too many teachers or what?

Gonzales: I didn't have all the requirements according to them.

G - B: But you probably were very qualified.

Gonzales: So, I went to Wagon Mound. And I got a job just like that. And then I was one of first Hispanics to work in the library and in the offices of the campus.

G - B: At Highlands?

Gonzales: At Highlands. I got a job at the library and I got a job also in one of the school offices. Like the registrar's office.
G - B: In those years were there not too many Hispanic students at Highlands?

Gonzales: Well, there were some but they didn't encourage us as much as they should have. And so that's why, John Aragón and myself and others kept pushing to get this batch of students to go to college, to get scholarships, to be recognized.

G - B: Do you remember anything about the Normal Training school at El Rito?

Gonzales: No, I never went there.

G - B: You never went there, you don't remember too much about that. This looks to me like a picture when you graduated. Do you want to talk about that?

Gonzales: Yes.

G - B: You already had children and...

Gonzales: Yeah, I already had children, see. But I went back to get my degree to finish my degree.

G - B: At Highlands?

Gonzales: At Highlands.

G - B: And your children where how old?

Gonzales: The oldest was, well I guess, nine years old, maybe seven. And the girl was probably six and my little baby girl Carmen stayed with my mother because I
couldn't take her. I put them in kindergarten because the youngest child was too young to go.

G - B: So, your mother helped you by taking care of your...

Gonzales: By taking care of my littlest, my youngest child.

G - B: So, the mother was important then in terms of allowing you to go out and work because she was there to help you.

Gonzales: She was very important, my mother, she always encouraged us.

Gonzales: I just want to put this before the camera, when she gets her degree. This was in the newspaper and her husband and the two children are there. She’s in her cap and gown. You belong to LULAC?

Gonzales: Yeah, I belong to LULAC here in...

G - B: Santa Fe?

Gonzales: Santa Fe, yeah. And again, we were instrumental in the LULAC organization to make it possible for some of the Spanish students to go on to college. We gave them scholarships to help them.

G - B: Your husband here was a candidate for state senator? Did he, did he serve in that capacity?

Gonzales: He served, yes, he did. He served a little bit.

G - B: And what was it like being the wife of state senator?

Gonzales: It was wonderfull.
G - B: You liked that.

Gonzales: I liked that. They used to throw big parties for us and everything.

G - B: And your experience as a teacher was, did you find that useful in...?

Gonzales: Very useful.

G - B: ... being in public life.

Gonzales: ...because they use to make me chairman of the different educational communities.

G - B: I see.

Gonzales: That's where I was very instrumental in being able to put a Bilingual Act together, as it was introduced and other legislation pertaining to the education of the children.

Daughter:

G - B: So you've always liked the public life. The politics and then being a teacher was good preparation. You received a Ford Foundation Grant to do research in Bilingual Education in Pecos?

Gonzales: Right. In Pecos. I did it in Pecos because they were putting bilingual education in their program. So I used to do my research at the, what do you call this place where you do research.

G - B: At the archives?
Gonzales: Archives.

G - B: Do you think maybe bilingual education should have come earlier to New Mexico? Do you think there would have been advantages for us?

Gonzales: Well, naturally there would have been advantages but it came and we were grateful to get it.

G - B: To get it then. But if it had come in the thirties, do you think things would have been real different?

Gonzales: I don't know. Maybe people wouldn't have been so strong for us as they were later.

G - B: Later. So maybe it came when it's time was due. Maybe you could talk a little bit about, if you look at education today, at what's going in the school, what's going on, do you have any feelings about the hole education project today.

Gonzales: You know I think that there should be more emphasis on education. I don't know whether there is enough emphasis on education. You girls probably would know better than I do because you're right in the mist of it. But I still maintain that education should be one of the interests that a family should have because they now have computers, they have so many thing that we didn't have those days and the more people learn the
more experience, the better off they are. The better off their families will be.

G - B: As you look back at your life, how do you feel about your career and your experiences as a teacher and as a very active person in education, in general, on state board of education, for example?

Gonzales: Well, I feel very good. I feel I've been very effective. I've influenced a lot of young lives, that's what it's all about. And I feel too that I'm sorry that I couldn't continue being involved but the last two years I've been very sick but I still go to retired educators when I can. I attend whenever I can because I was in bilingual education, the United Way, thank god for the United Way, wherever I could put in my two bits worth for education, I did -- LULAC and Esperanza for battered families.

G - B: You were involved in that?

Gonzales: Yeah, I was one of the originators.

G - B: That's here in Santa Fe?

Gonzales: Here in Santa Fe.

G - B: Well you've certainly done a lot for your community and for the state as a whole. Were you involved in the state. They used to have the state conventions, the teachers conventions.
Gonzales: Oh, yes.

G - B: I, as a child, I remember because it meant we could go to the city.

Gonzales: Oh, yes. I remember I was very involved in that. And not only did I attend the convention like I say I gave demonstrations because in those days they used to ask teachers who were pretty strong, especially in the 3 R's, to give demonstrations. I was always fortunate to be chosen to be sent over.

G - B: Would you have any advice for today's teachers.

Gonzales: Yes. I would have the advice that when they're in the classroom to truly take an interest in their students and see to it that they learn, and they take advantage of every opportunity. For example, nowadays, I notice by reading the paper that they are giving scholarships to students and the thing to do is take advantage of the scholarships and not go only to have a good time but to work hard and someday they'll be recognized. I think some of teachers are doing a good job.

G - B: Can you think of any real special stories that you'd like to share with us about your teaching experiences. Things that stand out in your mind or funny things that happened to you or wonderful things that happened to you?
Gonzales: Oh, well. Let me see. I remember when I was teaching over here when I was going around from school to school. I remember we had some students that used to cry when they would ride the bus and I had this little student, bless his heart, he had an accident. So the principal said, "Now you better wait until the janitor comes to clean this child up. That's not your job." I said, "Well, look I've cleaned many children including my own and I'm not going to let this child stay here until the bus comes" because the school and we all won't smell very pretty. So I took him and cleaned him up. There was another teacher and I who used to ask well-to-do families to bring in all the clothes of the kids, so I went to the closet where we had the clothes and I took care of him and so he went home real...

G - B: Brand new, huh?

Gonzales: I used to go over to one of the shoe stores downtown and I remember I would take the boys with me, whoever I was buying shoes for. "Could you give me some socks? Well, gee whiz, I see some nice little shirts, this child doesn't have a nice shirt. Could you give him a shirt? And he'd said, "What are you going to ask me for next?"
Mrs. Gonzales, sometimes we hear people say that in our culture women are passive, they stay home and they take care of the children, they're very passive and they don't do a lot of things and their husbands take care of them and limit what they can do. I think your life says quite the opposite. Would you like to comment on that?

Very much the opposite. I was never discouraged by my family. I was always encouraged. My husband, my mother, my children. It seems I got encouragement from all sides.

And were you always this strong woman?

Always a strong woman.

Always spoke your mind?

Always spoke my mind.

And do you think you have influence on the people you came in contact with? Not just the children but,

Oh, yes. Very definitely. For instance, we had parent-teacher group meetings. And the parents were very reluctant to go to these meetings so I would send notes home and encourage them, and low and behold on the night of the parent-teacher, the PTA meeting was loaded. My students would bring their parents. Some of them would practically drag them because, they'd
say, "The teacher said it was very important for you to go." So they would bring them.

G - B: What about problems like disciplining children way back then. Were the parents behind you or did you get in trouble if you disciplined a child? Did you ever have to discipline children?

Gonzales: Yes, I had to discipline children. I remember one time, oh, this parent was very upset because I had spanked his child. And I said, "Look, she's nothing but a spoiled brat." And she was. She said, "My father is a school board member and you can't do that to me." And I said, "Oh, yes. Try me!"

G - B: Try me, huh!

Gonzales: So I took her into the closet and I ordinarily didn't spank the children but I felt that she needed it. And she got it, and she said, "Okay. I'm going to tell my dad and tomorrow you're going to be out of a job." "Okay," I said, "fine, if you tell your father." So, the next day he said "You have the courage to do for her what I haven't had the courage, let me kiss your hand."

G - B: Great! That's wonderful! Was there a lot of politica in the schools? In jobs, in keeping jobs and...

Gonzales: Well, I...
G - B: Do you remember?

Gonzales: I don't remember. I don't think there was that much in the schools, per se, but in those days you had to I suppose. It’s like the situation now? You had to be qualified. See, and I didn’t teach outside the district except for El Prado, like I told you. Then I taught one year in Wagon Mound. But it seemed like the places where I taught I never felt any pressure. I imagine there's more of that going on now, I don't know.

G - B: Well, I think there is maybe more security than back then. Can you think of things? She’s probably getting tired.

Diana: I think It's probably time. I don't think we want to wear her out. What we might do is come back some time after we see the tape and see if it works and if our machinery works and maybe you'll think of some things that you'll want to tell us later on too. You might remember some stories or something.

Gonzales: Yeah. I will.

Diana: And so when we come back with all the pictures then we can bring you a copy of the tape, also. You've had a wonderful, a very interesting life.
Gonzales: I have really. Another thing my husband and I traveled extensively.

G - B: Oh, did you?

Gonzales: Yes. we went to places in Mexico. We went to Spain. We went to thirteen countries in Europe in 1971, I think it was. We traveled with another couple...

(End of tape and interview)
CELINA MARTINEZ SALAZAR
AUGUST 23, 1996
CELINA MARTINEZ SALAZAR
August 23, 1996

G - B: Here we are in Las Vegas, New Mexico interviewing Mrs. Celina Martínez de Salazar in her home. It’s August 23, 1996 and we are interviewing her as part of the Hispana Teachers en Nuevo México. Buenos días, ¿cómo está prima?

CMS: Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?

G - B: Gracias por invitarnos a su casa y creo que queremos empezar con que nos diga algo de su vida, su niñez, quiénes eran sus padres, su familia. Si puede recordar un poco, ¿Cómo empezó su vida?


G - B: ¿Usted fue a la escuela allí en Roy?

CMS: Yo fui a la escuela, fui a la escuela pública por dos años y luego fui a la escuela católica de “Saint George” desde el libro tercero hasta que graduamos, y luego tuvimos que ir a Roy a la pública porque some crédito no estaban accredited. Tuvimos que ir hasta...

G - B: Un último año.

CMS: Sí.

G - B: Entonces fue todos esos años a la escuela católica, se graduó...

CMS: ...y un año a la escuela pública.

G - B: Para recibir el diploma del estado, quizás.

CMS: Yo gradué en 1929.

G - B: ‘29. ¿Cómo era la escuela con las monjas, la escuela católica, se acuerda?

CMS: Pos yo tengo muchos recuerdos muy queridos que me gustan mucho porque era una familia junta y nos llevamos muy bien y teníamos muchos programs y todo y nos enseñaron mucho, como decir, modernidad and all that.

G - B: Did you speak English when you started school?
No, no. Cuando comenzamos, oh, muy poquitos sabían inglés, otra cosa.

¿Y las hermanas les enseñaron inglés? En public schools...

In the public schools porque yo fui un año y cuando estaba en el primer año que fui a la escuela, en noviembre tuve un accidente, me quemé una pierna y ya no podía ir el siguiente año por eso me quedé más atrás, no podía andar.

¿Ya para cuando llegó con las monjitas, ya sabía inglés, o no?

Sí.

¿O en los primeros dos años lo aprendieron?

Lo aprendimos, muy poco, pero hablábamos. Y luego las hermanas también ...

¿Y ellas no hablaban nada español, ellas les enseñaban puro inglés?

No, no. Ellas no hablaban español, no habían ninguna española, puro inglés.

¿Y no había oportunidades para ustedes para aprender a leer en español? ¿En la escuela?

No.

¿En casa les leían, o no?

En la casa, yo me acuerdo que mi papá leía mucho la biblia y nos leía, lecciones y eso. Y luego nosotros las transleábamos en inglés porque las hermanas nos enseñaba catecismo y todo eso, y teníamos catécismo every morning before classes you know en la escuela católica. Y luego después graduamos de allí, graduamos del libro doce pero no nos aceptaron la diploma y tuvimos que ir a la escuela pública.

¿Cuándo es que se hizo Ud., maestra? ¿Se acuerda?

Yo empecé a enseñar el primer año que gradué en 1929-1930.

So in those days if you had a high school diploma you could be a teacher?

You could teach three years.

And where did you go to teach? Do you remember your first job?

Sí, fui al Sabino. Y tengo muchos retratos del Sabino donde fui a enseñar la escuela. Y tenía como veinticinco muchitos en la escuela.
¿Y Ud., era la única maestra?
Era la única maestra. Y tenía algunos muchachos que estaban más grandes, eran dos o tres años menores que yo.

¿Y cómo los manejaba Ud., a tantos...
Pos sabes que, no tuve problema. Eran muy buenos muchachos todos. No había problema de "discipline". Pero los chiquitos sí. Pero los chiquitos venían y no querían, estaban, como decir, tímidos, no querían hablar nada y les hablaba uno y se tapaban la cara y no podía uno... it took a long time to get them started.

Let me ask you this question. Who influenced you to become a teacher? How did you decide to be a teacher? Why did you become a teacher?
Well, I'll tell you. My first thing was, I wanted to be a nurse. And when I went to, no me quería dejar ir, pero mi dad, en la familia había habido mestros en la familia, en los Martínez', y mi tío Albino era mestro en Mora. Maes, Albino Maes. Y también decían que mi granma había enseñado escuela, les había enseñado a los chiquitos. Quizás les enseñaba como leer, también decían.

Tenía una escuela privada, tal vez?
No, yo creo que en la casa. Pero les enseñaba a leer y todo eso, catecismo y todo eso. Y luego sus hijas de mi tío Albino eran mestras, dos de ellas. Luego mi dad quería que agarrara escuela y agarré escuela. Y el primer año que fuimos a la escuela, ¿cuánto crees que nos pagaban entonces?

Fifty dollars.
Seventy- eight dollars. Y teníamos que vivir en eso.

Entonces ¿su padre era él que la decía?, "hija quiero que seas mestra." ¿Y su mamá, también la aconsejaba, ella era quien la impulsaba?
Sí.

¿O tenía mucho apoya en la familia?
Ella siempre quería que fuera a la escuela, que nos educáramos. Y yo era la más mediana y el chiquito no quiso, él tenía mucho que hacer. Le gustaba mucho lo vaquero and all that, y ranchero y todo... Yo sí fui a la escuela y me dijo mi dad la primera vez que acabamos el high school me dijo”, tienes que enseñar tres años con tu high school diploma, pero quiero que vayas a Highlands”, era el Normal entonces, “a la escuela de una vez y te prepares”.

De una vez. Entonces ¿cuándo empezó en Highlands?


Después del primer año de enseñar se vino...

No, no. No más gradué de high school vine al colegio. Antes de ir a enseñar un año.

Vino al colegio primero. ¿Un año?

No, no vine al colegio. No, veníamos como six weeks, six weeks...

¿Cómo un institute? A summer. Entonces...

Y luego del verano de ay seguimos entrando el verano. That’s the way Carlida and I did it.

Entonces ¿de una vez empezó a entrenarse un poco aquí en Highlands?

Yes. Y me dijo él que fuera. Luego cuando fui al colegio a Albuquerque, que fuimos al training school en San José, en ‘35, todavía quería ir de nodriza. I still wanted to be a nurse. I had the urge for nursing. Porque teníamos una hermana que she was a nurse y era muy buena con nosotros todos. And she used to nurse all the people que estaba en Roy, ayudaba a los doctores en Roy. La Sister Consuelo. Se llamaba Consuelo y la queríamos mucho nosotros, and she wanted me to be a nurse. So I wanted to be a nurse. Luego me estuve con unos, cuando fuimos a San José Training School, pues tenías que ir a San José y luego nos llevaban afuera, como, fuimos a Cedar Crest y todos eso lugares afuera...

Para observe the schools?

Yes. We stayed for a week with some people there. I stayed with Mrs. Prieto and Mr. Prieto there, yo y la, otra muchacha, ¿cómo se llamaba?, era de Deming
ella. El me dijo, “pues si quieres ir a la escuela de nodriza yo te puedo poner en el San José, y él era lawyer. He was a lawyer. Pues, estaba muy interesada pero cuando vine, en ese tiempo vine a Roy and my mother was struck by lightning y la mató. I gave up hopes of being a nurse. I didn’t want to be a nurse anymore. So my teacher went...

G - B: I didn’t know that about your mother. That’s interesting because my mother’s brother, your primo was also killed by lightning, ¿no? I want to come back to the San José Project. But first let’s go back to your first job en Sabino, ¿no? Tell me what you remember about the classroom, what you did, how you taught the kids?

CMS: Te digo la verdad que no tenías nada con que comenzar. Everything you had to do, tenías que hacer. Compraba magazines y cortaba los retratos y ponía de uno a dos, tres cosas para enseñar los números. Para enseñarles el inglés tenías que cortar retratos de fruta y pastel and all that because I remember una vez les enseñé un picture de un pastel, “¡Pastel!” That’s the first thing they said, so we had to translate it to inglés, and así era como enseñamos. Teníamos que hacer our own seat-work.

G - B: You had no materials, no books?

CMS: No materials, no nothing. Books nos daban muy poquito. No me acuerdo what, I think we had “Layla”, y no me acuerdo que otros books teníanos después. Pero era muy poquito lo que nos daban.

G - B: ¿Los niños tenían lápices y cuadernitos, porque algunas maestras dicen que ellas tenían que ir y sacar de su pago y comprar.

CMS: Sí, teníanos que comprar. Nosotros teníamos que comprar papel y a veces cortábamos todos los papeles que podíamos agarrar, collect papeles en la casa que podíamos usar, todo eso usábamos nosotros. Yo me acuerdo que había unos cajones que compraban, en que venían naranjas y manzanas y todo eso y yo me acuerdo que yo colectaba los cajones y hacía silletitas para los muchitos. Les quitaba el back y les hacía silletitas para podernos sentarnos in a group and talk.
¿Y los padres, were they supportive?


¿En ese pueblito, en ese lugar, bueno me imagino que era rural, había como placita o vivían en rancho?

Había gente de ranchos, tenían cada quien, bueno pues venían a pie. La placita era como una placita y vivían dos o tres familias en un rancho y luego los otros venían en el bos. Los traiban el bos de los ranchos de afuera.

¿Y eran casi todos mexicanos?

No, no tenía más que un americanito.

¿Los demás era toda gente mexicana? ¿Los niños no hablaban inglés cuando venían a la escuela?

No, hablaban poco porque ya habían tenido, los mayores ya hablaban poco inglés. Pero los chiquitos no. No los grandes, algunos estaban ya en third and fourth grade, sí hablaban porque habían tenido mestras americanas.

¿Y tenían actividades más allá de enseñar en la clase, school events? ¿Plays, cosas así?

Sí, sí, para Crismes. Hacíamos Christmas Plays, poníamos nacimiento y desarrollaríábamos que hablaran and say a verse in Spanish and English y cantaban y todo eso.

Y los padres venían?

O yeah!

Was it a big community event?

Y luego teníamos, to raise money para poder hacer para Christmas, para dar dulces y todo eso teníamos box suppers.

How were the box suppers?

Pues, las muchachas traiban sus cajas con pastel o comida, a supper y la vendían. El que pagaba más ganaba. No era mucho en verdad era poco. Levantábamos
maybe twenty, twenty-five dollars.

G - B: For the Christmas Program, to buy candy for the kids?
CMS: And then we would buy some supplies. Comprábanos algunas cosas también.
G - B: What was your role in the community? The role of the teacher, were you a very important and essential person in that little community? Did you think that you played an important part?
CMS: I think we did. I think I did. La gente siempre me preguntaba por, como decir, advice or something.
G-B: Consejos y les tenía que escribir cosas para la gente?
CMS: No, muchas veces no. Había muchos que sabían como leer y escribir, mucha gente que estaba. No estaban muy backwards. La plebecita sí estaba porque no quería, tenía un muchito que, eey, I worked for about three years, que ese muchito no podía hacer ni leer, ni ver, ni nada. Se tapaba la carita asi y se acostaba and I even took him home una noche and I kept him at home para poder ayudar, y no.
G - B: What other jobs did you have after Sabino? ¿Cuáles fueron otros?
CMS: Después de la escuela de Sabino, entonces me casé and I quit for one year.
Luego fui a Mosquero porque mi esposo estaba trabajando en Conchas Dam, estaban haciendo Conchas Dam, y allí me levantaba él y nos veníanos a Roy.
Luego después cuitié ten years. I quit ten years to raise my family.
G - B: To raise your family. And how many children did you have and raise?
CMS: I had five children. I had Rudy and Mary Ellen, a little girl, and Francis, Allen and Vernie.
G - B: And you stayed home ten years with your children?
CMS: Luego I went back and they wanted me to go back to Bueyeros or, not Bueyeros to Sabino. Vine y enseñé en Mills. I taught one year in Mills. Y de Mills me cambiaron a Bueyeros. En Bueyeros enseñé dieciséis años. That wasn’t bad porque hay estaban todos mixturados, gringos y mexicanos.
G-B: Was that hard when you had mixed groups? Were there conflicts sometimes? ¿Había problemas?

CMS: O si, si había problemas. You have to have problemas everywhere. The kids would get into a fight outside, for this or that, pero teníanos muchos muchitos de las plantas, que trabajaban en la planta de dry ice. Había la mitad, well I would say one-third of them were americanos.

G-B: Did you have support from the americano parents always? Did you ever feel that they didn’t support you as much as your own people did?

CMS: No, they were very nice to me. No I had very good support del Roy Jefferys, the Jefferys he helped us a lot. El August Hayos, he was one of my best, he was a board member and he had two children there in school, and they helped me in every way they could. In Bueyeros I had a lot better than I had in lower Mosquero and Sabino because I was just beginning. Of course, that was almost fourteen years apart.

G-B: So you feel that in that community where there was a mixed community, Anglo and Hispanic that there weren’t a lot of conflicts. That people pretty much got along?

CMS: No there were no conflicts. We got along very nicely in Bueyeros.

G-B: Why did you go back to teaching after having your children?

CMS: I’ll tell you what. The war was over and it was hard for men to get a job. Abe didn’t have a steady job, he worked here and there. I wanted to go back to teaching and they wanted me to go. I think your mother had quit for one of you girls...

G-B: At Bueyeros?

CMS: No in Dehaven. Y mi compadre Doroteo quería que fuera a Dehaven. I didn’t go, they sent me to Mills. Mr. Blassi, you know Dominic Blassi, “oh, you better go teach, you better go teach.” Y la Mrs. Blassi era supertinent then. So she said, “well, how is your certificate,” my certificate was up to date. So she said, “you have a good chance to get a school.” So I went to Mills y de Mills, había
cuitiado una mestra en Bueyeros and they sent me to Bueyeros.

G - B: And you were there for sixteen years?

CMS: Sixteen years then I came to Roy.

G- B: Tell us a little bit about Bueyeros, that was also rural?

CMS: Well, I had very good years in Bueyeros. You had hard times too in a lot of ways, but then the people were very nice to me and they worked with me. Especially Mary Gonzales, Manuel, the Jefferys, the Mieras, all of them were very good to me.

G - B: Were the jobs sometimes political? Teaching, was it very political? Were your jobs in danger if there was a new administration? Tell me a little bit about that.

CMS: I’ll tell you what, at that time my dad was a very good democrat and the democrats were in, so I didn’t have any problems getting in. I didn’t have any problems getting in. Later on we did because I married a Republican and then that went the opposite.

G - B: Then you had to become a Republican.

CMS: The last years, but it didn’t bother me too much. We got along pretty good.

G - B: Now did your husband, was he always real supportive of you in teaching?

CMS: At first he didn’t want me to teach. He didn’t want me to teach because he thought that was a man’s job to support his wife. And my place was at home. But I saw the need and the kids needed, well, hard times were bad and then we needed more money anyway. And the kids were going for an education. Then, Rudolf finished the eight grade with me at Bueyeros y se fue a high school in Roy. We had to send him to Roy and then we had to keep another house. Luego graduó Francis and he went there. Luego el Allen y asina. Y ya cuando graduaron ellos ya Rudolfo venía al colegio. We needed money to afford it.

G - B: So primarily for you it was economic but then afterwards your husband got used to the idea and he did support you? It must have been hard to have four or five children and also work outside of the home? How did you manage?
CMS: Well, the first year I taught in Bueyeros, the only time I taught after I was married, well I taught one year in lower Mosquero, I had my sister, Grace, take care of Rudy, he was a baby. Y luego I didn’t teach the following year because I got pregnant de la Mary Ellen, so I didn’t teach. And Carlida said “why didn’t you go ahead and I could have taken your place.” But we didn’t do it because el Abe didn’t want me to work then, that’s when he wanted me to stay home and take care of the kids. Y luego ya después no enseñé. I went with him to Conchas Dam, they were building Conchas Dam. So we moved to Tucumcari and then from Tucumcari we went to Conchas Dam. We found our own place to live, they didn’t have places to live there then they built houses there.

G - B: We were talking earlier, when we were looking at the year books that in Roy for example, they didn’t hire any Hispanic teachers at all? And we looked at those year books and there were none or maybe one and eventually you went to teach there. And yet in these rural schools you were a teacher, my mother taught in that county, I don’t know if others, but they seemed more willing to hire you in the rural schools. Do you have any idea why that was? Or in Mosquero even?

CMS: No... I could have taught in Mosquero, I don’t know, my kids wanted to go to Roy to school. They were from Roy and they were partial to Roy and I was too, I guess. I know they offered me a school in Mosquero but the people from Bueyeros didn’t want me to come so I stayed with them. The reason I came to, I asked for a transfer from Bueyeros, I got very sick and I had surgery for an ulcer a bleeding ulcer. Entonces era cuando my husband wanted me to quit or do something so we decided, I asked for a transfer. I applied in Roy and they gave me Roy and they took me right away. I even had a contract with Mosquero school and Mr. Parents said, “well, I know you are very sick and you need to be closer to your family, so I moved to Roy.

G - B: Now, when you first became a teacher in those early years, there was a lot of pressure and a lot of talk about the need to americanize especially the Hispanic children and the only way they were going to americanize them was teaching
them English. There was a lot of pressure on the schools and the teachers to teach these children English. Do you remember anything about those kinds of pressures you might have had and how you dealt with them? What do you remember about that?

CMS: Well the thing is that we tried to teach them English at school. And then at home it was all Spanish. You don’t have too, you’re Spanish, you have to learn your own language first and your language was more important. But then we tried to, I mean, create this in the kids that we had to learn the English language because it was America and we were all Americans, and they had to compete with the other things that were coming up.

G - B: So did you think that it was your job to prepare these children to live in the world and to work in the world and did you believe that English was the only... If they didn’t learn English they would not have...

CMS: They were not going to get ahead. Because the Spanish, I didn’t even know how to read Spanish myself. I took Spanish in high school and learned very little in Spanish because my teacher was an Anglo, it was the superintendent, was teaching Spanish, he didn’t know anymore, but he... I know that Joe Trujillo and I sometimes had to take this class and we didn’t know anything about the class. We started teaching that way.

G - B: So did you ever think that it would be nice to teach these children to read in their own language? To read Spanish. Did you ever think that was important or did you ever think about that?

CMS: No, I didn’t think at that time, I didn’t think that way. Because I thought the English language was supposed to be...

G - B: With more experience later on, did you change?

CMS: Yes, I did. Afterwards I tried to teach my kids how to read Spanish and I myself learned a lot in Spanish, too.

G - B: Later, were you still teaching in the sixties when the bilingual education came in, did you then think that well maybe it is important to teach Spanish?
It is important.

But do you think that in the thirties and forties there were no opportunities and no one thought it was important?

No opportunity. No that's right.

Now okay, sometimes teachers were told that they should not allow children to speak at all in Spanish, that they should never use it in the classroom. What was your position on that?

Well we had to maintain that. Because we had to get after the children so that they could learn the language. The main purpose was for them to learn it.

So was there like, Spanish is forbidden in the classroom?

To speak the Spanish, and they spoke and we...

Did you have to punish the children?

No, no. We didn’t punish them, we just told them the reason why they had to learn the English language. Because that was what was being used.

Did you ever have to use Spanish to make them understand?

Oh yeah.

So you used it if you had too.

If I had too I used it, oh yes.

Did you ever teach or were you encouraged to teach about their own culture?

Like in the forties that was a big thing to teach, what songs, folk dances, but in the thirties I guess there wasn’t much interest in that right?

I didn’t teach in the forties. I quit in thirty-eight and I was off ten years. So I didn’t go back until forty-eight.

But when you were teaching you didn’t?

No, no I didn’t.

The San José Training Program was a very unique, a very special teacher training program in Albuquerque, begun by Professor Tireman. A very select group of teachers were sent there. Do you remember how you were selected and what it meant to go there? What kind of training you got?
I don’t know really how we were selected. I know that there were only Carlida and I from Harding County, that I know. Geniva later on. But the other one was from Quay County, Lucy. Lucy, Geniva and I went together. Carlida was the first one to go. Those were the only ones that went from Harding.

And you got scholarships?
Yes.

And what was the training like?
Well they taught you like in a rural school. You had the one-room school, you didn’t have one grade like you have now. Like I taught in Roy.

So it was training for rural teachers.

For rural schools, it was training for that. And we learned a lot of things. They were very good. I think we got more out of that then we ever got from any other...

How long did you go to that Institute?
We didn’t go for more than three months.

It was a short program. Were there a lot of emphasis on teaching English? Or do you remember?
Yes, there was some. Of course, that was in thirty-four when we went.

Did you board at the University?
At the University, we stayed at the University. And when we went out to the rural we’d board with these people.

So you’d go to rural areas?
For a week or so. To observe and all that.

And you came to Highlands every summer?
Yes.

What was that like?
Well, it was very hard. I tell you because you had your family. Vernie was just about two years old then. And Rudy had to take care of him and Francis, and it was very hard to go to school because every time you’d hear a siren or something
you’d wonder if the kids are in the yard or in the street. Sometimes they had to stay at home with Abe or somebody else.

G - B: Not only that, but you had to pick up your whole family, move to Las Vegas, rent a place, that was an incredible expense.

CMS: It was, it was.

G - B: You had to hook up the lights, hook up the water, pay the rent and you had your house back in Roy. That was a big sacrifice.

CMS: Oh yes. It was very expensive. We didn’t make very much money at that time.

G - B: Do you remember how many summers you came?

CMS: Oh, I don’t know. I can’t tell you how many summers I came. Sometimes I came all summer, sometimes I’d come the first six weeks or the last six weeks.

G - B: How long did it take you to get your degree?

CMS: It took me... I didn’t graduate until fifty-five. Almost with Rudy. Rudy was coming to Highlands...

G - B: How old were you when you got your degree?

CMS: I was about fifty something.

G - B: And you had a son in college?

CMS: I had a son in college.

G - B: And now they make a big deal about returning students and the women who come, and you all were doing that way back then?

CMS: We were doing that.

G - B: Did you like coming to Highlands?

CMS: Yes, we enjoyed it. It was hard because we had to study and we had to feed the kids and we had to take care of them, and do the washing and everything else and then go home.

G - B: Stay up late at night after the kids went to bed then you would do your homework, right?

CMS: That’s right, and did all of that.

G - B: You all were incredible women.
And then Carlida and I stayed at the dorms together. Sometimes we used to just eat there, we wouldn't even go out to eat. We'd just fix us a sandwich or something in the room, we had a lot of work to do.

CMS: How did those husbands of yours let you come here, leave home, go to San José Training, come to Highlands, how did they do that?

CMS: When we went to San José we were still single. No, but after... It was, I guess it was hard for them too, because I know one time I had to leave Francis and Allen with Abe and he took care of them for the summer. Another time two of them stayed with my sister and the one of them stayed with Prima Amalia Montaño.

CMS: But they say that in our culture that the men have always kept their women at home and don't want them... and yet you, my mother and many women like you were out living public lives, teaching, going away to school.

CMS: The reason we did is because we wanted to do it for our kids. For the kids to have an education: That's why I did it. I went to school because I wanted to put my kids through college. And I remember Vernie when he was about five or six, "What are you going to do when you grow up?" "I'm going to go to college." That was the main thing, to educate our kids. We've been doing that even with the grand kids. Abe and I afterwards, he thought it was very neat for them to get ahead.

CMS: If in our culture it is true, in the past, traditional culture, that the place of the woman was in the home, yet we had women like yourselves who were out, you were public school teachers, you went away to school, living very much public lives, did the community, do you think they supported that, looked up to you, that it was an acceptable thing for women in our culture to do?

CMS: I think we were criticized to a certain extent. That we should stay home, that that was our place and why not let our husbands support us, and we should be satisfied with what they were making and so on. But we weren't I guess.

CMS: How do you feel about that?

CMS: I don’t know. I felt like I was trying to help my husband in that way to get ahead.
G - B: Did you ever feel that it was important for yourself? That it was things that you wanted to do?

CMS: I did.

G - B: Would you have ever just quit and stayed home.

CMS: No. I didn’t even want to quit when I quit before I went to Roy.

G - B: When you retired?

CMS: It was my husband that made me retire.

G - B: So after a while, you started because you needed too, but at some point it became fulfilling?

CMS: Yes. I love teaching. I’d go back if I could. I have dreams about going to school. I would.

G - B: Oh, about teaching. Well they have these programs in Albuquerque called Los Abuelitos or something. The people come to the classroom and help with the kids. My daughter is teaching now and she has an Abuelito. She says, “I don’t know what to do with him.”

CMS: They have it here, too. Grandparents. I think it’s nice. But I didn’t go because I thought, well, let somebody else. I just quit. Well, after we retired ...

G - B: What do you think about education today?

CMS: I think education is good and I think it should be kept up, nobody should be deprived from it.

G - B: Do you think they’re doing a good job, as good a job as you all did?

CMS: I’ll tell you what. I don’t know. I know that when I first started teaching, we started to get help, we had these reading programs and a lot of diversion went on. The kids were just running around everywhere. And then discipline is completely out of the schools now and that’s why we’re having all these troubles. I think we had better discipline when we were teaching than what they have now. Because, well I don’t know whether to blame the children, or blame the parents, I don’t know. I don’t know that. Do you?

G - B: I think it’s a real large problem. Society as a whole.
Because we have so many things. We have T.V. You can’t get kids unglued from the T.V. And you know what we’re learning from T.V. There’s good things and there’s bad things.

G - B: What advice would you have for today’s teachers, elementary teachers?

CMS: I think that they should stay with the principles of morality, teach the children to be more moral than they are. Because you know what the problem we are having with our teenagers now and all that. We didn’t have that trouble a few years ago. The kids carrying a baby in their teens. It’s bad. I don’t know. I think you have to be more set in your ways, to be more stricter.

G - B: If you compared your rural teaching experiences with teaching in a town, let’s say like Roy, were they very different experiences? Rural teacher and town teacher?

CMS: Well, there wasn’t too much. The thing is that you have your attention on one grade and you don’t have to work, you have more time for everything. You could do more things for them than you can when you had all the grades. Because I had from first to eight grade at all these rural schools.

G - B: And did you have a preference for one or the other?

CMS: I would rather have the one grade. Because I think I could do better.

G - B: In the rural school you were the janitor?

CMS: We were the janitor, we were doctors, we were nurses, we were everything.

G - B: You were cooks?

CMS: No, well, no we didn’t have to. Later on we had hot lunch in Bueyeros. But before that everybody brought their lunch.

G - B: Do you have a special memory about teaching one thing that stands out in your mind, that was just wonderful?

CMS: I don’t know.

G - B: One thing that you remember or that was very funny that you’d like to tell about? Any incidents?

CMS: Oh yes, I know. One time I was getting some ready for a Christmas Program in
Bueyeros and I was selecting the children, what part to take, this and that. You always have some better than others and a lot more aggressive too. So I was picking, and one little boy jumped in and said, “Mrs. Salazar, I’m not Frank Sinatra but I can help.” He was so cute. I can remember that. I thought, well here it is. You have to give everybody a chance. But we did. We gave a chance to everybody.

G - B: What about an experience that was scary or you thought there was going to be real trouble or where you were under tremendous amount of stress, do you remember anything?

CMS: Well, I remember two little boys running around the school. One was the Andrada boy, Ruben and Vernie. They were running around the school and they ran into each other and one of them had a big gush, Vernie had it right across his head. He still has it. Ruben was a little taller and a little older and he hit him right here and we had to take him to Clayton to have stitches. I couldn’t wait for that bus to come in, and I didn’t know what to do. I had the hot lunch lady help me to give first-aid. We did whatever we could and then we took him to Clayton. And I tell you, I thought well, I’m going to be in trouble. But it was just an accident. But that’s about all we ever had. We didn’t have any bad problems. Oh, the kids would fight, they’d tease others and get into trouble like that. But we settled those pretty easy.

G - B: As we’ve been interviewing the women we think that they’re incredible women. Incredible role models, that they were pioneers in their times given the kind of cultural backgrounds that they came from. Families that didn’t have a lot of money but yet the interest in education, that they were able to manage families and a job and we think they are very special women. When you were doing all these things did you somehow feel also that you were doing important things and that you were a special person in your community.

CMS: I think so. I think so. I think I was trying to help and I have, older people, boys and girls that went to school with me. Abe used to tell me, “I can’t understand
why they come to see you, I didn’t like my teachers.” But they do, and they come to thank me for helping them out.

G - B: So you know that your life was important?

CMS: My life is important and I have so many of them that went to college, from Bueyeros from Sabino, from different places. And they went because I encouraged them, they said.

G - B: And you taught them what it took to go to college.

CMS: I know I had one boy tell me, “Oh, I like to do this, I like to do that,” and I said, “You can if you try, you can if you try. There’s nothing you can’t do.”

AA: At Sabino, Sabinoso or another place?

CMS; Sabinoso is different.

G - B: Where is Sabino?

CMS: Sabino is far east of Roy. Do you know where Dehaven is? Well it’s just right across from Dehaven but it’s more to the south from Dehaven, on that road.

G - B: Sabino and then Sabinoso is in the canyon.

CMS: Sabinoso is in the canyon in San Miguel county. I know we had picnics. Carlida and I had lot of...

G - B: I remember the Play Days at the end of the year. Remember? We’d get together and we’d play and we’d have races and oh, I remember those.

CMS: We had graduations at Bueyeros, we had graduations that would come in from Salado, Albert and Rosebud. We had the graduations there in Bueyeros because it was larger there.

G - B: I remember one in Mosquero. When I graduated we went to Mosquero. The only time. Are there things that you’re curious about, our viewers here that I haven’t asked?

CMS: I could get him to do anything for me, if I didn’t move to Mosquero. I don’t know why.

G - B: How do you think your kids feel about you? About your career and your life? Your own children.
My own kids. Well they think it was okay. First I had Vernie, he’s the spoiled one. He thinks he should’ve had more attention.

But they probably always thought that their mother was special. Do you think it was hard having your own children in the classroom?

Oh yes it was because they took more punishment than anybody else. I know you girls did.

Did you influence your sons in becoming teachers or did they do it on their own?

Well no. They came on their own. We told them that we wanted them to get an education. Now Rudy wanted to be an engineer and he wanted to go to Las Cruces right away. We didn’t have that much money. We said, “Go to Highlands and if you make it at Highlands then we’ll try to send you next year.” He came to Highlands and he was satisfied and he stayed at Highlands. And the others I never told them to go ahead and teach, I told them to get whatever they wanted. Now Allen went on into the Industrial Arts and machinist. He’s a machinist. The kids said that he has a better job then they did, as teachers.

Which ones became teachers?

Rudy, Francis and Vernie.

All three of them. I didn’t realize that.

There were four boys. See Rudy now, he retired from Phoenix, he was Assistant Superintendent up there in Phoenix. And he was always a Principal here. He retired from Gallup and then he went to Phoenix. He went first as a Principal and then he went on to Assistant Superintendent. But he retired now from Phoenix. And I have two granddaughters and they always wanted to be teachers like their grandma.

So you have some of your grandchildren who are teachers?

I have two girls going now. One of them started last year and Tammy has been three years, she graduated here at Highlands, got her Masters here at Highlands. Kim Ann graduated from Phoenix, the University and she’s teaching. Tammy teaches fourth grade and Kim Ann teaches, well she wanted to teach in high
school but she’s teaching seventh or eight. But she likes it. Then I have the other granddaughter, she’s in teaching too. She got her degree but she wanted to be a doctor, she took a lot of chemistry and everything but she’s with another job. She’s a supervisor. But she says that she eventually wants to go back to teaching.

G - B: María did you have a question?

MDV: Celina, when you were talking about when you first started teaching y había niños que hablaban puro español, ¿cómo les enseñaba el inglés? ¿Nos puede dar un ejemplo de eso, de cómo?

CMS: Pues sí. Tenía que hacer cards, pictures: mother, father, brother, sister, baby and like I was telling you, we’d make pictures of food and things like that.

MDV: ¿Entonces usaba el español ud. también?

CMS: We had to do all of that. We depended more on cards.

MDV: So did you see yourself as a bilingual teacher?

CMS: We did. It was bilingual. Because you had too. There was no way you could avoid that.

AA: When you started teaching was it already nine months or was it still six months?

CMS: Nine months. We had nine months. But my god, I was thinking, seventy-eight dollars a month, compared to what they make. And then later on, it got better.

MDV: ¿Tenía que vivir con familia cuando iban a otros pueblitos donde no tenían familia o les daban casa o qué?

CMS: No. La primera vez que fui a Sabino arenté un cuartito and Margaret went with me. My niece stayed with me.

G - B: Because the families weren’t comfortable sending you off, young daughters alone off to these towns to live alone. They usually, they very often sent somebody with you? Or they had you board?

CMS: I had to. I boarded two years afterwards.

G - B: You couldn’t get your own apartment like today. You had to board? They felt safe only if you were boarding with a family?

CMS: And then we had to live close to somebody that they knew. That they had
confidence in them. I think that helped us a lot too. We had a lot of hard times.

MDV: ¿Pero recibían mucho respeto de la comunidad?

CMS: Pero no, la gente fue muy buena gente toda. In all those places where we lived, nos respetaban y los repetábamos a ellos. And some people knew our parents too. Like when I taught in Sabino, a lot of those people knew my dad. Los Luceros, Primo Encarnación Lucero. Their mother was a cousin to my dad, la mujer de él. So we knew we were with people we knew.

G - B: It wasn’t as if you were going... Well, when my mother left to Cerro she was going far away and away from family.

CMS: I know she had a hard time, she told me the story.

AA: Where was that?

G - B: In Cerro, Taos County. That was her first job. But she had a tío in Taos County in politics and he got her the job. But it was leaving home, I mean, far away.

CMS: Tío Isidro. Oh, yeah, she used to write to me and pobrecita, she was very lonely. Then she came to Dehaven. I told her, “We have a school in Dehaven, why don’t you come up here?” She tried. She applied for it and she got it. Then she used to ride with me. I used to have a car. I always drove a car. And she’d come from Roy with me as far as the top of Sabino, there was a truck driver, era Eugenio Velásquez, he used to drive the bus to Dehaven y hay se subía ella con él y se iba con él. Then on Friday evening after four o’clock I’d wait for her there and we’d go to Roy.

G - B: I think that both of you getting selected for the Tireman School was really great, and this was funded by Cutting, he gave the scholarships. It was small groups and very, very selective.

AA: In what year was that?

CMS: I went in thirty-four, thirty-five.

AA: That’s the year he died.

G - B: I think we can bring this to a close and continue the informal conversation which will be just as interesting. Thank you so much. It was a wonderful interview. A
lot of people are going to profit from it.
MARY SÁNCHEZ
March 20, 1992
Side A:

**G - B:** Today, we're with Mrs. Mary Sánchez in her home in Albuquerque, March 21st, 1992. And we're going to be interviewing, Mrs. Sánchez here. Mrs. Sánchez, let's begin by telling us about yourself, where you grew up, when you were born, how your family was, your hometown. Just tell us about your childhood.

**Sanchez:** Well, first of all, I was born here in Albuquerque in 1906. My parents were Mr. and Mrs. Nepomuceno Mariño. They were natives from here. My dad has in livestock. I ran around here, and this here when...

**G - B:** This part of town?

**Sanchez:** This part of town...

**G - B:** Which wasn't town then?

**Sanchez:** No, wasn't town but we lived downtown. We had a little...

**G - B:** A little ranch, sort of?

**Sanchez:** A little ranch up here with a windmill. And every Sunday we would come down to the mountains we used to call them, and have picnics over there with friends, neighbors and so on. My dad owned sheep and cattle. I was educated here in the APS. 
G - B: You went to public schools?
Sanchez: Public schools here and I graduated from Albuquerque High. And my first experience was, as soon as I finished high school, I started the university.

G - B: At the University of New Mexico?
Sanchez: The University of New Mexico but, in the middle of the first semester I was offered a school down at Valencia County. My dad said, "No, you must finish your school" I said, "Dad they gave me a job. I want to work." So, I went. And I took a job down at Valencia, New Mexico, Valencia County. I taught there the whole year then the following year I was hired again.

G - B: So you were about eighteen, or nineteen years?
Sanchez: Nineteen, nineteen years old.

G - B: You were nineteen when you took that first job?
Sanchez: Yes. Well, I was nineteen because at that time we didn't start school until about seven years old, I guess. And so I stayed there. I met my husband.

G - B: He was from Valencia?
Sanchez: Yes. From Belén, New Mexico. We both started working, too. He had finished a year before I did, high school, I guess. And he was employed at Valencia County as a Chief, he was the Assessor Deputy. So, we got married and then I kept on. My daughter came in 1930. Then my
husband died very young when he was only twenty five years old. But, anyway after he died I came to APS and I got a school here. I got it in the mountains.

G - B: In Chilili or, or...?

Sánchez: No. What was the name?

G - B: I don't know what’s up there, Tajique or not that far up?

Sánchez: No. No, it was out further I think.

MDV: Escabosa?

Sánchez: Escabosa. I couldn't think of it. It's been so long, you know. So, when I came from over there, I took that school. Dad didn't want me to go. He said, "Mi hijita no se va."

G - B: It's too far.

Sánchez: Too far. I said, "Dad." So, I left my girl with them and I started. It was only a one...

G - B: Room school.

Sánchez: School. Yeah, and then there wasn't enough for two. So I surveyed all the community there. I got enough signatures to get another teacher. So, I got, what's her name? Josefita Herrera to go down there as a teacher aide, at the time. She wasn't a regular, she hadn't finished I guess. I got her to help me down there and she was paid by the Board of Education. So,
the following year I came down to Los Padillas.

G - B: And that's where you stayed?

Sánchez: I stayed there for twelve years.

G - B: Let me back up a little bit now and ask you, do you remember why you became a teacher? What motivated you, who influenced you?

Sánchez: Well, I'll tell you what. When we lived across the river and at the time my sister decided to get married. We were seven children. But there was a leave of absence between the first family and the second family. I used to think mama had been married twice and had two families.

G - B: But she wasn't.

Sánchez: No. Barbara was about twelve years younger than the others. There were four over there and the three of us. Barbara and Timmy and then my brother and I were the youngest ones. Well anyway, when I was going to Albuquerque, when I graduated from the eight grade at the time, they told me that I couldn't go because my sister decided to get married. My brother decided, my dad bought a brand new Ford for us to come to school. So, my brother just took it for granted that he didn't want to go to school anymore because he had a new car to roam around. So, he quit school and then Mr.
Gonzales, who was our principal at that time met me and my mother and said, "Mary are you going to school?"
And I said, "No." My tears came down, you know. And I said, "Because, there's no transportation across the river out to Albuquerque High." He went back to my dad and asked him if I could go to Harwood Girls School for Girls.

G - B: It was a boarding school?

Sánchez: Boarding school. My mother, thought she could never accept me going to a non-Catholic and my dad said, "Oh, wait a minute. Let's go talk to the priest." Father Duchette, in those years, you know. And we went and he said, I was supposed to be going just from Monday through Friday. And you should have seen mom, on Saturdays I had to pray the rosary and...

G - B: And make sure you weren't losing it?

Sánchez: Oh, yes. On Sunday...

G - B: So the priest said it was fine for you to go to school there?

Sánchez: Yes. Father Duchette said, "Well, you have a good Christian background." That's what he said. "For her education you must let her go." And you know in those days you wouldn't think that priests...

G - B: Oh, yeah. They drew the line. Right? But, he
recognized your education was important?

Sánchez: Definitely.

G - B: And you really wanted to go. To be educated.

Sánchez: I wanted to go. Because Mr. Gonzales said, "Amalia, who was his sister had said she was going." So, I went. At the time I went to Harwood we used to have a whole hour to study. I finished high school in three years.

G - B: Was that a good educational experience?

Sánchez: Oh, my goodness.

G - B: You feel you got a really fine education there?

Sánchez: Very good, very good. Because, we had to study. And we had to help, either one week helping in the kitchen stacking or in the bedrooms, somewhere. Training you for either way, housewife or a teacher, I guess.

G - B: And was there special training to be a teacher in that high school?

Sánchez: No.

G - B: Or just in general education.

Sánchez: It was general education. But what helped me was that they gave me the little children who were in the first grade, I guess, to take care of them and take them out for a walk and supervise them. So, that's where I started in...
G - B: So, you started working with children and you decided that's something that you wanted to do?

Sánchez: Yeah. I always did.

G - B: From the experience.

Sánchez: Then after my husband died I never did get married. I said it's either my profession or get married and raise another family.

G - B: And you decided to stay single.

Sánchez: I decided to stay.

G - B: Wonderful. Tell me a little about Harwood. Were the students there mixed students culturally? Were there Anglos and Hispanics or what was it like?

Sánchez: Oh, yes. Spanish and Anglos. A lot of Anglos from the northern part of the state coming down and there were Catholic. Many of them were Catholic. Many of them were Catholic and also a lot of them, Methodist and...

G - B: Presbyterians too, I suppose.

Sánchez: Yeah.

G - B: From the North. And they educated you well?

Sánchez: Oh my, I appreciated it because, you see, I could have never finished high school in three years and one summer.

G - B: And you liked boarding?
Sánchez: Well, I had to.

G - B: Did you get used to it after awhile? At first, it was probably hard to be away from your family.

Sánchez: It was. To be away, and I said, "Dad, they don't feed me enough and..." "Well, if they don't, we'll bring you something to eat." So, then later on they said they had to have my tonsils taken out. And I said, "Dad, they're going to have to, well, if they do have to have your tonsils out, you just stay." He was making it rough on me, I think. My oldest sister said, "Don't get her out. Just let her stay."

G - B: Oh, that's good. So, the whole family...

Sánchez: The family backed me.

G - B: Was there any others in your family who had educations? A high school education?

Sánchez: Well, yes, my sister. My older sisters, no. Because, they just went to...

G - B: Eighth grade or something.

Sánchez: Well, not even that. Well, in fact, you see Barbara was born in nineteen one. So, they were born in the eighteen hundreds.

G - B: But they encouraged you. They wanted you to go on and get educated. Do you think it's because you were the baby or they recognized that you were a special person
that should go on to do great things?

Sánchez: Because they didn't do it. They thought that I should.

G - B: That you should. That's wonderful. So, your whole family encouraged you?

Sánchez: The whole family, oh yes. The whole family.

G - B: And your mother?

Sánchez: My mother after that, yes. But then you should have seen her on Saturdays and Sundays. I had to do some reading in the catechism and reading in this and that. Of course, Dad would go to mass with us on Sundays. On some Sundays and some not. But, anyway...

G - B: So, you got a double education? Your weekday and your weekend.

Sánchez: Oh, yes. I had to do that. And my mother had also a system after I got out of there. Even before, that my sister would be one week in the kitchen helping the lady that used to, like you said, there was an Indian lady there with them that used to do the hard work for mom. But mom would put up with her on Sunday, I mean, one week in the kitchen and the other week in the bedrooms to help. And I thought that was a very nice way of...

G - B: Way of training. So, they were looking at, if this daughter gets married she'll know these skills but if
she goes out to do other things she'll also be educated.

Sánchez: That's right and then my husband, also encouraged me to go on.

G - B: To keep teaching.

Sánchez: To keep teaching and going to school. After all, I got, you see, it was the second year then I had been teaching, that I had to finish up. I just started here at the university. Then I went to Catholic Teachers College that became Saint Josephs.

G - B: Here in Albuquerque?

Sánchez: Albuquerque.

G - B: That's where you graduated? You got your B.A. degree from?

Sánchez: Yes.

G - B: Now, you would teach in the winter and go to school in the summer? Is that how it would work?

Sánchez: Summers and at night. My husband would bring me and Saturdays he would bring me.

G - B: So, you had a lot of support to follow your career.

Sánchez: After I got married, that was the understanding that I would keep on.

G - B: Did you make that arrangement before you got married?
You said, "I'm getting married but this is what I want to do with my life."

Sánchez: Yes. That's right and I did and I appreciate it and then, of course, after losing him I decided to go on with my masters. So, I became a principal.

G - B: Okay, before we go on to that, do you remember your first teaching jobs, what they were like, what you did in the classroom, how you felt about teaching?

Sánchez: Well when I went to Valencia County, I think I could speak better English than my principal could. At that time he hadn't finished high school. But, they hired him in those days, I guess, according to...

G - B: Well, a lot of politics, okay. So, a lot of the hires and fires were political.

Sánchez: But I started teaching the first and the second I think, and he had third and fourth, or whatever. I stayed over there. My dad saw that I stayed in a nice home.

G - B: You boarded with a family.

Sánchez: Boarded with a family. And after that when I got married, we lived in Peralta and then we started living in Los Lunas where my husband was working. So, I stayed out there some years. I don't remember now. I started teaching here with APS in nineteen thirty two,
I think.

G - B: Thirty two. Escabosa, now that must have been a pretty isolated little school. Did any of the children speak English when they came to school?

Sánchez: No. They didn't, in fact, I moved...

G - B: And were they mostly Spanish-speaking students?

Sánchez: Spanish. Spanish. There were some Anglos that were there at that time. But up to this time I still see them off and on. The old people.

G - B: That were your students?

Sánchez: Macario and I'll never forget. I went one day to Highlands Senior Center. I go there, you know, and he said, "Mrs. Sánchez," and I said, "What?" I couldn't remember him at all, and he said, "Do you remember me? Macario." And I said, "Yes. My little devil."

G - B: Now he was a grown man.

Sánchez: A grown man already married and a family.

G - B: Let me ask you, in those days when you went out to teach those children in the real early jobs, like in Escabosa or Valencia, were there already rules about Spanish in the classrooms and teaching English or not being able? Tell me a little about the whole language issue.

Sánchez: No we were supposed to. In fact, when I went to
Harwood. We were punished if we...

G - B: If you spoke Spanish.

Sánchez: ...spoke Spanish. I was spanked, I was spanked.

G - B: What sort of things did they do?

Sánchez: What, you mean to keep...?

G - B: To punish you?

Sánchez: Well, I'll tell you it kept me off one the parties that I was supposed to have with all the boys. The Menual boys.

G - B: Because you had spoken Spanish to one of your friends or something?

Sánchez: Well, I guess with the other girls that were there.

G - B: And did you tend to speak Spanish?

Sánchez: Well, no, no.

G - B: In secret or you really tried to follow the rules?

Sánchez: We had to follow the rules. That's all there is to it and we were taught also, by then, you follow the rules or we get in trouble.

G - B: So one time, you did get in trouble?

Sánchez: Well, I got into trouble because, I don't know what we were talking about a small group of girls, you know. But, anyway, they...

- B: You said something.
Sánchez: That was it. No, it wasn't bad. I think, we just said something that the supervisor didn't understand what we were saying.

G - B: And it seemed natural to you probably to say it in Spanish.

Sánchez: Oh, yeah. Oh, sure. But, other than that, when I came here at APS, it was when we're in the county. Then the county was consulted with APS.

G - B: But, did they tell you when you went out to teach, "Now, your job is to teach these children English and you mustn't use Spanish."

Sánchez: They never said, "Mustn't." But, we knew that.

G - B: So, you felt that it was really your job to teach them English and you absolutely...

Sánchez: That's right because we were there, that's right. And we would speak Spanish to the parents there, with them because they didn't know any English.

G - B: But the children you tried to just use Spanish, I mean, English all the time. Did you punish the children if they spoke Spanish?

Sánchez: Oh, no.

G - B: You didn't do what they had done to you.

Sánchez: No, no. No, nobody else did it only at Harwood Girls School.
But later on a lot of people went on to public schools and said that in the thirties and the forties, maybe depending on the teachers, that they were punished. Because, I know a lot of people, even, I was talking to a man the other day that started, I guess, grade school, probably he must have been in the late forties or fifties, he was put up in front of the classroom kneeling in front of everybody. I mean, really severe punishment, a lot of children did suffer those kinds of punishments.

Oh, I imagine so.

They were very traumatic, I guess.

And I think it was for our own benefit to learn the English and not to try to get away from it.

Do you ever think it would have been possible to do both things? Like we do have bilingual education.

I think so.

To teach them literacy in Spanish and to teach them English, too. That if you had known how it could have been possible.

Probably so, but, at that time there weren't as many funds, school funds as there are now, you know. I remember during that my first years of experience, when I came back to Albuquerque as a teacher down in Los
Padillas. They gave me a younger group, they started with NYCA the youth, but they helped teachers just like a teachers aide now. I had one that helped me and another one, they put one in each grade. I had only one grade.

G - B: Now, do you remember some of the things that you did in the classroom to teach children English.

Sánchez: Well,...

G - B: Was it hard?

Sánchez: Oh, no. We had to make our own ways of teaching them. Little games, or whatever it was, little songs, and also, the programs that we used to have and that's the way we educated them.

G - B: You probably didn't have a lot of supplies or books.

Sánchez: No. Well, when I came to Albuquerque we did.

G - B: Out in the...

Sánchez: Out in Valencia, we didn't have that much for the first years that I taught over there. See, from Valencia, the little town of Valencia I came down to Peralta. From Peralta I went to Los Chávez and then when my husband died, I went as the principal down to Bosque Farms.

G - B: Tell me about the programs. Did you do special programs like Christmas plays and that kind of thing?
Sánchez: Oh, all the time, yes, all the time. Yes, I enjoyed it. I remember involving the parents to do the costumes and they were willing to do it. I had my mother and my sisters, everybody.

G - B: They were all helping you. So, you found that the communities were cooperative? Was the school the center of the community in those years?

Sánchez: Oh, yes. I think they realized by nineteen thirties because, see, I remember the families. Macario’s mother, they were already wanting to know that they should be sending their children to school. In fact, they helped me to get all these people together to get another teacher. You see, the interest was there already.

G - B: But, you sort of helped to move it forward?

Sánchez: Absolutely.

G - B: What was the role of the teacher in the community? Was the teacher an important person? A respected person?

Sánchez: Very much so I think. Oh, my goodness, yes. They thought they were the top. I mean, they always had respect, always willing to help in any way shape or form.

G - B: Now, sometimes I wonder about this. You know my own mother, whom you knew, went out to teach very young
like you did. I think she was seventeen, her first job way out in the mountains. I know these very young girls leave their homes, go out to teach, board with someone they don't know, did you ever feel, were you scared? Did you ever feel vulnerable? Did you ever feel that maybe you were in danger? Did you ever have any experiences that were...?

Sánchez: No, never, never, no. But, we, you know, being that I had another teacher with me when I came here to Albuquerque, we were going to the university on Wednesday nights. We'd go on Monday morning come back on Wednesday, go back and come back, go back and then come back on Friday. No, I never felt that I was afraid of anything then.

G - B: But you had to be pretty brave young women to go out there on your own in those days, I think?

Sánchez: Oh, I know. Escabosa was not far from here. Do you know where Cedar Crest is?

G - B: It's behind the mountains?

Sánchez: Well, just on the other side of Tijeras.

G - B: Yeah.

Sánchez: And that was no problem.

G - B: But didn't you sometimes feel, "Gosh, these young women going out and being adventuresome."
Sánchez: Then I think it was more my dad and mom, felt more for it then. But I was still young and I wanted...

G - B: You wanted adventures. You went out and did you feel good, did you feel independant?

Sánchez: I felt that I had to support my daughter. I had a child to take care of, and of course, like my dad said, "You don't have to worry about that. I'll take care of both of you."

G - B: But, you said, "I'll take care of myself."

Sánchez: Well, no. I just said, "Dad", and he knew that I had I had already gotten my Masters and all that, I mean, my B.A. then my Masters. Later, I became principal.

G - B: Did you ever feel, well, you became a boss very soon. We'll talk about that in a minute but, when you were a teacher. Did you feel like somehow that some of the women have said, "It was pretty obvious that only the men became principals. The women, there weren't as many opportunities." Were there ever any conflicts that way or let's say, that you feel that Anglos had more advantages then you did?

Sánchez: I never felt that. I have never felt that I have been in any way... Like my dad always used to say, "You're not any better than anybody else and nobody else is better than you are. Always have respect for
everybody." And I never had that. ..

G - B: Any problems.

Sánchez: ...problems with the Anglos. In fact, my children
didn't either. And so, of course, it was already late
in the thirties and forties and fifties. But, when I
became principal, the first in nineteen thirties.

G - B: You must have been the first woman principal?

Sánchez: Here, one of them.

G - B: For the public schools.

Sánchez: Yes. Yes. But, I started, see, the superintendent, Mr.
Zamora became superintendant. They gave me the
privilege to take his place because he was principal
down at Bosque. There were four teachers and the
principal.

G - B: Were all the teachers men or, I mean, women?

Sánchez: No, I had men and women. I had the coach and the sixth
grade teacher. I believe at that time we were teaching
eight grade, too.

G - B: Did they take to a woman boss? Do you think? They had
respect for you?

Sánchez: Over there I had the young one. But when I came to Old
Town I had an elderly man. And he was always...

G - B: You didn't have any problems being the boss?
Sánchez: I didn't have no... No, because I always, you have to use some kind of psychology or whatever you call it to make them believe that they are, just like your husbands, you know, you make them believe that they are the boss. But you are they boss.

G - B: So that's what you learned about how to work with men under you? Let them think they have some power but you really knew you had it.

Sánchez: Oh, yes.

G - B: Tell me about some of your experiences as principal.

Sánchez: Well, like I said I went from Escabosa just half of a semester I finished out the year. I think it was that I had to finish that. When I came back from over there, it was just one year that I stayed in the mountains and then dad saw that I would get down to the valley.

G - B: Through connections?

Sánchez: Of course, connections. Always.

G - B: He, he knew people. Okay.

Sánchez: Politics. He was a strong Republican at the time and then he died and then when Dennis Chávez became, we became Democrat. But, anyway, I don't mind if you want to put all that down.

G - B: Oh, this is all fine. That's part of it.
Sanchez: But anyway, I came to teach here at Los Padillas in nineteen thirty five I think it was. There I stayed for twelve years. Then I came back to...

G - B: Were you principal at Los Padillas, also?

Sanchez: Yes. I came back to East San José and form East San José I went to back to Los Padillas.

G - B: That was a big responsibility?

Sanchez: It was, I'll tell you what happened. Miss Schmitt, who was the superintendent, knew that I had taught there, and I knew the families. And dad used to live there too. They knew the families, you know, and they respected each other so much. I told them when I was at East San José teaching, I was a sixth grade teacher there, and I said... Then Miss Beatriz Sánchez transferred in October and at the end the September and then October there was no principal and the school was going to pot. I understand, I don't know. Being that I had had the experience down in Valencia County they asked me if I'd would take the school and I knew the family and I knew the people there. So, I said, "Yes, I'll go, but if I don't like it and I can't do it may I have a sixth grade back?" They put a substitute there. Then by January they asked me if I wanted to stay, well, they said, "I think you better stay, you're doing
a good job." Well, at the end of the year, I said, "I'll take principalship here next year if you relieve me from my teaching, either I'm going to be a principal or I'm going to be a teacher, one of the two."

G - B: Good for you.

Sánchez: I was frank enough to speak. There's a lot of people that are afraid to speak.

G - B: Right, but, you spoke your mind.

Sánchez: I spoke since I was that high I think. You know my mother used to say, not the bell, the knock on the door I'd run out there to see who it was. My mom would tell dad, "Bring that girl over here, my goodness, she always has to jump." "Let her do it." Dad spoiled me, but anyway, he spoiled me rotten but I think the right way.

G - B: He's the one who encouraged you to be your own person?

Sánchez: Oh, oh, yes. Mother was always afraid that I'd get...

G - B: That you'd get too independant. Probably get in trouble.

Sánchez: Yes. You know, it's your destiny or is it your attitude, my sister was the opposite. She was very self-centered. I was out-going and my brother was out-going, too.
G - B: And you think that's what helped you to move along in your career and become principal?

Sánchez: I think so. I guess so, because from what I saw up there I thought I could do it. And I did.

G - B: And you did a good job.

Sánchez: I guess.

G - B: Did you ever have serious conflicts or get involved with some political...

Sánchez: Well let me tell you, when I went down to Los Padillas as principal, I told them at the end year for the following year. They wanted me to start this social studies program. They always used to teach straight history, straight geography, straight this, and I had taken that course at the university. I asked for a teacher, Miss Denton, top-notch teacher, and she took the course with me, too. I said that if I had the chance, I had a good talk with the superintendent and they were understanding, of course, I talked to them like I'm talking to you. I said, "If you relieve me from my teaching then I would take the responsibility of starting this new program. If you give me the chance to get my teachers to help." I mean, teachers that had taken the course. I gave the names of some the teachers that were there. So, sure enough. We
started the whole social studies program. Of course, like I told the teachers, "This is the social studies. It's a new program, now there's new groups -- A, B and C, at the time or whatever -- bluebirds or redbirds or whatever. You can not neglect the top ones or the lower ones, but have a program set up that all will be taken care of. I always took care of that because I learned that from supervision at the other place. Once you had experience, you know. We started there and we started the boys club, no, it wasn't the boys club, it was the...
Side B:

G - B: The superintendant?

Sánchez: Oh, yes. He was the superintendant in the county then, superintendent for APS and then the state. God bless him, he died in such a terrible way. He was mugged and hurt, but he died. But anyway, like I was saying, we started the girl scouts and the patrol boys.

G - B: Were you a very progressive principal? I seems you wanted to do things for the community.

Sánchez: Well, I did my part. Get the families, get the community that's the only way the teachers are going...

G - B: ...get them involved.

Sánchez: Involved. Then I got involved with the PTA. But all these other teachers there, now there's another teacher there that was from Los Padillas. And she knew the families and of course they knew her, too. Of course, I never stayed there, I think that's what helped me, I think. Since I went to boarding school and I was away all the times since I was young and then got married and got away.

G - B: So change was important? You think to keep you on your toes?
Sanchez: I think so. If I had to stayed there I don't think it would have been that easy for me to realize, well they respected me I was not as stranger but still, my father was such a good, I mean my family was very good with people, to help down there during the depression.

G - B: So family connections were very important for you in the community. Then you went to Old Town?

Sanchez: Oh, yes. No, I went to Santa Barbara. That's...

G - B: Martinez Town?

Sanchez: I went there for two years. I said, "Oh, my goodness, this is such a big school." Of course, this one Mr. Barela, I was talking about Mr. Barela. But I had some really nice, good teachers, too. Much older than myself at that time -- Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Real, Mrs. García. But they had been there for years and years. Of course, I never tried to change that much. Then, Dr. Chisolm said, "Mary will you take" -- they were going to consolidate the two, "Santa Barbara and Longfellow."

G - B: And by then, let me ask you one question, were there more women principals or were you pretty much one of the few?

Sanchez: Very few that I know. Of course, Miss Giddings, she went back. She was one of the Spanish. There were
very few Spanish.

G - B: Very few women and then, on top of that, there were very few Spanish.

Sánchez: I suppose very few Spanish principals. But, anyway, when I took over Santa Barbara, I took it because I had heard that it was going to be consolidate with Longfellow. And I thought, "Well, They'll set them up at Longfellow." But Dr. Chisom said that they were going to keep it opened because, people from Santa Barbara didn't want the school closed, and "will you take both schools." I looked at him and I laughed. And I said, "Doctor Chisom put me back in the classroom, okay. If there isn't any openings for me now I'll be glad to go back." And he looked at me and he said, "Mary, there's an opening at Old Town but keep it under you hat. I said, "Oh, my lips are sealed." So, I took it and then I stayed until nineteen sixty-eight.

G - B: As a class-room teacher?

Sánchez: No.

G - B: As the principal. So, you took the principalship in at Old Town? And how was that different from other experiences? Was each one different?

Sánchez: Well, no. I think by that time there was a lot of
those teachers that were there a long, long time. So, when I went there, they didn't have the boy scouts, they didn't have the, I don't think they had a coach, either, yet. Yes, they had a coach, teaching. He taught and then he went out of the class. So, I asked for a coach because they mean so much and a nurse, of course, I had a nurse already in mind from Los Padillas. By that time I wanted a secretary.

G - B: You hadn't had a secretary?

Sánchez: No. I had to do all my own work at Old Town, I mean, Los Padillas and Santa Barbara. And when I asked for a secretary, I got a top-notch secretary, Mrs. Hanson. My, she was good. Then when I went there, Gatewood had been the principal there. Mrs. Hardish had been the principal for years, twenty. I don't know how many years. And then Gatewood was there for about two or three years. Just like I was in these other schools, you know. It didn't matter. A lot of them didn't like that.

G - B: You were adaptable?

Sánchez: I guess. And so, Gatewood said, "Mary, I, and the ---" I don't know, I don't want to be...

G - B: Okay.

Sánchez: The ----, they were having troubles. He wouldn't take
them back the following year. He said, "Mary, we have
the ---- Boys and this and that and the other." And I
said, "Mr. Gatewood, please don't tell me who to come
and who not to come." I said, "Because, I don't know."
I knew it because, I knew Fabiola was teaching at East
San José and that's where they had gone, her nephews,
had gone back to West San José. You know where that
is? And so I went out to the family, no wonder that
they were having problems, that was my way of meeting
the people. All summer long I visited the parents and
I visited them and found out about this Springers, why
they'd been, out of school, not in that school but
somewhere else. I found out that his father was a he
drank a lot, you, a drunkard. And the mother had to
get out at seven o'clock and go work, housework. And
said, "Of course." And of course they were very
defiant. The oldest boy would teach the next brother
so on and so forth. So, I went out there and I told
them that we would like to have the boys come back. So
they did come back. Another change that I made...

G - B: So, that was one of your big challenges?
Sánchez: Yes. Very much so. So, I got him back but at that
time, I got this coach, you know, for the students.
Also, separate changes which helped me a lot. A nurse,
a counselor, as I went along, I got what I asked for.
Why, I don't know. I have no political, politics in any way shape or form. It's just that I told him what we needed.

G - B: What you wanted. It was always for the good of your school and your community?

Sánchez: Then Mr. Wylie, Mr. Chávez and all those, you know, that I knew, you know, After that Dr. Spain, Dr. Chisom, of course, but by that time I had already built up all my staff and so on. But, then when I, at that time, we could choose our teachers or rather recommend them, not choose them. There was vacancy, especially when I first went to Old Town. That was a pretty town because you had to take the part of County Club. Oh, those who were on the top. And ------used to cater to them.

G - B: And then the Old Town people.

Sánchez: And then you had the Old Town people. And then we had a mixture of these people, three groups.

G - B: So, there were conflicts.

Sánchez: The good, the bad, the best. But anyway, I organized the PTA there and also he didn't believe in PTA's. He didn't want to be involved with them. I don't want all this ...
G - B: We can edit that out.

Sánchez: Oh, but, yeah, all these things, that I mentioning names...

G - B: Yeah, we can just take them out because even on this we can splice it out and in the written we can put X or take out whatever you want. You'll have an opportunity.

Sánchez: Oh, well, anyway, some teachers there, ------ was a second grade teacher. I didn't have a good rapport with her, I guess. She had been a busy body around the school. So, I didn't allow that, you know. And so she tried to get a little group from the community against me saying there was more catering to the Spanish.

G - B: That you were catering, that was the accusation?

Sánchez: Uh-huh. There's more to the Spanish than to the Anglos, or whatever she was saying. I heard about it and, of course my PTA president, I established a good rapport with the PTA, so, being that she was doing all these things around here, of course my janitor was one of my best friends and my secretary. I used to get from what was going on. I never pretended to, I always helped them too. I never showed any anger and one day I heard,... She used to go the first grade and second teacher, I had two, and she was spanking one. So I saw
it and because we had the doors that we could see what was going on. And then after school I said, "Now, Mrs. -----, why did you have to go and spank in there? Do you know that could get you in a lot of trouble." "No," she said, "but, Mrs. -----", I said, "Next time," I was firm with my teachers, I said, "Next time, let me... I told Mrs. ---, too, I said, "send them to my office." If I'm not there," I said, "My secretary is there." So, she didn't like that, you know. So, they had been God bless them, the same first grade teacher had been there for twenty years was the same thing. The same routine, the same seat-work over and over. I said, "Well, there has to be a change somehow. How do I do it." The Lord has helped me, too. And I said, "Get a first grade teacher in there, a young one. One that has the experience and so on. And change the other one, to the second grade and to the third." And she didn't like it, the change, you know. So, she started, some more, against me. So I went out to see Dr. Chisom, and I said, "This is what's going on in Old Town. It's either her," I said, "or me that will have to leave. Dr. Chisom because the problem is between her and me, and the community." So, they changed her in the summer time. I understood from what the janitor
told me. He said, "My gosh." He said, "she was so mad, 'Look who came to chase me out of my own school for so many years.'"

G - B: That's why you're a pretty good politician to me. You know.

Sanchez: An old Mexican...

G - B: An old Mexican, chased me out.

Sánchez: That's what they said. But, anyway, they changed her. And she wasn't happy with it. Then I didn't tell any teacher. I didn't gossip with any of my teachers either or anybody else. But anyway it was settled and then when a teacher was leaving, you know I had an Indian teacher whose name was Leona Wilson, I don't know if you knew her. She was top-notch. I tried to get people, not because... I had friends, I had relatives that wanted to be in my schools. I felt that it would be a detriment to schools other than help, not because they were my relatives or my friends, but was I going to be able to recommend them, because I think it's a good idea that the principal looks at their...

G - B: Records?

Sánchez: Now, I understand they don't. You take whoever you think. The only one that they sent me that I didn't know and it was Mr., the old man that I said, not the
old man, well he was older, much older around the fifties.

G - B: Do you think that was a good change that maybe, that initially in the early years of schooling, appointments were very political. People could choose whoever they wanted and then later on they tried, I sure there still some politics going on but, it's a little different.

Sánchez: Oh, yes. Now, I had a Chinese girl, she's a doctor something, she was good. We had Chinese students, we had Indians, we had, you name it, there in Old Town it's a...

G - B: A very mixed group.

Sánchez: And of course, you knew the Moyas. She stayed there and so did Mrs. Owens stay there. And later on they all retired and then, of course, whoever took over after me, it's been a good school, I think. But, that was the only, the only conflict that I had.

G - B: What do you think went wrong with the schools?

Sánchez: Well, to a certain degree I think...

G - B: What we're comparing today, what you hear today about the schools when you were a principal and a teacher.

Sánchez: Well see, what happened was, I started with the first grade teacher. I was a teacher for fifteen years before I started, I guess, about fifteen. But, anyway, social
promotions. At the time, we had the top groups, okay. The top group was already in at the middle of the year to go on to the next but you couldn't send them on because you had to keep them. But you have to provide for that group. The average student, they were ready to go. There's always about eight or ten, so, because the background at home, you know, and maybe they're slow learners. So,...

G - B: Maybe they're not getting enough food sometimes, I suppose.

Sánchez: Well, yes. A lot of times, the poverty and all that. But, social promotion came. All the teachers said okay, just let them go. The next teacher got them and she couldn't control, well she tried to anyway and then they went on. That slow group is the one that created my problems and the top group because it was hard for the teacher to control the top, it's just like today. The old and the young and the poor people are the problems, right here in the United States and throughout the world. But, these three groups, A, B, C, that little group, if you had kept them one more year and gave them that reading experience then...

G - B: It just took them a little longer to learn and no one was taking the time out to teach them and they were
just moving them out.

Sánchez: Just pushing them out.

G - B: Pushing them out.

Sánchez: And that's why. They go from the eighth and ninth and the same thing is happening. But, no, let me tell you why. We had to do it because, "oh, you're not being fair to my child." Just because he a.... anyway the rich and poor, so there it comes again. Just because,

G - B: People didn't understand.

Sánchez: Didn't want to understand even if you told them what you are doing that "you're not teaching my child, too." People don't realize all these things, you know. So, that was the problem. Sometimes I would talk to the parents and I'd say, "Look, your child could be a better student if you leave him. He's going from that same group. He's going to the top group in that same class." And when we had two or three first graders, "don't let them go in the same room there, let them go into the other room." Things like that you have to do. But, I think that solves the problem. It was a problem at the time we had to do it because they said, "Oh, you being..." What's the word I want to use.

G - B: Discriminating against.

Sánchez: Discriminating against my child. Another thing that
they were very strict about was this school for the retarded.

G - B: Special Education.

Sánchez: That's it. It's good, but then it became a dumping, I don't know what the schools did it or not. But, I didn't stay that long.

G - B: It was the way to get rid of the students that people didn't, maybe didn't know how to work with them?

Sánchez: Ah, yes. Because, that's special education was just for those that really were not making it. With a little effort at home, you couldn't depend on the parents either they were both working. The social problems have been there always.

G - B: What advice would you have for today's principals or teachers or educators?

Sánchez: Well, it's hard to say. Because I know I had my problems and it's very, very hard, teachers nowadays, there not going for teaching. They don't, they take it because it's a job. But, in those years we had dedicated teachers.

G - B: Loving your job and wanting to do [unintelligible], and loving the children, too. Is that very important especially, with the little ones?

Sánchez: Right, right. Very much so. That's been the problem I
think. I know Mrs. Grant's daughter, she's not, now they have to go through...

G - B: Very specialized training.

Sánchez: Special training and also, my niece started as, two of my nieces started as teachers aide and then they liked it. And then the teachers there and the principal you know, they're regular teachers. That's the way it goes. There has to be somebody behind you to help you out. But, it's hard nowadays, I think. If you get teachers that are not dedicated and they don't like children and they are there just for the money. The more and more money is not going to do it. It's how well the teachers are adapting to the students.

G - B: And in the early years when women like yourself went out and didn't have much training they were creative and it was dedication that made good teachers.

Sánchez: Oh, yes, dedicated, yes.

G - B: Did you play with the children out in the playground when you first started?

Sánchez: Yes. We used to go out to play.

G - B: So, you had to be the gym teacher, the janitor. Did you ever have to build your own fires and...

Sánchez: Yes. Oh, no. I didn't have to. No, no.

G - B: You were lucky because some women did. They had to be
a nurse. Sometimes the cook.

Sánchez: Well, the nurse, yes, no, the cook, no, no.

G - B: You didn't have school programs in those, school lunch, I mean.

Sánchez: No, the time that I came was when I came to Los Padillas in nineteen forty three, forty four, I became principal.

G - B: Uh-huh. Did you, ah, did you miss being a classroom teacher when you became a principal?

Sánchez: Well, like I say. "May I have my own sixth grade back. If I don't..." but there was more money, of course. And in those days we didn't get much but, it made a lot more.

G - B: Do you feel that you made a difference in the schools that you were in?

Sánchez: Well,...

G - B: Personally that you felt real good about?

Sánchez: Yes. All the schools, and I feel good because so many times I see students coming up to talk to me downtown in the store, at the hospital when my son-in-law was there. They got down and said, "Hello, Mrs. Sánchez, remember me from Los Padillas?" He was in the first or second grade, I don't remember. But things like that helped me. Another time at the university, we were
eating at the cafeteria, down there at the union. And these was one of the slow learners and we had to see that he got into the second grade. He said, "Remember me?" They always say remember and of course I...

G - B: Sometimes you don't. Or you hope you do, right?

Sánchez: Well, if they were the little rascals, you know, but then you never got to know the very good ones, but anyway they come to you when you were there. But, he came up, you know, "I'm working here." I think he was a bus-boy. He looked so proud. Things like that he was proud of his job. And I have lawyers, I have, you name them, fire department, police department and it's so nice to see these.

G - B: Were you involved a lot in other activities, professional activities or organizations? Did you go to the conventions, remember the teacher conventions?

Sánchez: Oh, all the time. In fact, I went to almost every convention I think just because I enjoyed it. One thing that a lot of teachers did not do is, when we could go to school anywhere we wanted to go and then deduct it from their professional growth, and deduct it from income tax. I did that a lot. I did that a lot when I went to conventions. We could deduct that. In fact, maybe by the time I became a teacher and by the
time I became a principal all these things were following up and a lot of them were not taking advantage of that. But, I did. And I remember going to Monterey, not that I wanted to learn more Spanish but Leona, one of my teachers, wanted to go and they gave us two weeks professional leave, so we went there and deducted that from our income tax. And then we went to Puerto Rico, the convention down there, and we went to Washington. I was always glad because I used to travel a lot. And a lot of people didn't travel. And then I wasn't tied down, I mean, in many ways. After my daughter got married I was fifty.

G - B: Was it hard to be a single parent and a professional?

Sánchez: Well, not to me because my in-laws were very good. While I was down in Valencia they took care of my child. They took over, and then my mother and my dad. They took over me I guess, so I adapted.

G - B: So, the family support network is very important for women especially who are career oriented?

Sánchez: I didn't have to hire or take her here or take her there. I always knew that it is was...

G - B: Maybe we can look at some of these pictures and put them on the camera and you could tell us a little bit about some of these things. They're kind of nice.
Sánchez: Well, this is my dad and my mom. God bless them.

G - B: And what were their names?

Sánchez: Nepomuceno Mariño, Julianita Montaño and dad was from the southern part of the state and my mother was from the northern part of the state. And...

G - B: And they got together in Albuquerque? In the middle, right?

Sánchez: I said, "Mom, how, how in the world did you meet my dad?" And you know that the people from the southern part would come through with the wool and take it to Las Vegas to be shipped out. So, I guess, they met through the family and then in those days, they said, "You, my son, will marry your daughter, your daughter will marry my son."

G - B: It was arranged?

Sánchez: So I guess it was. All the time.

G - B: And this is you and your husband? And your husband was?

Sánchez: Flavio.

G - B: Sánchez.

Sánchez: Sánchez, sí.

G - B: And he was from...?

Sánchez: Belén, New Mexico.
G - B: Okay. And this is your first grandchild, oh, this is, you, when you got your master's degree at Saint Joe's?

Sánchez: No.

G - B: Where did you get your master's?

Sánchez: Well, my masters I got from, Las Vegas.

G - B: From Highlands.

Sánchez: Highlands.

G - B: In nineteen fifty-three?

Sánchez: Yes.

G - B: Did you go there in the summer to study?

Sánchez: This is my B.A.

G - B: Oh, that's your B.A. And the B.A. was when now, let's see?

Sánchez: In forty-one.

G - B: In forty-one. Was that from Saint Joe's or UNM?

Sánchez: No. From UNM.

G - B: Did you go to the San José Training Center?

Sánchez: Yes. No, no, I didn't. But, one of my teachers did.

G - B: And that was forty-one from the, UNM?

Sánchez: Yes.

G - B: You were probably one of the two Spanish people at UNM at time?

Sánchez: Yes. Yes, right.
G - B: Hardly any went until later in the fifties, late forties and fifties. And then the master's was from Highlands.

Sánchez: Highlands in fifty-three.

G - B: This had a fifty-three.

Sánchez: Yeah, that's right.

G - B: My mom got her B.A. in fifty-four at Highlands, but, I don't know if you knew each other then.

Sánchez: No.

G - B: Because she used to go in the summer.

Sánchez: Well, fifty-three is when I left my daughter here with my dad. Well, by that time, my daughter was, fifty-three, well, by that time she was married and my grandson came.

G - B: This is your grandson?

Sánchez: No, no. This is my great-grandson.

G - B: Your great-grandson, okay. We don't have one of your grandson here.

Sánchez: Yeah. I sure do. There it is.

G - B: In this other book.

Sánchez: I think you have it there. He was a baby. That's Flavio, that man over there.

G - B: This is you when you retired?
Sánchez: Retired. Retired, yes.

MDV: You want to hold it up and I'll fit it into the frame.

G - B: And her certificate of retirement in nineteen sixty-nine.

MDV: Hold the book the other way you, just a bit.

G - B: So how long was your teaching career? Forty-two years.


G - B: Wonderful. How old were you when you retired?

Sánchez: Well, I was sixty, I'd say sixty-nine, sixty-three in fact, I wanted to retire earlier than that and they wouldn't let me.

G - B: And this is when you retired. This is a letter that students from Mrs. Becky's room from Bonnie Hartly. And she said, "Dear Mrs. Sánchez; Sorry you're leaving. I sure enjoyed you. I want you to enjoy your summer and every once in a while come and visit us. Okay? I just thought how long you been teaching and then the boss. And I want to say, bye."

Sánchez: That's cute.

G - B: That's when you retired.

Sánchez: Yes. And they wrote it out.

G - B: And these are all the cards you got and parties and, people really appreciated you. From the scrap-book you
showed me -- breakfasts, and parties, and the mass, and the cards they sent. So, you sent this back to them? Saying "Thank you." That was sweet.

Sánchez: And you know, during my principal ship, I used to be very active with the retarded youth, with the legislature. I used to go to Santa Fe every year.

G - B: To lobby?

Sánchez: Lobby.

G - B: For schools, specific schools or just any education legislation.

Sánchez: Yeah. Well, whatever we needed. Like one time, I was at Old Town and Dr. Chisom called me. He said, "Mary, would you meet Mary Lackey," the other principal from Alvarado, and, a Mr. Lucero seemed to be against a certain bill and you know him." I knew him because their daughter had gone with me down to South America. And I said, "Sure, I'll go up there and talk to Mr. Lucero about the bill." He was the representative, so I called Mrs. Lucero and I said, "Mrs. Lucero, would you like to go to Santa Fe? I'm going to the legislature." I said, "Dr. Spain wants us to meet your husband down there." She said, "Mrs. Sánchez I just got back. But, I'll tell you where he is." The teachers teased me about it. So, I met Mr. Lucero down
there at Santa Fe. But, anyway, I went so, Mary Lacky and I left, oh, we left about two o'clock and we were there in time to talk to, of course, Ray Sánchez is my nephew.

G - B: Oh, I didn't know that. I went to school with Ray at UNM.

Sánchez: So, he's my nephew down there I met with him and he said, "oh yeah, I’m sure it's alright, go ahead and talk to him." So Mary Lacky and I went, and called him up and I said why we were there. So we went out with him that night and had dinner. In fact, he treated us to dinner that night. All in all, well, we changed his mind.

G - B: So, you were a lobbyist, and a politician.

Sánchez: Oh, well, I guess.

G - B: What other talents do you have?

Sánchez: Well, my husband was a politician, too, I guess.

Because he had been training, I mean, He had been in the Assessors Office in the ...

End of interview
DORA ORTIZ VASQUEZ
March 18, 1992
G - B: We’re interviewing Mrs. Dora Vásquez in Chacón, New Mexico? 18 de marzo de mil novecientos noventa dos. And, we’re doing the interview at Mrs. Ortiz's. Do you want to begin by telling us about your childhood?

Vásquez: ¿Dónde creció? ¿Cómo era su vida cuando era niña?

Vásquez: ¿En español?

G - B: Como usted quiera.

Vásquez: ¿En español o inglés?

G - B: Vamos empezar en español.


G - B: ¿Y la única mujer?

Vásquez: Era la única mujer. Tuve otras dos hermanas pero murieron mucho años pasados. Así que yo era la única que crecí allí esos días con mis hermanos. Siendo yo la menor pues me consentía mucho. Y ellos habían ido a escuela, en esos días, en Ocate había habido escuela.
misionera presbiteriana. Ellos habían asistido la escuela de la misión. Uno de ellos había asistido hasta el libro octavo. Pero después ya no siguió la escuela. La escuela se cerró como en el tiempo de que yo ya empecé a ir a la escuela. Porque la iglesia tiene, ese, igual pienso como cualquier iglesia, cuando ya un lugar está listo para seguir adelante de por si, cerran ellos la escuela que sigan las públicas para no hacerles ningún mal. Así que se cerró la escuela presbiteriana y ya no había más escuela pública. La escuela pública era muy pobre, no teníamos nada, nada. Para que yo tuviera una banca para escribir, mi papá me hizo una. Llevé una silla de mi casa porque los demás niños se sentaban en unas bancas largas pero no había nada más. Nomás un pizarón y una mesita para el maestro y un calentador en el medio y eso era todo.

G - B: Esto era public school?

Vásquez: Esa era public school.

G - B: ¿Tenían maestros o maestras?

Vásquez: Si, tuvieron maestras Hispáns. También tuve una maestra que asistió cuando era Las Vegas Normal School. Ella se llamaba Refugio Trujillo pero después era Fernández cuando se casó y también era de allí de Ocaté. Fue buena maestra y con ella estuve yo y estuve
con otra que había asistido Loretto Academy en Santa Fe, Josefina Chávez. Esas fueran maestras mías. Pero las escuelas eran muy pobres, que no teníamos con qué. Hace mucho. Las maestras nos compraban, todavía cuando estuve en La Loma Parda, yo compraba todo lo que se necesitaba para los niños. Porque no tenía...

G - B: Papel y lápices.

Vásquez: No tenían y a veces no podían ir a la tienda, no podían ir para hacer compras. Así que mis hermanos decidieron mandarme a muy tierna edad a la escuela en Santa Fe.

G - B: Al Allison James.

Vásquez: Al Allison James, era una escuela presbiteriana, girls school.

G - B: ¿Presbiteriana?

Vásquez: Boarding school. Así que fui en el libro cuatro muy chica. Muy chica. Una muchacha de aquí en Mora la pusieron que fuera mi hermana mayor. Y ella me peinaba y cuidaba de mí, que me limpiaba.

G - B: ¿Y era la más joven. Se acuerda?

Vásquez: No era yo la más joven. Había varias, otras muy chiquitas que jugábamos con muñecas todavía y en nuestro tiempo que podíamos jugar. Y empezamos la escuela y me encanté en la escuela porque, bueno, las niñas allí todas jugábamos juntas y vivíamos juntas,
todas ibamos juntas. Las maestras estaban allí y nos tocó una maestra que era la dorm mother que le decíamos. But it was a very hard place because of how to get to Loma Parda. Loma Parda is on the Mora River but it's down on the deep part of canyon and the roads leading from anyway to Loma Parda are very bad. There was no bridge on the river and in the Spring the river was swollen. So it was very hard to cross it. In the Fall is wasn't so bad. But it was a hard place for me to go. But I had a cousin that lived in Loma Parda from Ocate. She was married to a cowboy that had come to the area, and he used to take care of cows for Mr. Sincoly from Wagon Mound up in the Fort Union area, and they lived in Loma Parda. They had bought a new house there and in the little placita that was a very nice little house. And so Aurora lived there, that's her name, my cousin. So, when Don Cosme told me that I could go to Loma Parda, I said that I would accept because then I would be with Aurora. I would have a place to live and she would kind of help me get started there in a new place. And Loma Parda was sort of a placita that the people lived on both sides of the street. And then there was some more farmers that lived down the canyon but came to school or up that
other way to La Pardita, the smaller pueblo.
But we were more or less we were in the smaller...

**G - B:** Were you the only teacher in this town? It wasn't big enough for more than one?

**Vásquez:** Yes. No, no, no.

**G - B:** So you graduated from high school and went to Loma Parda.

**Vásquez:** Yes and I was very young.

**G - B:** Do remember how you felt about this first job?

**Vásquez:** Yes I think I tell it in that. The first day you had those, to ring those cowbells, and I stood at the door ringing that bell, and my knees were just shaking. I didn't know how I was going to get started. And there was nothing in my schoolroom like I said, there was nothing. I had a few papers and pencils and that was about all. There was an old man, Don Cosme C de Baca. That lived across from, it wasn't a school house, it was a rented room that they rented for us to have school. He lived across the street and he looked at me and he told his wife, "Oh, that teacher is too young. Es una muchachita, muy jovencita. Los muchachos van hacer sopa con ella."

**G - B:** Because there were boys that were probably almost as old as you?
Vásquez: Yes. I had two boys, in fact, one of them was older than I am. And one has come to see me, for he used to live in Los Angeles and he came out to see me about three years ago, Benny de Baca. And Timoteo Paéz, they were the oldest boys and they came in just to check and see la maestra, you know. They really weren't interested in school. They had been to school, we had had teachers in Loma Parda that had gone before me. I better not say their names, but one of them had started going with one of boys around there. That wasn’t too good. And so the other boys and the other people didn't like her. They finally didn't want her back. So when I went and I was that young, too, they thought it was going to be the same thing, you see.

G - B: Well that would be a temptation.

Vásquez: But that was one of things Aurora told me. And Thompson, her husband, said, "Now, they will always have a teacher's dance to begin the school year." A dance for the teachers. "You dance with everybody. You be friends with everybody. Try not to fall in love or to show any difference to anybody." See. There wasn't really anybody that I really cared to go around steady with anyway. And I didn't know anybody. So that night in the Teacher's Dance I danced with everybody and I
think I tell about those two old cowboys that wore spurs and...

G - B: Boots and their hats.

Vásquez: ...and they didn't think I knew how to polka. I did know because one of my brothers, I used to polka with one of them. So when they knew that I could polka, I became their partner. So, it was nice. We became acquainted but, when I had these students come in, I had three girls in the eight grade. Three girls because, in fact, one was just about as old as I am. We had to train them. They took state examinations before we went into high school. If you didn't pass you stayed in examinations till the eight grade. You couldn't be in high school. So you really had to tutor. I spent time and time tutoring those girls especially towards the Spring when they were going to...

G - B: And it would reflect on you, right? If they didn't pass the exams.

Vásquez: Yes. Because I was their teacher. We started getting along alright and I worked with the parents. I used to get these Teacher's Normal Magazine that came out. And it gave you hints on how to teach and it gave you hints on how to work with parents, and it was very helpful to
me that I took that magazine. And with Aurora's and Thompson's help and the people.

G - B: And you had a mixed classroom, Hispano children and Anglo children in the classroom?

Vásquez: I only had the two Thompson kids there were part anglos and Spanish. They were all Spanish.

G - B: Oh, okay. As a teacher you were probably a very central part of that community?

Vásquez: Yes. I had to do everything, even for the people. Write letters, interpret, translate, sometimes they called me if business came up and they needed me. Sometimes I had to leave the kids with one of the older girls. If some Anglo people came, you know, wanting to know something and the other people couldn't tell them. They said, "Llámén a la maestra."

G - B: So you would be a translator?

Vásquez: I wrote letters for people and took care of them when they were sick; helped them with their food. A lot of things that you had to do. La maestra was the ...

G - B: Center of the community.

Vásquez: I think I tell you there that Loma Parda was an isolated place because of the situation. And the only person that really came there was the Catholic priest from Wagon Mound. He was a Frenchman. Padre Lumari.
Very nice person, very well educated and he was in the Board of Education in Mora County. So it was very good for me to be there because when he came once a month, I would get the news of what was going on in the Mora County with the Board of Education in the schools. He was very helpful to me whenever he came out.

G - B: Were those jobs political appointments?

Vásquez: Not, not right then, yet. But, they really got afterwards by the thirties, politics really got into the schools. But, when I first started, it wasn't that bad. When I first started but it started about then.

G - B: Why do you think politics started to encroach, was it that there were so many teachers and not enough jobs or that people were just trying to control the educational process?

Vásquez: They were trying to control, getting your relatives, you know, and things like. It was a temptation to get the ones from your party.

G - B: The party?

Vásquez: Ignore the other party. Now for me it didn't make any difference. I've been a Republican all my life and I never had any trouble, Don Cosme was a Democrat. I never had, afterwards it was said if you were a good teacher, you succeeded. You make a name for yourself,
and I think that's it. If a teacher behaves and does the things she does, I don't think that the politics would affect you as much. They never did here in Mora County for us.

G - B: But, there was a lot of pressure to behave and...

Vásquez: But, there was pressure, yes. I would say there was pressure.

G - B: Now, how long were you at Loma Parda?

Vásquez: Just the one year.

G - B: And then where did you go after that?

Vásquez: I was given a school to teach in Ocaté. But then I decided to go back to, it wasn't Highlands yet. It was still the Normal.

G - B: Normal.

Vásquez: To go back to school. I went back to school before teaching any more.

G - B: And did you go right through and finish a degree or you teach in the winter?

Vásquez: Teach in the winter, I would teach in the winter and go to school in the summer. But I did go that next winter.

G - B: You went one full year and then went back to teaching?

Vásquez: Then went back to teaching.
G - B: And did you go to Ocaté?

Vásquez: Yes. I went back to Ocaté.

G - B: Did you feel better prepared after a year of college?

Vásquez: Oh yes and more mature. I had a little more experience in every way. I was a little more mature. And there I did have Anglos and Spanish.

G - B: And did you have any pressures from, let's say the Anglo community accepting, did they have any trouble accepting a Hispanic teacher?

Vásquez: No. No, because I lived right there. They were part of us and they knew Spanish, so... Those Falwells and those Anglo people there were just, sort of like, if you knew the Cassidy's or some other people here. They always lived there, they intermarried...

G - B: So there wasn't any pressure there or discrimination against you as a Hispanic teacher?

Vásquez: And not with the kids.

G - B: When did you graduate from college? If you went summers...

Vásquez: I never did graduate from college.

G - B: You didn't.

Vásquez: I am up to the Junior year. But I never did graduate from college because then I got married and then I quit
teaching when I had my children. But I always kept correspondence courses or something.

G - B: And how long were you out of teaching to bring up your children? About, not exactly, were they already grown up?

Vásquez: Yes. Ben was already six years old when he started. My other two were already out. So it took me many years, I would say more than twenty, no?

G - B: You were able to take the time out to bring up your children then you went back?

Vásquez: I wasn't strong enough to do both, and then I wanted to be home when the children got in. I brought up my children.

G - B: And then you went back to teaching?

Vásquez: Then I went back to teaching. That's when we started going to teach at Allison James. I was a teacher.

G - B: Oh, you did.

Vásquez: And we started teaching. We left Mora County on our own. Politics were getting very bad here. The schools were mixed with politics and we didn't care for that. And we left the public school system in Mora County and we taught in Socorro and Valenica County. We had taught in Los Lunas but then we decided to go into teaching in the boarding schools better.
G - B: Now, was your husband a teacher, also?

Vásquez: Yes. He was a graduate from Menual School.

G - B: Okay. He graduated from Menual and was he from your area?

Vásquez: No. He was from here, from Chacón.

G - B: From Chacón.

Vásquez: After I got married, I left Ocate and I came to live here in Chacón. We taught in the Chacón schools, and I taught in Chacón here, in Luján and El Alto.

G - B: Now, that's interesting. Being married to a teacher, did you ever feel in your teaching career that maybe he had more privileges or that it was easier for him because he was a man? Or was it always or was it as easy for both of you?

Vásquez: No, I told him. Because he always told me that if I wanted to we could, if I chose to stay home there that he would do the teaching and the supporting of the family while the children were growing and he could go on to school. He took more courses and he graduated, Edmundo, our oldest son graduated from Highlands before he did.

G - B: Before the father?

Vásquez: But then I don't know how it came that Eusebio went ahead of him. Because, finally Eusebio got his
consulting and certificates before Edmundo. I guess Edmundo kind of quit. I don't remember that but, the college degree, Edmundo got his first. Because we would teach and go to school. Teach and go to school.

G - B: So you'd teach in the winter, go to school in the summer. And eventually...

Vásquez: And get all the certificates. The salaries were very low. Mora County, you know, was a low income county. We only got a hundred dollars a month. Colfax County was the best paying county and that's always been a little more wealthy. They paid a hundred and fifty. I guess San Miguel paid around that, too.

G - B: And then you and your husband both went to teach at Allison James?

Vásquez: Allison James, yes.

G - B: And you taught there many years? Or how long did you...?

Vásquez: We were there five years and then we went up, being that they were church schools. They transferred us to Wasack (??) Academy in Utah, we stayed there until we retired. We retired from there. But see in the boarding schools you could live right there. They gave you housing and everything. And it was much easier than in public schools.
G - B: And you prefered teaching in the boarding schools?

Vásquez: Yes. And you didn't really teach, you didn't make anybody be any kind of religion that you wanted.

G - B: It was just to educate.

Vásquez: You let them be what ever they wanted to. That's what their belief was. They were Presbyterian schools and they did give bible. That's the only thing they got in the Christian school that would be of something.

G - B: Now going to Utah must have been very interesting and very different for you?

Vásquez: Very different, very different. We left the Spanish feeling here. We were with the Spanish people, it was a different environment and everything.

G - B: Did you adapt easily or were there problems? Do you remember ever having any problems or...?

Vásquez: Well, I'll tell you Walsachs (??) Academy is a multi-race school, I guess. We had kids from Tailand, Africa, Mexico and all the park areas where kids were far from schools. Because the national parks, Arizona, and Colorado. And we had students from every nationality that I think I know, Indians... It was really good because we learned to mix and learn to live with people. Then we were in the dorms. And it happened, I went to dorm life. I took the younger boy's
dorm and my husband had the older boy's dorm. We were separated. The Mission school separated us. I lived with younger boys in that dorm and he lived with older boys in the other dorm. And it was very challenging. I had the junior high boys which were from seven to tenth grade and he had the eleventh and twelfth grade boys. When they were with me I used to tell them they were regular rascals. I had such a hard time with them. By the time they went to saints they were mature and well-behaved.

G - B: Because you had trained them.

Vásquez: And I used to get so mad at them. I would say, why did you give me such a hard time and they said, "Oh, Mrs. V.," they used to call me Mrs. V., "Oh, Mrs. V., we didn't give you a bad time." But that was just boys growing up. But, they obeyed in those schools in that time. That was our good luck that the students still obeyed the rules of the school. They disobeyed all the rules, you know. But more or less, to stay in the schools they had to live by the rules like certain lights out at certain times. If they wanted to study later they would get permission for late study, you know. Things like that.

G - B: Did you retire in Utah and come back to teach here? Or
you never taught again?

Vásquez: No. We never taught again. My husband was going to go back. We did start doing substitute teaching. I started here in Holman doing substitute teaching but you know they only pay here in Mora eighteen dollars a day. The substitute teacher would have to go by eight and stay until the last bus left. It was very hard, and I didn't feel like...

G-B: It's lots of hard work.

Vásquez: So, we didn't continue doing substitution teaching. We just quit. We just retired. But we didn't get a state pension. See, we didn't teach enough years to get state pension. So we only had the retirement from the pension plan of the church.

G-B: Now you've also, in addition to being a teacher for a good part of your life, been a writer. The one book here, The Enchanted Dialogue of Loma Parda and Cañada Bonita, which you talk about your first teaching job and the second one is Enchanted Temples of Taos, My Story of Rosario which is a beautiful book. When did you write this?

Vásquez: I started writing some of those stories from the time I was in Loma Parda, I think. I used to stay up at night, because I didn't have things to do in Loma
Parda, like socializing or I would be in my room. I still have in that Big Chief tablet where I started by hand writing, some of my stories that I was remembering that Rosario used to tell me and my mother. I started writing it since then for it never came to be a book until nineteen seventy-five.

G - B: So you just kept building the stories?

Vásquez: That was my first edition, I think this is the second edition you have there.

G - B: How did you finally get them published?

Vásquez: My husband, and after the boys grew up, they always wanted, "Momma, write your book and let's make a book out of it." But we didn't have the means to do it, really. But when I got all these stories put together, I thought I had a more or less a book, I took them to Alice Bullock who was Mr. Bullock's wife. The one that had Bridle Press. She was a writer. You know him? She read my book and she said, "Oh Dora, this positively has to become a book." And she told her husband, "Why don't you publish it for her?" So, they said they would take it. And, I asked them how much they wanted and they said they wanted five hundred dollars down. We were going to go Albuquerque then so my husband went over with me and we made a loan. So,
coming back we paid the five hundred dollars and they
took my book and he made the first edition. And when I
did it, Mr. Bullock told me, "Let's make, four thousand
books." And I said, "No, no, no. What if my book
doesn't sell" I mean, it was going to be very
expensive. It was going to cost three-thirty to
publish this book and we sold it for five-fifty in
order to make something. It didn't start selling for
five-fifty. It started selling for four-fifty and then
Mr. Bullock himself was the one that raised the price.
We decided to make two thousand. I said, "Make two
thousand and if I lose out, I won't lose out that much.
I could give them away or something." But no. He
told me, "You wait and see, two thousand are going to
sell before two years and then you're going to have to
come back and it's going to cost you more." Which was
true. I had to go back and make my second edition.

G - B: So it sold in two years?

Vásquez: Taos was good to me. Taos started selling this book in
no time. And Santa Fe. Santa Fe and Taos and even Las
Vegas they started selling. The book sells good even
today.
Everywhere they have it, it does.

G - B: Rosario, you grew up with her then. She took care of
you...

**Vásquez:** She was sort of like our nurse grandma. When Padre Martínez died, you know, she was Padre Martínez's maid.

**G - B:** Right.

**Vásquez:** And when he died, she chose to go with my grandfather and my grandmother. And they left Taos and went out to the Ocaté Valley because lands were so fertile, good for farming, raising cattle and sheep. So when we went to Ocaté, Rosario went with my family and she helped us growing up. She was like our grandma and I was the smallest so she always...

**G - B:** La crió?

**Vásquez:** Y me crió muy consentida. I'm sorry to this day, is like I say, I didn't learn that little Navajo song that she used to...

**G - B:** That she used to sing to you.

**Vásquez:** I wished I could have learned it. But, I think I was small and I didn't learn it. And after I grew up and after that she didn't...

**G - B:** She used to tell you the stories?

**Vásquez:** She used to tell me all the stories about Padre Martínez. All these stories that I have here and then my mother would verify them. I would go to my mother, "Momma, Mayallo, (we called Rosario Mayallo) told me
this." And she'd say, "Yes." She'd tell me a little more, something more about the family. So I put it together and...

G - B: Just picking what you'd heard from all the women and other people in your family.

Vásquez: No more than the two woman, Mayallo.

G - B: Did she raise your mother, also?

Vásquez: Yes, yes. She raised my mother. She raised my mother from the time she was a baby and mi Tío Bernardo Romero, she raised them both. My Tío Bernardo lived in Vegas. He's in New Mexico history quite a bit. His picture is in one of those books by Twitchell, I think it was Twitchell's book or Reed’s.

G - B: He was involved in the politica or in newspaper work.

Vásquez: In the not too much politics but in history in New Mexico history. But he had more the history of around the Watrous area, the Ocate area, that area. I think to it’s Twitchell and Reed, both in the New Mexico history, they both mention him in all. Mallayo brought them up both. They were just the two.

G - B: Rosario was important in your life?

Vásquez: Very important, very important and I loved her very much and I say she lived like we thought she was going to live, going to have her like for always. But one of
these times she went.

G - B: How old were you when she died?

Vásquez: I was married and it was in about thirty-one or thirty-two now how old was I?

G - B: So you were already grown up.

Vásquez: Yes. I was married. I took my husband, he was the one who took the picture, to see her when we got married in twenty-eight. In twenty-eight is when we took that picture but it never came out.

G - B: We might want to show this picture of Rosario.

D - R: How old was Rosario when she died?

Vásquez: That’s a sixty-four thousand question.

G - B: A good question.

Vásquez: If she might have been around a hundred and twenty. Because she tells of coming from Navajo land at the time when the Spaniards and the Indians were still having so much trouble. And then she was still alive when the Civil War ended when she got her independance...

T - D: Freedom.

Vásquez: ...That she could have gone to be by herself. So, it made her very old.

G - B: Here's a picture of Mrs. Vásquez too that we might want
to take a...

Vásquez: Now that's a long time ago. That's a better one than today.

G - B: When she got her freedom after the end of the Civil War, when the president declared freedom for all slaves and servants, she chose to stay with your family?

Vásquez: Yes. When Padre Martinez told her that she, because she had run away several times. Padre Martinez had always had to pay more to get her back because he always wanted her because she was a good person. A good working person and they liked her at the home. So when he told her that she was free to go then she started crying. She said, "Do I have to?" He said, "No, you don't. But, if you want to go you can go. And you can take Soledad and I'll buy you land and property and you can have a home. You have no worry about being, not being supported, I'll give you enough to live on for you and Rosario." But she didn't want to go, except she came with my family to Ocaté. Now when she came to Ocaté they did give her part of one, my grandfather's ranch was divided in two. Half he gave to Rosario after she came to Ocaté. She had three sons.

G - B: Did she marry?
Vásquez: No. She had three boys.

G - B: What happened to her family, her sons and her daughter?

Vásquez: They're all dead now, they lived in Pueblo. They left Ocaté, they sold that land after Mayallo died, one of the sons died there and then the other two sold and went to live in Pueblo. But they are all dead.

G - B: And you lost contact with them or you just...?

Vásquez: Yes. I lost contact. There's only one person that called me once, sometimes from Denver and that's the daughter, she would be a great, great granddaughter to Rosario. And she was trying to prove that she was Indian. But I don't how she could prove her indian blood.

G - B: Certainly your book would help.

Vásquez: That's what she was trying to do, she finally took my book. But I have never known if she finally proved if she had Indian blood in order to go to school.

D - R: What was her name, Señora?

Vásquez: Her name was... the one that lives in Denver? It's Chonita something but, I forget what her last name is.

D - R: Do you remember what the names of Rosario's son, the last names was?

Vásquez: Romero, it's from here, to Romero. They continued with our name but we know what the real name was. He was
another Spaniard man that lived there and Rosario lived with him. But he was also a widower. And she had the two boys by him. But they continued with our name.

D - R: How old was she when she was captured? When she was taken as a slave?

Vásquez: We figure she might have been around, in her teens. She had Soledad already. She'd been married in Navajo land. And she had Soledad. But she must have been very, very young because she could have had Soledad as small as thirteen or nowadays somethings they...

G - B: But she could have, it's not uncommon to...

D - R: Do you know what happened to her husband? Was he killed?

Vásquez: He was killed in one of those battles with the Spaniards. That's why she got so mad at them. That's when she was so mad at the Spaniards because she saw when her father, her husband, and her brother were killed in that canyon up, she said, Navajo land. I don't know exactly where it was.

G - B: I sounds from the book that when she told you these stories that you were able to capture her sorrow and her sense of loss of freedom.

Vásquez: Yes. Yes. And she spoke a broken Spanish.
Side B:

...and when she started telling me sometimes I would cry with her, when she was telling me when she saw her father die and everything. But then when they say that she had the baby, they left her alone and they brought her with the baby. When they brought her to Taos Father Martínez bought her right away, but, somebody else bought Rosario, I think... But then Padre Martínez saw that Rosario was very unhappy and said, "That wouldn't do. I'll go buy Soledad." So, he bought Soledad, too. Then we had Soledad and Rosario together, growing up. And she was my tía all the time until she died.

G - B: Rosario or Soledad?

Vásquez: Soledad.

G - B: Was brought as a tía. She was brought up as part of the family.

Vásquez: Part of the family, that's my tía.

G - B: But, I think you captured those feelings in the book. You tried to capture her feelings for the landscape especially for freedom.

Vásquez: Have you read in Questa that people have captured the feeling when they read the book? They say they do. There have been many people that bought the book at
Feria Artesana in Albuquerque, and they read the book and came to Taos the next day to go see the place and everything else. They were so impressed with it.

G - B: Now you seem to have been very motivated when you wrote this book, to tell a story that would stand in answer to another book that existed about Padre Martínez.

Vásquez: Yes.

G - B: When you read Willa Cather’s book you were not very happy about that book, right?

Vásquez: Yes. And then there is that book that Vaughn translated, Demonios de Padre Martínez, Don Pedro Sánchez had written... that's the book that I had wanted to impress too, that there were good things about the Padre and the other people had written about the Padre and had known the padre themselves. They were some of his own students, you know.

G - B: Who were writing? Sánchez was his student, right?

Vásquez: Yes. The first Don Pedro, there were three Pedro's. The older Pedro wasn't. And the second one was, and the younger Pedro grew up in Ocaté, he didn't even know who Padre Martínez was. But he knew the story his father had written. And then Vaughn translated it into English. I was just reading it the other day...

G - B: I haven't seen her translation. I know the Spanish
book, I've read that but, I haven't read Vaughn's translation. We can look at it.

Vásquez: Oh, you haven't. Do you want to see it? See, right there on, I have some books right behind that chair. See if Vaughn's is there. No, behind the chair. In the little stand. No, that's not it.

G - B: And did she...

Vásquez: That's it, no. That's Shadows of the Past by Cleofas. Maybe I have it here. I have it here, I think. Let me see.

G - B: Let's see. Shadows of the Past. Otro de Cleofas.

Vásquez: Ese va ser de Córdova.

G - B: Córdova. She has them all. All of them.

Vásquez: No, I have it there.

M-D-V: Yo se lo busco.

G - B: We'll find it and take a look at that. So, you wanted to write a more true story about Padre Martínez?

Vásquez: No I have it some place.

R - D: We'll find it.

G - B: We can take a look.

Vásquez: But, anyway, you can get it in Taos.

R - D: Okay.

Vásquez: I think the Kachina Bookstore should have it. But
R - D: We'll ask her.

G - B: Now, when you wrote your story, did you, of course, the women who are best known, the writers from before were Cleófas Jaramillo, and Fabiola C de Baca, We fed them cactus and the other one is Nina Ortero Warren, did you consider yourself like part of that generation?

Vásquez: No. No. Oh part of the generation, I never thought that I would be a writer like them.

G - B: But did they inspire you a little bit? Did you say, "Well, they told their stories I can tell mine, too."

Vásquez: Yes. I think so. Adelina Otero Warren, I met her when I was going to Allison James. She used to live in that big house just down from where Allison James was. And I talked to her a lot of times as a little girl, I would go get some of this history from New Mexico. And I think she did inspire me, but I didn't tell her that I wanted to write, I don't think. But she knew I was interested in stories. She would encourage me by telling me more stories.

G - B: Or here it is. Memories of Antonio José Martinez.

Vásquez: First she wrote it all in Spanish, I think, it is. And then she translated it and then she tells... there’s Don Pedro.
G - B: So she does the translation and then she includes the text.

Vásquez: She does it all and I think that's a wonderful book.

G - B: And this Chacón, Rafael Chacón.

Vásquez: Rafael Chacón, sí. And the other one that you saw, that one is *Adios mi Tierra Encantada*. What did you do with that little orange one?

G - B: Ese es de Cleófas.

Vásquez: No. Es de Alfonso Griego.

G - B: Oh, I know, Alfonso Griego. Right, de aquí de...

Vásquez: De Albuquerque.

G - B: Pero el creció en San José y en Villanueva.

Vásquez: De allá de La Jarita. One of his brothers just died. They just buried him last week I guess, in San José.

G - B: What other things were you involved in, besides being a teacher? I know, for example, when we talked to Josephine Córdova, she's very involved in the historical society. Have you been involved in other things.

Vásquez: I have been, I still belong to the Kit Carson Historical Society. I spoke a lot, lectured. I lectured a lot at different places. I always had the gift of speaking, I think. I went to state college and
different places lecturing on Spanish history or whatever, or on Northern New Mexico. And I still belong to the Taos Historical Society, Kit Carson. And now even more because of the Martínez Hacienda.

G - B: You're involved in that?

Vásquez: The Martínez Hacienda. So, I've been involved in Historical...

G - B: I would say that looking at your life, given the history of our people, the loss of land, sometimes poverty and isolation, that you had a very exemplary life and a very unique life. What do you owe that to? What do you think accounted or helped you?

Vásquez: We had a part to fulfill life. And I've done the things that I wanted to do. Because we weren't rich but we weren't too poor, I had the means to do the things that I wanted to do. More or less they helped me get the means, somebody like my husband helped me, started publishing my books. I had my family that always supported my ambitions or...

G - B: And it sounds like your family brought you up with the belief that education was important?

Vásquez: Yes. That education was important and behavior, too. They always told me to be a lady wherever I went. When my brother left me at Loma Parda, that's the first
thing he said, "Remember, always be a lady." And things like that, you know. They wouldn't go into details, but you could get what they meant.

_G - B_: What about, maybe, I don't know if you'd want to talk a little about growing up in a separate culture, Hispanic Culture and then as your life goes on having to interact more and more with the different culture, particularly Anglo culture. How was that?

_Vásquez_: My life was different. These people that have come up from the Spanish classes, now they’ve been Spanish completely. But, I grew up in the Ocaté area and people have come in with the Civil War when Fort Union started and there were confederate soldiers that stayed afterwards and lived in the Ocaté area. So we grew up with Germans around us and different kinds, English people, Indian, Mexicans. So I grew up not in a completely Spanish culture.

_G - B_: So ever since you were little you were having experiences with different people.

_Vásquez_: I had the experiences there in Cañon and then in Ocaté. And if you go to Ocaté, well there's hardly anybody left, now, it's almost getting to be a ghost town but, there's mixed people yet. And then there were intermarriages.
G - B: Did you believe that your own culture would ever be an obstacle to being what you wanted to be or accomplishing what you wanted to?

Vásquez: I began to see that afterwards. I was already a teacher and grown up and began to see these race things coming up. We began to see that it was going to be harder for our children. Unfortunately, my boys were able to do the very same things all those anglo boys ever did in Vegas, go to Highlands and take all the different opportunities in education that all those anglo kids got. But by the time Ben grew up, then it was really getting to be this Chicano Movement and I was sort of concerned for how Ben was going to go. He went down to New Mexico State to get his Master's. He had gone to the University and went to New Mexico State and got his Master's in Bilingual Education. But fortunately, in my family we always stayed neutral in that respect. I tried to counsel Anselmo Arellano the writer. Well Anselmo, when he was in Springer, was having his, "Why are we being treated the way we are?", he was going around with Atencio a lot.

G - B: With Tomás.

Vásquez: Tomás Atencio, and so they were thinking very deeply into this and I admired the way they thought of things.
But when I talked to Anselmo one time I did ask him. I said, " Didn't you grow up in Colfax County," and in Colfax County, like I say, you have to speak English because it was an Anglo county. There were more Anglos than Spanish. He said, "Yes." So, then he began to think. They've done a wonderful way of putting it together in their books. Both Anselmo and Atencio have become very good and even Gabino Redón. They've come a long way in doing things for the Hispanics in a very nice way, finally. That have brought up more of our culture to what it should be instead of just putting us down.

G - B: How do feel about bilingual education? Do you think it was a good thing? Do you think it's something that maybe our people could have profited from, past generations?

Vásquez: I have mixed feelings of that. Because now our Spanish kids don't hardly know Spanish when they go to school. So, it's necessary that they learn the Spanish with the English. It's very important that they know both languages or more if they can have them. Languages are very important. But at the time that I grew up we needed the English. We spoke the Spanish, we needed more English. But I think it was necessary to have
both and then now that kids are growing, I think they need the Spanish. So I think the Bi-lingual Education Program is a very good program in New Mexico. There are lot of people that are against it because it has been a little more expensive, I think, in training bi-lingual education teachers. But that also helped the Anglo teachers because I think they have learned Spanish.

G - B: I wonder though, let's say that when you were children in school, or like my parents, if you had come to the schools and they said "You already speak Spanish, we're going to teach you English, but at the same time while you're learning the English, we're going to teach you to read and write Spanish," -- that they would have advanced so much faster if they had literacy right away. I often wonder what would have been...

Vásquez: Where did you go to school?

G - B: Well, I went to school in Harding County which was part of Mora.

Vásquez: Where, where Roy?

G - B: Well, my mother was a teacher. I went to Roy to a sister school a couple of years then my mother was a teacher out in the boondocks in a one-room schoolhouse in Rosebud.
Vásquez: How would you have felt if they had made you?

G - B: Well, see in my situation we couldn't because it was all Anglos. We were the only Hispanic children, but I lived in Mexico when I was a child for a year. My father went to work in Mexico and we went to live there, and at the age of eight I was taught to read and write in a language that I already spoke. I think that was very positive for me. I think that it would have been good for all our people from the early years to learn to read and write Spanish and of course, English.

Vásquez: And of course English. I see them on T.V. now and it's so nice to see that they're doing it in both languages. And like I say, they have gotten the German from the German, let them get German, too, or Indian. I had a friend when I was going to Highlands, from the Indian reservation from Gallup, and he didn't want his little girls to learn Indian, and I said, "Why?". He said, "Because it's English, now." and I said, "But, how much more wonderful it'll be if they know Navajo, English and Spanish." He spoke Spanish and 'all those languages. He said, "I want them to learn Spanish," but he didn't want them to learn their own Indian language. I think your own language should be by all means whatever it can be. They should teach you your own
language and other languages besides.

**G - B:** Would you have any advice for teachers today? From your experiences, what have you learned from being a teacher that you could say to us, "You know, if you do things like this."

**Vásquez:** To respect your students. From the very beginning, respect and let them know that you're telling the truth and that you are living what you are teaching. If you don't live what you teach and you don't respect them... I found that respecting my students was one of the best things I could ever have done. Because they know. Sometimes they have good ideas. Let them tell you their own ideas and accept them. Sometimes, even the smaller kids have good ideas to tell you.

**G - B:** What are the most pleasant memories of your teaching career? What was the best part of it?

**Vásquez:** Well, Loma Parda was my richest, my first, and really something unique with those older people that I had to learn to be a lady, learn to teach, learn to help others in so many ways; that I think that's how it stands out from my other teaching years. But as I say when I went to boarding schools with mixed cultures, I think that also opened new worlds for me because I could see the Africans from Africa and how they had
come to the United States and in many cases not being treated the way they should. And yet, they were persons just like we were and so eager to learn, that when they came to our schools they were tickled that they could room with all the anglo boys. And we didn't put them separate. I remember one boy came from Thailand and I put him with an Anglo boy as a roommate so that he could get the English. The Anglo boy was the son of a doctor. I said, "Will you help him here?" The boy was also wanting to learn how to speak in Thai. But it was very helpful to learn to live together and with peoples. I think you have to learn to live and have a positive way of life. If you have a positive way of life you have peace, you don't have envy, and shall I say discrimination. You're not a real person. You haven't been trained completely.

**D - R:** Are there other writings?

**G - B:** In addition to these two books, do you have other books?

**Vásquez:** Books? No, I have articles. The way I started to write was when I was at Allison James. I used to write for magazines, different magazines that were published in Chicago, and send stories. I earned my first five dollars with a story and then I began to get twenty dollars.
G - B: Do you have those collected? Do you have copies of those?

Vásquez: No. Unfortunately, I don't. When I started writing cuentos and those things, both in English and Spanish, I used to send them. I had written for papers like the Springer News and Taos Sentinel and even in Vegas. I have had articles in the Tribune and the Journal and in Las Cruces...

G - B: You don't have all those collected? It would be nice to collect them and put them in a book.

Vásquez: No, I never did.

D - R: I will look for them.

Vásquez: But I don't know that you... now, most of those writings are already under Dora Ortiz Vásquez, the one's that...

G - B: Some earlier ones, did you write in another name? Because we could start to look for these in the newspapers and the magazines.

Vásquez: Well, the ones I did write in magazines were Dora and my maiden name, but unfortunately it’s been such a long time.

G - B: Dora Ortiz.

D - R: Do you remember what the names of the magazines were?

Vásquez: I have to think about it.
G - B: Because we might be able to find them.

Vásquez: They're not published anymore, that magazine from Chicago is not published.

D - R: Sometimes you can get old copies.

Vásquez: You might some find old copies in libraries or archives. Like, well, I have to think about it. I don't recall it at all.

G - B: Do you have other questions?

M-D-V: The conflict from being a Catholic and becoming a Presbyterian?

G - B: You were brought up Presbyterian. Your family was already Presbyterian?

Vásquez: Yes.

G - B: For a couple of generations, right?

Vásquez: Well, the clash came with the French priests, when they came into New Mexico and started discriminating against the Hispanics, the native priests. Of course they came in with the new Catholicism they brought from the East, and the ones that came from Durango brought the old Spanish Roman Catholicism from Rome. It's different I think, and it was very radical. Now, these other ones came in being the other way and they needed churches and they needed money. The Spanish priests all had their churches because they were all wealthy. Padre
Lucero had his own church in Arroyo Seco, Padre Martínez had his own church in Taos, and Padre Gallegos had his own church in Albuquerque, and Medina in Española and all of them had their own churches because they were wealthy. So, they couldn't take them away from them. The only way was to start new Catholic Churches and that sort of divided the Catholic Church within itself. Then, when Padre Medina, he was never excommunicated, the one that was down in Belén, he got on his burro and went to Mexico. I don't think he was excommunicated, he was the only one. Padre Martínez was the last one here. And that one, because he had been an educator and things like that, but I can see your point. They disobeyed their vows and that's the vow that got him, that he married. But I'm glad he got married. I'm glad he got married. But he did marry. So did Padre Lucero and each one married the other one.

G - B: This is later after Lamy came?

Vásquez: No, they were married long before. See they already had a family. They had broken their vows as priests. The Catholic Church got divided by itself because the followers of the French priest went one way and the padres, fathers went the other way. My family, I don't think, wanted to take part in that. But, we were very
lonely and sad because we were being mistreated in Taos. So that's when my grandfather left Taos. They say that affected him terribly. I didn't get to know him. He never was the same. It affected him very much because he didn't want to leave the Catholic Church.

**G - B:** This was José...

**Vásquez:** Jorge, Jorge Romero. One of the padre's son. But when they went out to Ocaté, that's when those Presbyterian missionaries came out there. These people had the bible, because Padre Martinez always taught bible in his school and always had a bible. The French priest didn't always bring the bible to the people. I hate to say that, but it's so true. It wasn't until afterward that they began to see that the people wanted it. So there was a clash that, it isn't good to talk about it. My grandfather didn't become a Protestant but my other family did. So I grew up as a Presbyterian in Ocaté. One thing my father always said, "Always respect. We're both really Catholic and Protestant. And we must always respect the other people's beliefs and that's what's it all about."

**G - B:** I've known, I've had friends that were Presbyterian and maybe went to Menual and some of these schools and they sometimes felt marginalized by their community, the
Hispanic community, Catholic Communities, left out a little bit.

Vásquez: Because they were...

G - B: Because they were Protestant.

Vásquez: And because they went to Menaul. In fact, there's a teacher here that's retired in Mora. She used to be from Truchas and there was a mission school there, but even after she went to Menual, they sort of left her out some of the Catholic Church activities because she had gone to Menual. But, then she got in again after she left Menual.

G - B: You never felt those kinds of conflicts within your community?

Vásquez: No, I never did feel that. No, I always worked with the Catholic people, like I did in Loma Parda and did everywhere. We worked together because I had been told from the very beginning by my father, to always respect. We went to the velorios, we did the same things that the people did or we went to mass. You go to mass and you worship the same way the other people do.

M-D-V: Were those services done in Spanish?

Vásquez: Where?

M-D-V: Here in the Presbyterian Church. Did they do...
Vásquez: Yes. Here they’re done in Spanish. In Mora, it's in English because they have Anglo people in Mora from the Christmas Tree Canyon. But they have sort of a mixed service. They sing hymns in Spanish and sometimes the minister reads the bible both in English and Spanish. Here it’s in Spanish because it's all Spanish people. But, usually in the summer time we have people come around, it's mixed, just like masses are now in the Catholic Church.

G - B: Did you feel that your job, maybe when you were out there in the community teaching as a teacher, that part of your job was to Americanize those children? That the Hispanic children that maybe didn't know English or know the ways of the new and the dominant culture...

Vásquez: What do you mean by Americanize, no! I didn’t try to Americanize. I think we were loyal to the American government once we had it, you know. But, it wasn’t our need to Americanize, really. But that’s what we were doing after we became part of the United States, Americanize. But not really to the way that, what would you call it now?

G - B: Assimilation. To forget their culture.

M-D-V: To give up everything.

Vásquez: No. Not to forget your culture by no means.
G - B: That was always important for you. You had to learn this but you had to maintain your culture.

Vásquez: Maintain your culture. No matter what it is. Pride in your culture and then get other cultures mixed with yours, but keep your own and speak your own language. I taught my children to speak Spanish before they learned English and a lot of people told me, "You being a teacher, why do you teach them Spanish?" I said, "Well, they have to talk to their grandparents and people that don't know English like our vecinos all over. I want them to be a part of knowing each other always. From our vecinos and the people we grew up with."

G - B: My mother taught us, of course, English before we went to school but we also spoke Spanish because of the abuelita who'd come to stay with us. We'd go visit them and stay with them and you had to communicate.

Vásquez: Our Spanish is what we speak more in the family now. We had the grandson that just left, he lives in Salt Lake City. He has his own business. And he said, "Granma, one of the nicest things that I think I know as a boy, since I was growing up is that we spoke both English and Spanish." I think it's good for them.

G - B: Do you and your husband speak mostly Spanish now with
each other? Is that your home language?

Vásquez: Si. Ahora, si, más español pero si no podemos pensar una cosa en español la hacemos en inglés, es lo que pasa.

G - B: Pero se sienten más cómodos en español.

Vásquez: Si, más en español. Pero para leer es más fácil en inglés.

G - B: ...fácil el inglés.

Vásquez: Como ahora tiene mi hijo unas historias que están en español. Mi hijo dice, "No, está mejor en inglés." El siempre, si la lee en español va al inglés, porque comprende mejor, es más fácil. En español tenemos que usar más el diccionario.

M-D-V: I have one more question. Does she have pictures of the schools?

Vásquez: No.

G - B: She said they didn't have money to buy film and cameras. There's a couple in that.

Vásquez: There's a couple of these that Alice Bullock took of Loma Parda. That is a picture of Lomas Parda. I just had one of my students from Loma Parda die the other day here in Vegas. I have had quite a few students die already from Loma Parda. No. I guess I don't have any...
G - B: Of the school? Of the children? You don't have any pictures of yourself that's a...

Vásquez: No. I don't have any pictures.

D - R: Are these photographs in the archives, too? Or does the Bullock family have them? Or...

Vásquez: I wonder if Alice Bullock is alive. Is Mr. Bullock still living in Santa Fe?

D - R: I don't know. I can look.

Vásquez: I think he is. They live on that street, and what is the name of that street? You can find him in the directory. James Bullock.

D - R: Okay.

Vásquez: I don't know what he did with Alice's... Oh! she had a good collection. Now she had pictures of... she used to teach up in Ratón, and that area of the Dawson Mines. She had pictures of the Dawson Mines and Dawson Schools and all the places where she taught way back in the twenties and thirties. So, they might have some of those. Not of mine, but of the public schools. I had a picture of my husband teaching in this school that no longer exists here in Romeroville. They called it Romeroville because there were Romeros living there. And I loaned it to somebody and I lost it, the picture of where my husband is. That was way back in the
thirties. So, that's about it.

(the interview is interrupted here.)

D - R: I agree.

Vásquez: It's so important. For a better world for a better community, better state. I hate these negative things. I don't like to attack. My father told me this, which I have always thought was right: "To raise yourself up, you don't have to throw somebody else down." And I hate it, like in politics, you don't have to throw the other person down, you'd go faster up.

D - R: And politics are getting so bad.

Vásquez: Yes. It's getting horrible. Now I hate when they attack each other because they only do each other harm. Let's say they are all Democrats. Once the primaries finals are over they're going to be friends again. Why did they attack themselves so much? Saying the things they did. I don't like it.

G - B: I saw this painting here. Is that someone?

Vásquez: That's me. That's me, go see it. Yes, that's the painting of one of the German men. The picture at the other end is my little sister. That's me. Go in and see it.

D - R: Oh, that's beautiful.

Vásquez: That's me once upon a time.
D - R: Señora, would you mind if we took pictures?

Vásquez: No, take them.

D - R: I have to plug...

Vásquez: They have it at Menual. The picture of the picture but, take it. It's in the historical library.

D - R: Okay. I'll go check there, too.

Vásquez: Let me come in to tell you more about those. Now, this is the painting by my husband. He has revived the Spanish Colonial. Now, you know that that almost died. Almost died, and he worked with the... who was that man in Taos?
GUADALUPE BACA VAUGHN
March 18, 1992
Guadalupe Baca Vaughn
March 18, 1992

Side A:

Vaughn: Wait a minute, no, no, no. The twenty-fourth. And I came back and that's when I taught at San Isidro in San Miguel County. In twenty-four I taught at San Isidro. You could get first, second and third grades.

G - B: Back here, San Isidro by Belen? I mean...

Vaughn: No. San Isidro in San Miguel County.

G - B: Oh. Another San Isidro.

Vaughn: It's on the highway de Las Vegas highway and it's West.

[Knock on door] Come in.

Interviews resumes

Vaughn: Okay.

G - B: Okay, so you were at San Isidro.

Vaughn: I went to San Isidro and that was terrible.

G - B: Why?

Vaughn: Because, it was far away. Way up in the mountains and it was far from Vegas. They had to take me. Didn't I do this before?

G - B: Not for us.

Vaughn: Didn't I tell you about San Isidro?

G - B: Not yet.

Vaughn: Well, what did I tell you about before?
We had just started out but we backed you up to your childhood so we can continue with San Isidro.

I see. And then, that's the time that I taught just up till after Christmas.

Right. Okay.

And I started in September, that was in San Miguel County. And that was a one-room school. But, there were two rooms in there. There was a little tabique between the rooms. The principal was Alejandro Flores. I remembered the name last night and I wrote it down. He used to play the violin. And he played all the old tunes and he that's all he did. I think I had first, second and third and he had fifth, fourth, sixth, seventh and eighth. But it was just a small school, you didn't have all the grades. My part was the dark part where they put the tabique and it didn't go all the way up, just half way and there was a door, no door to it, just an opening. And he had a desk, I didn't. I had sort of a little table, maybe this big. I hadn't taken any training yet. But I taught the way I was taught at Loretto.

Sure.

We did have a chart, a pointer and I had a piece of blackboard that was cardboard, I guess. Painted black.

I bet there were no books, no tablets, no...
Vaughn: No books, no tablets, no nothing. And kids had to sit two in a seat but we had the wide seats and some of them were the single ones. They were that kind that you put your books here in front and the long bench behind.

G - B: Right.

Vaughn: But anyway, it was so lonely. It was all among the pines and there were a few houses. There was a church and I rented this room from the lady that was near the school. I had never been out by myself. So, I used to take sardines and crackers and cheese. You know, what you'd usually would take in those days take to a picnic.

D - R: How old were you, Señora?

Vaughn: I was twenty-one, wait a minute, twenty, twenty-one.

G - B: So, you boarded with this woman?

Vaughn: No, I didn't board. I just rented a room and had a little tiny stove. I could cook my own and because the lady told me, "Si quiere que le cuesa frijoles, yo se los atizo." Which was funny because I thought, I didn't like her. Well, I was young and I had very strange ideas. I didn't last very long because that was when I quit in December and went back to Vegas. And then moved to Santa Fe, my daughter was born in Santa
Fe, my oldest daughter. And that was the extent of my teaching. Then I went to Missouri and lived there for a few years, I guess it was a couple of years. And then came back, back to San Miguel County, then we moved to Santa Fe, and I got a job in Río Arriba County. There was this one room, they rented a room. There was a Mrs. Velarde who was on the Board of Education and she had always wanted to have a school in Velarde. What did I call it?

G - B: Santa Fe?

Vaughn: Rinconada, Rinconada. So, they rented a room and they brought desks and I actually had a desk and I had blackboards, too. I had from the first to the eighth grade. I had mostly first graders, maybe second graders and I don't remember now the in-between. But I had two eighth graders. And in those days in order to go to high school, the eighth graders had to take a state test. You had to bring them to Santa Fe to the Superintendent's Office. Well, I never worked so hard in my life because I never had been good in math. I can add two and two and get six. But, anyway, it was a challenge because there, those children in San Ysidro were all Spanish. I forgot to go back to San Ysidro. This Mr. Flores, and there's still records by him, he
used to play the old dance tunes, and the folcóricas in Santa Fe, had him make some discos with all these tunes, and they used to sell them. I don't know if some of them still exist, I imagine so. But, you know, él se cansaba de enseñar. El sacaba el violín. So then nobody had school. Habia veces que desde la mañana lo sacaba y tocaba. He played the violin really well and was the best musician that I know. He was very famous. Para las fiestas lo traían para acá. He was very good but, he was no teacher. But I wasn't there very long y se quedó él solo with the whole school, when I left. And then I was in Rinconada. I had two, I had about five Anglos and the rest were Spanish kids. And they were all big. I think I had one or maybe two beginners, but they were all big kids from...

**G - B:** Did these kids speak English? The Spanish speaking kids? Did they know any English? In Rinconada?

**Vaughn:** Yes, no. In San Ysidro, no. In Rinconada, Yes.

**G - B:** They had all ready...

**Vaughn:** Words, some, just words. Because, the Shaflancas were Anglos and all those people still lived there, the old families. But, I had to prepare those girls to take the test and that I started working with them. And I worked so hard at math, you know. Because I wasn't
good and never was. And I thought, "Well here I had to teach those kids" But, they did all right. In May I was a wreck when I brought them. My brother in law went after me to bring them here, ya no me recuerdo, to the office to take the test. And they passed it, which I guess I didn't do so bad but, oh I thought, "no more math. No more math for me." I still don't like it.

**G - B:** You must have done a good job. One of the teachers we interviewed said that there was a rule that they told you. Once you got a job, you must not, you can not use Spanish in the classroom. And she said if we did our jobs were in danger. They told us, "we will fire you", and she said "we'd sometimes just didn't have a choice." Do you remember some of those old rules? They really drove that home?

**Vaughn:** Oh yes. Yes. We could not speak Spanish to the kids. And those poor little things, they would come and they didn't know what you were talking about.

**G - B:** Did you ever break the rules?

**Vaughn:** Oh, all the time. Nobody knew anything about it. But, you had to. And some of big ones would know better you know, some of the bigger kids. But, here in Riconada, I had mostly big kids and then those two Anglos girls. But, the Spanish kids, there weren't very many, they
knew a few words, but very few. And I stayed there all year and oh, I didn't want to go back. Mrs. Velarde said, "Well, you're the only teacher that has wanted to come here because we never had a school." That was the only year they had a school in Riconada.

G - B: Is the year you went?

Vaughn: Is the year I went.

G - B: So afterwards you went somewhere else?

Vaughn: And then, I came to El Rancho. Could you read what I have there, if you can read it.

G - B: Let's see. El Rancho, you have here, San Ysidro, Valencia.

Vaughn: But that comes later.

G - B: El Rancho you have later. Riconada and El Rancho.

Vaughn: Okay. El Rancho. Then I got a school here in El Rancho. Esa vez ganaron los republicanos and my brother-in-law was Deputy, United States Marshall for Tom Lee who lives down in the middle of the state. So it's all, you know...

G - B: The appointments were political?

Vaughn: Oh, all of them, all. They said they weren't but they were. You had to come and talk to, entonces tenian directores. Each little village had its directores.
G - B: Which was like the President of the School Board, something like that?

Vaughn: Yes. But each little place where there were schools, they had, el cuerpo de directores. And so my brother-in-law knew the directores here in El Rancho and he was a Republican. So I got the school in El Rancho.

G - B: Through this connection?

Vaughn: And So I came out here and in the meantime, in summers, I had gone to Highlands. In fact, that's because my family got bigger and I could only go summers. I was lucky that my sister, Eloisa Meyer lived in Vegas in our old home, which our old home is still there.

G - B: Right.

Vaughn: In old town and I would go every summer to school.

G - B: So, in the winter you would teach, in the summer you'd go to school and then you had how many children?

Vaughn: I had three then, then I had four.

G - B: And then on top of being the teacher and being the student you had your own children to raise?

Vaughn: I had my own children and I usually would go...

G - B: How did you manage all that work?

Vaughn: Well, I got this little girl from, she's an old lady now here in El Rancho, from Chamita. Carlota
Mascareñas was her name. From those Mascareñas who were muy políticos. Do you know anything about Rio Arriba?

G - B: Uh-hmm.

Vaughn: And she came and took care of my children.

G - B: While you were teaching and going to school?

Vaughn: While I was teaching.

G - B: In the summer, did you take your family to Las Vegas or did you go alone? Because when we were kids we would pack up and go to Las Vegas in the summer. It was great for us because we were from the rancho. This meant going to town.

Vaughn: Uh-huh.

G - B: But you know, they had to pack up all...

Vaughn: I took all of my kids and my kids grew up with Eloisa's kids. ¡Que Julius, oh, era un diablo, un demonio! And he was little, very little at that time. And the minute I got to Vegas, my sister Eloisa and my brother in law would take off for Mexico, for California because I was there and I had the whole family. I had her kids and mine. So it was a big house and the bigger kids would take care of them.
G - B: Do you remember those days being hard to bring up your kids? To study? To then to prepare for classes? Do you remember it being a lot of work?

Vaughn: It was very hard studying at night. But after you would put them to bed is the only time. Había veces que estaba muriéndome de sueño. Because I...

G - B: You had that exam, you had that reading assignment.

Vaughn: Yes, those assignments, especially the later years when I was majoring in Spanish. We had all this literature that I took classes with your father.

G - B: Was he hard?

Vaughn: No, he wasn't as hard as, ¿Cómo se llamaba, Campa?

G - B: Oh, Campa taught there, too, at Highlands. Did you ever have Cobos? He was at Highlands too, for while.

Vaughn: Yes, but I didn't have much with Cobos, that was later. Cobos wasn't that hard. I don't think I ever took any, yes, one course but I don't remember what it was. I remember that we were having a test and he says, "Aquí está este papelito." I asked him for something and he wrote on the piece of paper. I took the piece of paper and followed what he said and never turned it over. And the next day, when I took the test, he said, "You should have gotten an A." I said "No, I just couldn't remember." He said, "I gave you the questions."
G - B: The answers.

Vaughn: And I said, "You did not!" And he said, "Do you remember that little paper. I wrote all the questions to the test on the back of it." No me dió Dios licencia de volterar el papelito a ver que había en el otro lado.

G - B: Did you want to be a teacher when you were young? That was never a dream of yours?

Vaughn: No. Because my sister was a teacher. My great-grand mother who came from California was a teacher, so they said in.

G - B: In California? Or here?

Vaughn: No, no. Here. Cuando vino enseñaba catequismo. But she taught them their ABC's and she taught them the rudiments, in fact Fabiola says that she was just a little tiny kid about five, that she went to, we called her La Macita, meaning Mamacita, La Macita. But she had taught children to embroider and when they came from California, because my mother's family were not New Mexicans. They were Californians, eran de Grande and, so, let's see where was I on this other, I lost the thread.

D - R: Fabiola had said when she was five...
Vaughn: Yeah, she went to my grandmother's, but I was talking about the school. Oh, no, I had to come home and cook for the whole bunch, my sister's kids and mine. And I was so tired and they were so noisy and they'd tattle "He did this to me and then she did that to me." You know how kids, well, they were left alone but it wasn't hard till after they were growing up. I wouldn't be a teacher today for anything. The teachers here complain, "Oh, the kids are awful." They have no respect for the teachers or for elders. And the language that they use and it's everyday language. Four letter words, just pop out. My daughter-in-law, Carlos' wife is an aide here with the Spanish program and they have all the little ones. First, second, third, fourth and fifth not fifth now because that's this new school over here. But, first, second, third and fourth and she says those little kids come in and the things that they say. She's just shocked. So, I couldn't be a teacher today. And in Taos, when I was teaching junior high, I was known as the meanest teacher in junior high.

G - B: You taught at San Ildefonso, also, right?

Vaughn: Yes, but that was the same area. You see, I taught at El Rancho and then from El Rancho I went to San
Ildefonso and then, no, from El Rancho, I went to Pojoaque. That's when they built the, because it was not consolidated. See there was a school near Jacona, here in Pojoaque, then the school up on the hill, and over there in Pojoaque, in Nambé, there were two or three schools in, Cuyamungué had a school, then they consolidated in Pojaque. So that's when I left in...

G - B: And how was teaching at San Ildefonso? Do you remember that experience?

Vaughn: Yes, but they were all Spanish kids.

G - B: They were?

Vaughn: The building is still there, ya se está cayendo. But the building is still there.

G - B: Again, did these kids know English or was that part of your...

Vaughn: Not a word.

G - B: So you had to come in and teach them.

Vaughn: No. I had to come in and teach English. They didn't have books. We did have a black board in El Rancho. And we had those tables that Mr. Gómez, Adelido Gómez was the principal, we had four, four rooms then. It was pretty large. But they didn't know any English.

G - B: So you spent most of your day teaching, trying to teach them English?
Vaughn: English and arithmetic. But I taught it like I taught Spanish in the junior high, by doing things, by naming things. For instance, I remember last summer, this fellow called me from Los Alamos and he said, "Mrs. Vaughn, you wouldn't remember me but I remember you. You were my first teacher and you taught me how to speak English." and I said, "I did!" "Yes, don't you remember," he said, "you had three balls, one red, one yellow, and one blue. And this is the red ball." Y comenzó on the phone to tell me all this. Then I had a nursery rhyme. I had a candle stick and we'd recite, you know, and jump over the candle stick. We had jump, and, we had all the verbs, you know, we'd act out all these things. And they learned. That's the way I taught.

G - B: Did you believe that, well, that was your job, to teach them. Did you do this from a conviction that these children in order to survive in this society they were going to have to learn English.

Vaughn: Oh, yes.

G - B: Was that the most important thing you could do for them is to...

Vaughn: That was the most important thing and we'd sing. We did a lot of singing. Que me ya acuerdo, que...one day
we had, oh, by the time I was in El Rancho, they had song books at the county fair. They furnished crayons, and they furnished construction paper. And that's about it. But we had to do with six boxes of crayons for the whole room and I had about forty the first year. Forty kids in there.

G - B: In different grades?

Vaughn: No, I had them in first, pre-first and first, and second. That there were so many that I had to get rid, they had another teacher that taught second and third and fourth. And then Mr. Gómez taught sixth, seventh and eighth. He was the principal. But, I remember the fights I used to have with him. Mr. Gómez, era tan tight. He'd give us six little boxes of crayons and they were the single ones. And maybe two sheets of paper and I was always looking ahead for Christmas. I wanted the red and the green. The red and the green so we could make change, you know, to decorate a tree. Those kids had never had a tree. It was fun. I look back to it now, it was very tiring but I was young.

G - B: Sure. Were you able to use anything culturally?

Vaughn: No.

G - B: Not from their own culture. That wasn't your job.
Vaughn: No, I just, no. That wasn't my job. We would tell stories. They would tell stories because I've always been, folklore for me has always been it. I'd say try to tell it in English. But we read The Three Little Pigs, and all those.

G - B: But you would get them to try and tell the stories they knew from home in Spanish and English.

Vaughn: From Spanish to English. But they couldn't. They told it mostly in Spanish and they'd put a word here and they'd say, "How do say?" Like one time I had them learn the different animals. I had some patterns for an elephant, a giraffe, and a camel and horse and so on. And so I got some scraps and I said we're all going to sew, even the little boys. And I said, "If you can bring some thread," because that was during the depression. Remind me to tell you about the pay. Then we would cut the animal out for them, they sewed it, and then we stuffed it. And they had animals. They had the elephant, elephant. This little girl came to me one day and she said, "Mrs. Vaughn. Can I have more gar for my elephant?

G - B: They could be very creative?

Vaughn: She told me what she wanted. We communicated. I thought if they can communicate, that's something.
Which they did. Excuse me. Give me some more gar for my elephant.

G - B: And you knew what she wanted. Right?

Vaughn: She knew what she wanted.

G - B: But you did too because you knew Spanish?

Vaughn: Yes, of course I knew, otherwise I wouldn't have known what gar was, garra. Garra, you know.

G - B: Right. So you had to be very creative in those days.

Vaughn: As you know, I remember this candlestick that this little boy remembered. This little boy, he's a man, has grown children of his own, but called me because I I taught him English. "Mrs. Vaughn you taught me English." And they all, the first year, I can say, they could get along. And those kids pasaban mucho trabajo. Los que vivían del otro lado del río, they had to come in the winter time and they'd fall in the river, which didn't have much water, but they managed to fall in.

G - B: And get wet.

Vaughn: And they come home, to school wet. And helándose, purple little hands, they had no gloves. And I had a big pot bellied stove.

G - B: Did you have to build a fire yourself?
Vaughn: The first few days and then they got a woman to come in. But I had to take out the ashes. Because they couldn't take them out. You know, they were too hot. But I had the stove and I'd put all the little chairs around and take off their stockings. You can imagine how it smelled in there, and dried them. Pero venían hechos sopa, mojados hasta aquí. Those that lived in, del otro banda, you know. But, they all grew up, the ones I remember now. Some of them are already gone but they learned good English. Some of them had an accent but a lot of them, especially the boys, no accent. But that wasn't due to me because they went on. They realized that they had an accent and so they tried to overcome that. Which they did very well.

D - R: Why do you think the boys had no accent but the girls might of had more?

Vaughn: I don't know. Maybe the boys got out more y no había Anglos. None, not a single family.

G - B: So they didn't have any exposure to it.

Vaughn: So they didn't have any exposure to it. But, we would, to go back to this folklore. Where I got them started was telling their stories. They'd tell mostly, "La Llorona. Boy that was a favorite one. Still is, La Llorona and,...
Brujas and gavilanes, the tecolote and all those, you know. They were all more or less the same. And they all had something to say. So with those, you see, we would take, for instance, chickens, "cheecans". And I tried to overcome that, Chicken "cheecan". And what else was it that, oh, one little girl, one day I sent her to Mr. Gómez's room for the song book. We had song books, and he kept them. I wanted to teach a them new song so I sent her in there, and, she went over, and she said, "Mr. Gómez, the teacher said to send her the book song." And Mr. Gómez said, le dio risa, izque le dijo" you mean the song books?" "Yes, Madam." I always think of that because he never forgot it, you know.

Yes, madam.

Yes, madam. Oh there's so many cute things that I wish I could, sometimes I sit and...

Remember them?

I remember them.

Did you do Christmas programs or special plays and that kind of thing?

Yes. Yes, yes and we didn't have a stage or anything but, people came, ¡Qué bárbaro!
G - B: That was the most important thing that happened?

Vaughn: The most important thing that happened. They had to come to, oh, we even had a sand table. Mr. Gómez made a sand table for me. I even have pictures of it. We planted wheat and in two days the wheat grew this high, all over. So then we talked about places where there were jungles. They made little trees and some of them thought things that I wouldn't have thought of, but, I would tell about these things, you know. We made villages, they made casitas de adobe, they made little adobes, they made hornitos, they loved to make hornitos. I guess all kids did. Because I do remember making hornitos. Sticking my hand there and putting all this mud here and then taking it out, you know.

G - B: The Christmas programs you had plays and, ...

Vaughn: The Christmas programs we had all English songs. This boy that called me, he was a cutest little boy, he sang *Away in the Manger*, and we dressed in white and put little wings on him like an angel. *Estaba allí, "Away in a manger"* in a what?

G - B: In a manger.

Vaughn: And everybody went wild.

G - B: Just like a little angel.
Vaughn: And a little angel. And he was so cute, he had the cutest voice. Oh, we had plays and we had... And then, of course, when spring came we played outside.

G - B: Did the parents help you, like for the plays or was this something you did all by yourself?

Vaughn: No. Era la gente muy, muy pobre. No tenían ni que comer. People don't know what it was but I imagine that these people had at least tasajos, if nothing else. That the people in the city didn't. This all during the depression.

Vaughn: I don't remember when it was, twenty-nine, that the county didn't have the money to pay us. Mr. Lujan, Manuel Lujan, Sr. was a superintendent. He called a meeting, I used to hitch a ride with Mr. Gómez who had a little rumble, one of those little cars with a rumble seat. Yai iban quién sabe cuantos, a little car full. He'd take me to Santa Fe to the meetings and he said, "We don't have the money, the people haven't paid their taxes. They just can't pay. So, we can't pay you. If you can get a job, go ahead. You won't lose your job, you can come back to it." But nobody quit. Everybody kept their jobs, no habia...

G - B: They just taught to the end of the year?
Vaughn: No habia jobs, there wasn't anything. The good thing is, I used to sew a lot. I had my sisters hand me downs and all that. Then I made clothes for my children. I made pants for my oldest son, Patrick. He wouldn't wear them anymore. But, those were such hard times.

D - R: Did you ever get paid that year?

Vaughn: They gave us, at that time he said "we're going to give you a certificate of indebtedness for the amount of money." I wasn't making very much. I was making sixty-five dollars a month, I guess. But, things were cheap. You could get a lot of hamburger for ten cents. Bread was five cents. A sack of flour was a dollar something. And I used to make my own bread and then this girl, Carlota, used to make tortillas. And we always had beans. But all the people were very, very poor. What we didn't have was pencils and books and so on. We had two or three books and with those three books we had to do for the whole classroom.

G - B: Was the teacher an important person in the community? A respected person?

Vaughn: A very, very respected person. And everyone, for instance, some of those people would want you to, venia que les hiciera un ordén, you know, to Montgomery Wards
and because they didn't know how to make the order and then, we'd tell them, there was no post office...

Tape I, Side B:

...and the stories. It was not the tecolotes y de brujas y de muertos y de...

G - B: Bultos.

Vaughn: The thing with our culture, we're, what's the word I want to say. Healthy.

G - B: Insular, closed?

Vaughn: No. We're not a people that look at things happily. We're always afraid.

G - B: Pessimists?

Vaughn: Pessimistic. There you are. We're pessimistic people as a race. The more I live the more I think about it. Like my son tells me, "Oh, mother. You always think the worst things." Because le digo, "con que si esto", "con que nothing"! But anyway, we are a pessimistic people. While the Anglo, most of them, it depends on what they think, they come. Now the Kentuckians and the Tennesseans are very much como estos and some Oklahomans. Pero, the more that you go south, los Tejanos - algunos, pero you go to Mexico, we're a pessimistic people, as a race, I think. I don't know, you may not agree with me but that's what I believe.
But, anyway, where was I? So then that year we didn't, not the whole year, but it was three months we didn't get paid. Oh, that was terrible. I couldn't pay Carlota, and I couldn't pay my bills at the store and, it was terrible.

G - B: In those years, the early years especially, most women from our culture weren't out being public figures. They were at home with their children. How do you think people in the community or people, from within the culture, looked at a woman, like yourself, who was out there being a public figure, being a teacher and interacting with the whole community? And so they saw you as a woman who was strong and supporting her family...

Vaughn: Supporting her family and they helped me all they could. They were very, very good. Entonces las mujeres no trabajaban.

G - B: But you were very independant woman, then?

Vaughn: Oh, I always was, I guess. Because, I did go to live in Missouri and I couldn't take it. I was going to live with my mother-in-law on the farm and, I was just there. I came back to New Mexico. That's when I started teaching.
You didn't like that. And that's when you knew that you were going to have to work to support your family and yourself to survive. As you look back on your life, are you glad that you worked?

Oh, yes. Because now I'm going crazy. And I've always worked, I tried everything. I used to sew for people. Thank goodness that I learned how to sew. And when I was living in El Rancho, I canned. I did canning for people. Fabiola was so helpful. They had the pressure cookers had just come in and she got me the County Pressure Cooker. Si tenían una milpa grande, "¿no quieren que les empaque el maíz?" Which they couldn't in those days, nomás lo secaban, hacían Chicos. Which are wonderful now, que tal, you have to pay for them.

For what you have to pay for them, right?

But I canned for them. I even had a garden and tried raising things, pero me tocaba la agua, you know, te toca la agua whenever. Me tocaba la agua lunes en la mañana and it was very hard. Then I've always done other things. I've been interested in painting, in writing, and reading, and embroidery, colcha embroidery. All those things, I've done it all. But, I've worked for other people a lot in that way.

So, you're a worker, a lot in that way.
Vaughn: When I came to Poajaque I had the Four-H club and they did cooking and we did sewing and darning. You had to darn your stockings in those days.

D - R: I remember.

Vaughn: All those things. And now that I can't see, I'm lost.

G - B: Did you feel that you were kind of a unique and a special woman or you just did what you had to do.

Vaughn: No, I did what I had to do because other people were doing the same thing. But most of them were men, you know.

G - B: Do you feel you ever had any problems making your way in life because you were a woman and that men had it easier? Did you ever see that or feel that?

Vaughn: Oh, no. But women there weren't principals, at all. They were just teachers.

G - B: Right. That's right. Very few of them got...

Vaughn: I was principal of Nambé for awhile, 'til, there goes politics again. Mrs. Sheets was a superintendent and that's when I left Pojoaque and went to Nambé. But I was principal then at that time for the first five months then she got somebody else.

G - B: Were you replaced by a man?

Vaughn: No, by another woman.

G - B: But it was a political connection.
But it was a political connection.

But you were aware of that, when it came to principals it was going to be the men and not the women. Which is still true today, you know.

Always. I think so. There are very few, very strange, you know. For instance, in Albuquerque, they have a lot of women in the court and in lots of things. I get the Albuquerque Journal news on the phone. Now, they're very nice.

Well that's wonderful. So you dial a number and then you get...

I dial and I have my numbers that they gave me. It's a special number.

That's wonderful.

I have a list of all the things that they have. For instance, you start with local news. Which I always get. They're fighting so much with what's his name?

In Albuquerque with Saavedra?

With Saavedra and all those. I get the local news which is Albuquerque and then a lot of Santa Fe news comes in there. Then the state news which I enjoy very much during the legislature. I used to get so mad, but it doesn't do you any good.

Were you active in politics as a young woman. Never?
Vaughn: No, no. In fact, I lost my job in this county because of politics.

G - B: So, you don't want to have any thing to do with it?

Vaughn: No. That's how come I went to Taos. The superintendent that had come in, I had known him most of my life. He was De Vargas. I was teaching the second time in El Rancho. He came out, and I taught in San Ildelfonzo. That was the first year that the Indians voted. And so he came up, he was running for superintendent and he said, "Mrs. Vaughn, I want you to help me with the Indians in San Ildefonso. You know them all. So, I want you to help me." I said, "No, Mr. De Vargas," I told you this before so, I'm not going to repeat it.

D - R: But we didn't have on the tape then.

Vaughn: Oh. Oh, well, that's all right because that's just gossip.

D - R: But you didn't want to help him and then you lost your job, right?

Vaughn: I lost my job. I told him I wouldn't help him. Because I didn't believe in that. So, I got my pink slip. Then that's how come I went to Taos.

G - B: Now, in your life as a teacher and as a public person did you see mainly the injustices along the lines of
politics or did you see some ethnic kinds of problems? Did you see a lot of that?

Vaughn: Both. I saw the politics, how they worked. Of course, you know the Spanish people up to not too many years ago have been the whole thing. Ya ahora no es, they're not the whole enchilada any more.

G - B: They're lucky if they're the lettuce and the tomatoes.

Vaughn: Mostly. Then the Anglo has always been since I was in school, since I was in school and that was in 1912.

G - B: Did you ever teach in schools where you had Anglos students and maybe had problems? Or that you saw problems in conflict in the schools?

Vaughn: No. No, because I had both, but these were my Spanish classes. These Anglos that I had in my classes all wanted to learn Spanish. And they were nice kids. They were junior high age.

G - B: But with the families, with the parents, you never saw or had pressures or problems?

Vaughn: No. Never. But I could see the problems in the town of Taos. Like I've seen the problems with Santa Fe. Like I see the problems in Albuquerque, Las Cruces. Take little Texas over there in Roswell and all those places. It's pretty bad.
Of course, it didn't happen but let's just say what if, that way back when you started teaching, do you think, if we had had access to the concept of bilingual education, that that would have made a difference to the education of our people?

Yes. In fact, I taught bilingual since I first started teaching. When I started teaching Spanish, I told Mr. Maes when I went to junior high, I said, "Mr. Maes, I'm not going to follow all these books." We had all these, El Camino Real and all those books which you're supposed to go page by page, and they're all in English, and you don't learn. So, I said, "Mr. Maes I'm going to teach Spanish my way and they'll learn. I'll guarantee you that they'll learn." And I said, "But, there's one thing we have to do," After the first few months, this is what I had to do. I had English and Spanish students, and they were of course, junior high age. I had seventh, eighth and ninth. The Spanish kids, I was explaining something and they would jump right away and catch it. Or I'd asked a question, de una vez, they'd blurt it out. So, the poor little Anglo kids weren't quick enough to think and they couldn't. So, I told Mr. Maes, "Mr. Maes, we've got to have two classes. Quiero los güerros en una clase y
los mexicanos en otro." "Mrs. Vaughn, we can't do it. We can't do." "Well, I'm going to do it," le dije.

**G - B:** We do it at the university, now, you know. We have special classes, we separate them out. We feel that we can teach our students better by separating them out.

**Vaughn:** Oh, sure. Better. And you could teach the other Spanish.

**G - B:** And then the others profit, also.

**Vaughn:** Oh, sure. Because this way, those poor little güeritos weren't getting any place. And these other kids...

**G - B:** We don't hold back ours, we can move faster and move ahead.

**Vaughn:** Yeah, and move ahead. But, I said, "I'm going to do it." And he said, "I don't know anything about it." "If you want to do it, you do it. But, I don't know anything about it." But he said, "keep all those, books right there in the shelf, so that if somebody comes, you can have your books out." We had the *Camino Real*.

**D - R:** I remember El Camino Real.

**Vaughn:** I said, "Okay, I'm going to if you let me." He said, "I don't know anything about it." he said. So I did. I separated the kids, they were so happy, especially the little Anglos kids.

**G - B:** Because they got a chance to learn.
Vaughn: They got a chance to learn and all those Anglos kids did better than the Spanish kids in a lot of ways. Porque los otros pensaban que lo sabían y no lo sabían. Si, lo sabían to a certain point. They didn’t have to start from scratch. But I only had three, after they finished high school that went all the way with Spanish in high school and they majored in Spanish. I had three of my students that I started in Spanish, and they were all Anglos. They went on, and they're teaching Spanish today. There was Michael Duderroft, who is now the head of the Spanish Department of the University of Kansas and the other two were girls. They're in California and I don't where they went.

G - B: Bonavita Quinto.

Vaughn: Pardon?

G - B: Did you have Bonavita Quinto in Taos? Or were you already gone?

Vaughn: I had Bonavita...

G - B: She's teaching in California, Spanish.

Vaughn: She is? Ferguson?

G - B: No, no. Esta es joven, maybe you were already retired, she's in her thirties, but she's from Taos and then she took Spanish at UNM with us and she teaches in California. Quinto...
Vaughn: Oh, really. Because I had a Bonavita Ferguson.

G - B: This is Quinto. Ella es de Taos. De El Rancho.

Vaughn: There were a lot of Quintos from Rancho.

G - B: From Rancho, right?

Vaughn: No, I didn't have her. I had a Bonavita Ferguson. Pero era Mexicana, her father and mother were both Mexicanos. But anyway, I taught Spanish the way I wanted to. I told the kids, "If anybody from the state department or somebody..." I'd get the word from Mr. Maes anyway. My classroom was right near the office. And I'd say, "Each one of you take a book, and we'll turn to the page that I tell you, and act like you know what you're doing". That's the way I got started and then all through the years it went all like that. But, those were the good classes. I didn't like junior high at first. Oh, I just hated them. I had to teach English. The first year I taught in junior high, I had to teach English and I hated it. Because that was seventh graders. All came to junior high and they were, oh, I don't know how many hundreds of them. The reason that I was teaching English was because I had a English minor. But, I didn't know anything about it. Well, not like Spanish, you know, something that you put your heart and soul into. I didn't want to teach
in junior high. I wanted to teach in the elementary but, well, I got through the first year and I said, "No, I want to teach Spanish. That's what I'm supposed to do." So, then I got Spanish, and I never taught English again. Thank God. I used to spend until two, three o'clock in the morning grading papers. And you know seventh grade English is hard. Because that's when they start to get into what's hard. I don't think they do that now, phrasing and analyzing and all of that.

G - B: Diagraming.

D - R: They probably should.

Vaughn: Diagraming. What? Diagraming I loved it. That was the only part of English that I liked, to diagram. The kids loved it. Then I started teaching Spanish and I went on. But I taught it my way and they learned. I had the kids and all of them had two notebooks. They had to, in fact the bigger kids, "oh Mrs. Vaughn, you're making us play paper dolls." What I had them do one time when we were starting out with it, they'd say 'la silleta' y la esta y el otro. You had to get them away from that because they had said it that way all their life. And I'd say, "No la silla." "La silla is for a horse", and that time they'd talk back to you.
But they weren't bad. I said, "Okay, you know what you're going to do, get a Montgomery Ward Catalogue or Sears and we're going to learn." First, we had the home, we had the family; el papá, la mamá y todos los parientes, the names and all that. That's where our folklore came in. Every Friday, we had folklore. They'd bring dichos y cuentos and all kinds of things. They loved that. Oh they were always waiting for Friday. I had one little girl, that always wanted, "Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Vaughn," "Okay. Lilly," y pobrecita - que Mr. Maes one time, I was laughing so hard that I had to go into the office. I couldn't tell Mr. Maes what it was. She was telling a story, and the kids would say, "Not Lilly, Mrs. Vaughn, please." Because she wanted to tell a story every time and she'd take the whole period, you know. And the other kids wouldn't get a turn. So she was telling a story and she said, "Una vez, había unos racunos y estaban cociendo frijoles." I said, "I'll be back." Then I left the kids to hear her stories. I went to the office and I couldn't tell Mr. Maes what it was all about. Then when I finally told him, we named her 'La Racuna,' pobrecita. Y me decía "¿Ya Cosiste los frijoles?" Oh that was so funny. I still laugh a lot when I think
about it. Pobrecita La Lilly, she was a little bitty kid, muy, muy paliedita y muy scraggly hair. But siembre, she was the first one. So finally I had to tell her, "Lilly, the others have to have a turn". Because the kids would say, "Oh, Lilly!"

D - R: Did she make her stories up or were they coming from her imagination?

Vaughn: No, no, she used to tell a lot of stories that I think came from her home. Because they brought some very strange ones como, but this one wasn't, I think. Maybe she made it up and didn't know all the words and she said, "Racuno". Mr. Maes, he was the principal at the junior high, "¿Cómo está la Racuna?" But it was fun in some ways and very frustrating when the kids...they loved Fridays. We had a bautismo, of the ahijado, la entrega del ahijado and we had the entrega de los novios, and I had somebody come from Arroyo Seco to play for the Entriega. You see, they loved all that. We used all of that as part of the Spanish Program. I always thought, "Oh, this is what I want to do, the way I want to do it." Not have anything formal and then when I got this grant, I did it that way.

G - B: Then you went in the schools and got teachers?
Vaughn: I went, but, it was just too much. There were too many schools, too many children and I only had one assistant. We couldn't even cover the surface. I only got to Oñate because I started with Spain, when we had entriega; the marriage of Isabel and Fernando. Then from there we came up to Cortés and we had the history of Mexico. And then coming over here, I barely got to Oñate. And I had the plans from Oñate on. But, they got a lot of history. Mr. Russell se llamaba del education in Washington. He wanted me to go on. I got this through the Kid Carson Foundation. Because I couldn't get it myself and it was a humanities. What's for the humanities?

G-B: The Endowment, National Endowment for the Humanities.

Vaughn: Endowment for the Humanities. I used two years and they wanted me to go two more years. But you see, I had already been retired a few years. But I wanted to do this and I wanted to see it work and it worked. And I had from this, teaching what's from kindergarten through sixth grade. There were a lot of schools, there was Arroyo Seco, Arroyo Hondo, Talpa, Rancho and the municipals. There were many, many classes so I barely covered, like I say, I didn't get to cover all I
wanted. It was all folklore and todo, todo, the way people used to do things. It was cultural...

**G - B:** Sounds like a wonderful program.

**Vaughn:** It was a wonderful program. I heard that this year in Albuquerque they had a very good bilingual program.

**G - B:** Well, the Hispanic Council, who Carol Guzmán works for, got a grant to do some stuff in the schools. I haven't heard too much about it but I know they are working and one of the things they're doing is Oral History in the different schools districts, Los Lunas, remember all the teachers are involved in getting the children out to collect. And it seems to me like a very, very successful program. So, there's some people doing work out there.

**Vaughn:** That's the way it should be. They could get so much further if they would work it like that because the kids get interested. They're doing something and they're learning something. The big kids in Ranchos plastered an horno y hicieron chicos in the horno. The little ones, because then we had a lot of help at that time that had to work with me. They had the aides and the political jobs que tenían puestos para mujeres aquí. They made jelly when they picked their own apples and made apple jelly. They made tortillas. The
lady that was helping would say, "Mrs. Vaughn, where do
you get so much junk in your head?" Dijo, "Yo soy la
del pachaso." Because we made pinole. Then the whole
school could smell that popcorn popping, You know. You
know how that odor and we made pinole. They just loved
it. Several kids brought corn poppers, electric corn
poppers. We popped the corn and then they brought
maquinitas de moler. And we made the pinole. We
ground up the popcorn and each one saved their little
milk carton from noon. And each one had their own
pinole...

D - R: I don't know how to make pinole.

Vaughn: You don't know. Well, this is my way. I don't if it's
a good way or not, but you make your popcorn and you
grind it in the food grinder, make a powder of it and
then that powder you put into a glass and pour milk
over it, hot milk or cold milk. But don't try to eat
the pinole like that, you've got to be careful, I'm
telling you just in case. It chokes you, it's like
powdered sugar. It's very fine and it smells so good.
We made pinole, they made tortillas. Mostly the little
kids. What else did they make that... The greatest
thing that they made was the chicos. Because they
plastered the over, they built the fire and they all brought coal. That was in El Rancho school only.

D - R: Señora, how old were you when you got married? You must have been very young.

Vaughn: Twenty. I was going to be twenty.

D - R: Oh, you were twenty. You were going to be twenty. And from the time that you finished high school until you were twenty, were you working?

Vaughn: All the time. I didn't quit working until I retired.

D - R: But, you weren't teaching school at that time.

G - B: But she went to college one year. Before she taught.

Vaughn: No. I went to college the first year.

D - R: But no you taught one before college, right?

Vaughn: No. No, I went to college one year after I finished high school.

D - R: Okay. And that's when you went to teach?

Vaughn: And then I got married, then I went to teach.

D - R: So you met Mr. Vaughn in Las Vegas, is that right?

Vaughn: Yes. He came with Ben Meyer. Do you know Charlotte Meyer? Or do you know Anna McCollock? They were sisters, they're from Vegas. They were Herman's. Okay, now let's see...

G - B: Do you think of something that we haven't covered.

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D - R: Well, the advice for teachers for today.

Vaughn: The what?

G - B: What advice would you give teachers today from your experiences? What do you think that you learned that you think could still work if they wanted to apply it?

Vaughn: All teachers or just the Spanish ones?. You mean all teachers?

G - B: Whatever, whatever.

Vaughn: Oh, I don't know. I wouldn't teach today because it's so different from what they tell me. They spend so much time in filling out paperwork and I don't think it's necessary. They do have to make a certain amount of paperwork that they need. But from what they tell me, they have to make reports. Nobody ever reads them, I'm sure. But I think to do, have the children do, learn by doing, I think. In learning English, in learning Spanish, in learning social studies, social studies lends itself real well to... What do you think, do you teach social studies?

G - B: We teach Spanish.

Vaughn: Oh, both of you.

G - B: Both of us, and literature

MDV: Spanish, also.

Vaughn: You teach what?
MDV: Spanish, also.

Vaughn: Spanish, I would teach Spanish. I don't know what I'd do now because they have so many new rules and so much unnecessary work. And they have so much money. We were always short of paper, we were always short of this and that. And now they have everything and it goes to waste. For instance, in Taos they got all these mimeograph machines and all this stuff. They didn't use them, allá están arrumbadas en el sótano.

G - B: Do you think that the women like yourself, the Hispanic women, las mujeres mexicanas que salieron a enseñarles a estos niños, that they were important in the educational process of New Mexico? That if you women hadn't been high school educated and able to teach that things might have been different or do you think you made an important contribution?

Vaughn: No, no, I think that is was part of the times. And, and it just...

G - B: Happened?

Vaughn: Passing, and every era has its time and place. And they do different things. But, I think that, oh, yes, they were very important, teachers were very important. Even sometimes when the teachers, some of those you see in those days if you finished the eight grade, you
could teach. They would go, I had a friend, who, she's gone, now. She used to be from Cerrillos and she finished the eight grade and she started teaching in Cerrillos right away. Every summer, she'd go and she got her high school, then she got her college, every summer.

G - B: They were so short of teachers.

Vaughn: Short of teachers, yes.

G - B: But by the time you all came along, you usually were already going to high school, so more of the women were coming from high school.

Vaughn: Yeah. Not all, porque, in Rio Arriba County, Taos County, those places when they got to the eight grade, they thought they were educated enough, al cabo, ¿para qué? Para casarse y tener hijos. No necesitan educación. In fact, this woman, Carlota that I brought from Chamita, to work for me when I was in El Rancho. She can't read or write. She can sign her name, now. But, her children, boy, her children are smart and they've all finished college...

End of tape one (1), side b.
Tape 2, Side A:

G - B:  ...your people. For your children.

Vaughn: For your children but not for your people I’m not aware.

G - B: Not the community.

Vaughn: But because they were so good to you they did all that they could for you, too, you know. Eran tan generosos, si tenían una extra gallina, they'd bring it to you. For instance, for Christmas, we had a Christmas tree and we had gifts, cookies and Mr. Gómez and I got together and we sent to Montgomery Ward for a barrel of candy. Esas cubetas, así. Venían en a wooden bucket. They were about three dollars maybe with this hard candy, yes. Which was a lot of candy. And we got little bags and we divided that up between his classroom and mine. We paid for that.

G - B: And everyone got a little treat.

Vaughn: And everybody got candy. And piñon, si había piñon. But, no other gifts because nobody had any money. But, I guess later I realized that the teacher was very important. Well, but at that time I was, you know trying to make ends meet in your own family and having other problems in the family and having this teaching to do and to teach those kids English. But, I guess a
lot of those people remember. Now, I called a woman, day before yesterday, because I heard that somebody in her family wanted to iron. So I called her and she was not my student. Because the second time I came to El Rancho, I taught fifth grade, but that was in forty-nine, fifty. And, I talked to her, "No, yo no soy la que plancho, es mi nuera. Ella plancha pero tiene jitos y yo se los estoy cuidando porque está limpiando una casa." Oh, le dije, "¿Limpia casas también?" Oh, I thought, here I hit the jackpot. And she said, "Sí, algunas, en veces. Pero tiene sus hijitos," dijo. Le dije, "Pues yo soy La Mrs. Vaughn." Y me dijo, "¿Oiga, es usted la Mestra? La que era mestra aquí." Mestra, you know.

G - B: Sure.

Vaughn: And I said, "Yes." "Pues yo la conozco a usted." dijo, "Yo me acuerdo de usted." But that was the second time I came not way back in those black days, you know. She said, "I remember you well." We talked on the phone for a long time. She's married and has children and great-grand children.

G - B: She was your student?

Vaughn: She wasn't my student.

G - B: But she remembered you from the time...
Vaughn: She remembers me because, well we all played together outside. All the grades. We had basketball.

G - B: Did you get out and play with the children?

Vaughn: Always. We used to run races, que una mujer, last two, three years when I was still going to the senior center. I brought this little woman home, I gave her a ride and I told her my name. Y me dijo, "¿Oiga, no es usted la Miss Vaughn?" dijo, "que enseñaba escuela?" "Sí," le dije. "Va," me dijo, "pero si no la conocí. Está tan gorda." Well, I used to be like como una espiga. "Era tan lijera," me dijo, "como era lijera." Le dije, "¿Cómo sabe usted que era lijera?" "Porque nos ganaba a todas." dijo. We used to run, and she remembered when I took all the girls from the school. Because we have a picnic in the Spring, but not together. Mr. Gómez took the boys and I took the girls. And we went up to Mesita Huerfana. And I told the story of the giant, which is a local...

G - B: Yeah, right. Enrique has told me that one.

Vaughn: Pardon?

G - B: Enrique Lamadrid told me that story.

Vaughn: Oh, that's my story.

G - B: He got it from you.

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Vaughn: I have all the big charts I made now for the, because after I retired I got a grant to teach the History and Culture of New Mexico, in the Taos schools.

G - B: Right. Yeah, I remember that.

Vaughn: I think I told you.

G - B: Right. Last time we saw you, we had talked about that.

Vaughn: I have all the material there. Because I used so much and I had a secretary and I had an assistant. I could do a lot of things and I have all those...[interruption in the tape] We went to Notre Dame too. My father went to Notre Dame. En esos días, era la gente, la gente de razón. That makes me so mad I can't stand it. La gente de razón.

G - B: They should just say la gente with the means, right?

Vaughn: Hmm?

G - B: La gente with means.

D - R: Del dinero en vez de la gente de razón.

Vaughn: La gente de razón, los que tenían...

G - B: Con que.

Vaughn: Y en those days, eran lo mismo. Los mexicanos, que ahora los güerros, you know, they jip the poor man out of what ever he has. Now, from what tell me, my grandfather in Las Vegas, toda esa gente de la plaza de
arriba where his home was, eran los peones de mi abuelo. And then he sort of had a commissary in his home. Y allí llegaban y compraban todo and they were always in debt to the patrón.

G - B: Oh, yeah. That's right. My great-grandfather, too. That was the, the,...

Vaughn: Como se llamaba tu grandfather?

G - B: Se llamba José Manuel Gonzales. That was my great-grandfather.

MDV: That's your great-grandfather.

G - B: Great-grandfather. Mi abuelo era Canuto Gonzales. He was a representative here in Santa Fe pero de allá de Harding County. Pero los, era...

MDV: José Manuel Baca.

Vaughn: José Manuel Baca?

G - B: José Manuel Baca. Baca, yes.

Vaughn: Because I bet you, John really has gone to town on that.

G - B: I bet we could find it. I'll be real interested to see what we could find.

Vaughn: Well, and he's going to come this summer pero I'm going to tell him, "John, I'm not like I used to be that I could help you. Ya no veo." We used to work together. We sat out there in that porch with all these papers I
have of my grandfather's. I started the genealogy, but he had put it away for a long time and now he has gotten back to it. That's all he does. Sometimes the phone rings and John, "Oye Lupita. ¿Quién era quién sabe quién?" Como no me puedo acordar. I used to remember, but I don't now.

G - B: Did you know Isabel C de Baca, Cabeza de Baca, right? Esther Libby's mother?

G - B: Isabelita?

MDV: Isabelita.

G - B: C de Baca. Los C de Baca que se fueron para Clayton. They're probably también from that same family.

Vaughn: When I...

MDV: I thought her father was, they were from the Luis Baca family.

G - B: Luis Baca family, yeah.

Vaughn: Oh, Luis. ¿Luis María?

G - B: I think so. De esa familia.

MDV: ... my Dad has talked about him.

Vaughn: Luis goes way back. Goes way back. Luis Maria was the one that took the name Cabeza de Baca.

G - B: But they had probably some later Luis.
Vaughn: That was way back. Pero sí había muchos by the same name. They would name their grandchildren by the same name. So that's used up. But John says, "You can't get mixed up now with the computer." he says. Oh, he's all into it.

G - B: Great.

D - R: So happy with it.

Vaughn: And in fact, he teaches at some college there in...

G - B: California?

Vaughn: No, Arizona. California. He's my second cousin. His mother was my first cousin.

D - R: Señora, do you have any photographs of yourself at school, with the schoolhouses and things? Do you know?

Vaughn: No. Not with the schools.

G - B: Or your classrooms with the children?

Vaughn: Yes, of the classroom of this last thing that I did.

G - B: Oh, the later one.

Vaughn: Later. I do have all the work that the kids did....

D - R: Did you ever write anything about your school experiences?

Vaughn: No. I wrote other things. I was very interested in Padre Martínez.

D - R: Right. We saw that. We need to...
G - B: The translation to it, no?

Vaughn: The translation. And then I have all of his letters that I started translating that he wrote to Archbishop Lamy.

D - R: Oh, he did?

Vaughn: Yes. I have them but I never got to translating them but I have them. I have a lot of Martinez'. If I'd spent as much in my genealogy as I've spent in Martinez, I would have a lot.

D - R: Are you related to the Martinez some how?

Vaughn: Yes. One of Father Martinez' brother was married to my grandmother's sister, Teodora. And that branch of the family, they only had three sons but then they had...

G - B: Then that's how you're related to Dora. You must be related to Dora Vásquez.

Vaughn: I don't know. Yes, I guess so.

G - B: Because she's from that family. Antonio José married Teodorita. And that's the line that directly fits Dora Vásquez.

Vaughn: Yes. Teodora Romero. Yeah, but this is not the same line. Have you ever seen her book?

G - B: Yes, we took it up there today and we're looking at.

Vaughn: ¿Cómo Se llama?
Vaughn: ¿Cómo Se llama?

G - B: The first names she had are Antonio José and Teodora...

Vaughn: Romero.

G - B: Romero y luego de allí empieza a bajar la línea de ella.

Vaughn: But that side of the family, no es. Porque este era hermano de Padre Martínez. Porque their father, what was the name? Tuvo cinco hijos y tres hijas. But see he comes in the next generation than Padre Martínez. But there's two branches with Antonio José. Padre Antonio José. There's one branch, and that's the branch that my sister married. But, I'm not related to the Martínez only through marriage. See, Juan Pascual Bailón Martínez era hermano de Padre Martínez. He married my grandmother's sister, mi Tia Teodora. So there was Teodora Gallegos. She was a Gallegos, that's the only branch of the family.

G - B: I see. Oh, that was a different family. Yeah, that's a different, okay.

D - R: And how did you get all these letters? I'm interested in how you managed to find them or...

Vaughn: Oh, I, at the archives where they were, the archives...

D - R: So you don't have the originals, you have copies of them?
Vaughn: I have copies that I copied. No, I don't have originals, oh no.

D - R: And have you, have you left any of your papers, photographs up there in the archives of Santa Fe or in Kit Carson?

Vaughn: Have I left what?

D - R: Do you have any papers or photographs that you've given to the archives of your things?

Vaughn: Not yet. But, they're in my will, all my papers.

G - B: Are they going to the Kit Carsons or to State?

Vaughn: No. Al Kit Carson ni verlo quiero.

G - B: Oh, so you're going to take them to the state.

Vaughn: To the state archives.

G - B: Good for you. I'm glad you're not giving them to Kit Carson.

Vaughn: No, Because, you see, there was a pelea there. I worked all these years when they got the hacienda and developed all of that for years before that with Jack Boyer, who was the one who started the Kit Carson Foundation. And then later on they got rid of Jack Boyer. You see the Kit Carson Foundation belongs to the, not the Shriners but the, are they Shriners? It's, I can't think of...

D - R: Masons?
Vaughn: Masons. The Masons. Okay, then this fellow that's there now, they named him, he had gotten his degree at the university or something. When Jack left they should have advertised which is what they should have done.

D - R: They didn't do that?

Vaughn: They should have advertised in the magazines or historical museums. But they didn't do that. This fellow came in and asked for the job and got it. And he really messed up at the beginning, I don't know now. Because at that time we had a group that was doing work, we were doing genealogy and we were doing a lot of other things. There was Marie Martinez and Corina Santiestevan. There were a lot of... so, I quit. I was head of that and I said I would quit because they did Jack dirty. Jack had worked so many years and he had done so much and then this fellow came in, didn't know anything about it and took over and it just wasn't right.

D - R: Their archives are very disorganized, also.

Vaughn: Their what?

D - R: Their archives are very disorganized. They need to have someone come and take care of them.

Vaughn: Oh, yes.
D- R: Things will be much better taken care of in the State Archives.

Vaughn: But all my stuff is going and so is John's because this fellow that did this genealogy...

G - B: And what is his last name?

Vaughn: Pardon?

G - B: What's his last name? John...

Vaughn: Landon.

G - B: Landon. He has his grandfather, see, his grandfather's papers. His grandfather and my father were brothers. I have all of mine, not all, because there is still some in Vegas that my niece has. I don't know what they're going to do with them. You see, the trouble is that they're all in Spanish y no saben leer en español. So, that's what so bad.

D - R: Who is your niece in Vegas?

Vaughn: In Vegas. Marian Ackerman.

D- R: Oh, that's right. Okay, sure.

Vaughn: Do you know her?

D - R: Sure.

G - B: I forgot. Do you know any other teachers from Las Vegas, that we might talk to? Because we've already seen the North and Taos. We need to move out East now.