

# Interview of Lupe Anguiano

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## 1. Transcript

### 1.1. Session 1 (April 6, 2011)

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is April 6th, 2011. I'm interviewing Miss Lupe Anguiano at her home in Oxnard, California. Thank you so much for agreeing to interview me. I'm very excited. I'm very honored to be able to sit you with you and listen to your life stories, and I want to start with your earliest—well, maybe what your parents have told you about your family history, what you learned about your parents' history, your grandparents' history. We can start with that.

*ANGUIANO*

Okay. Well, first of all, call me Lupe. Be very comfortable, because the "Miss" and all of that just throws me into a different space.

*ESPINO*

Okay.

*ANGUIANO*

Anyway, well, I was born March 12, 1929 in La Junta, Colorado. My dad Jose Anguiano worked for the Santa Fe Railroad. We lived in Delhi, Colorado, that's close to La Junta, and we also lived in Hoehne, Colorado. My dad, because he was working in the railroad, we lived in the company's what we

used to call the bunkhouses, and they were made of concrete. They weren't houses, they were like you see apartments, one room after another, one room after another. We had a kitchen and then we had the bedrooms, which were about three, I think. My dad, the reason he came to Colorado was because it was during the revolution, revolution and Pancho Villa, [Emiliano] Zapata were really—there was a revolution in Mexico. Anyway, to make a long story short, my mother [Rosario Gonzalez de Anguiano, her father and mother were Spaniards and they had quite a bit of property in La Barca Jalisco in San Jose de las Moras. San Jose is like a village attached to La Barca Jalisco.

My dad's family, mom and dad, were Huicholes Indians, and my grandmother, my dad's mom, used to be the housekeeper of my mother's parents. Many times when my mother would speak about her family and about her marriage with my dad, and my dad also, they always spoke of the conflict that there was when they married, because my mother was the youngest in her family and my dad was the youngest in his family. My dad was the only male of I don't know how many sisters, and my mom was the youngest of a large family also.

So when my mother would talk about her experience in dating my dad and everything, we used to laugh about it because my dad's mom would call my mom's family gachupines, which is a derogatory word for a Spaniard. Then like, "You don't want to marry a gachupin. They're oppressive, they're landowners, and they want to come here and they want to take over our land," etc., etc.

Then on my mother's side it was an issue of, "How's he going to support you? He's one male with a lot of women, sisters, and he's the youngest, and he's coddled and spoiled and he doesn't know how to work. How is he going to support you? What is he going to do? His sisters are the ones that support the whole family and his mother. So how in the world is he going to support you?"

I don't know how this happened, but my dad and his family were very religious, they attended church, they were Catholics, and, of course, my grandfather and my mother they were also very Catholic because being Catholic was expected of every Spaniard. That was your identity, your culture, your history was all within the realms of the Catholic Church. Many of the church pictures and all came from Spain. So that identity of being a Catholic was just being part of society or of an upper, higher society. So I don't know how my dad became an altar boy. When he was older, he was selected as a sacristan of the church in La Barba Jalisco.

So my mother, of course, my aunts and all went to the rosary and they went to Mass. Of course, my mom and dad, they were the youngest and so they knew each other and they began to know each other. So when my mother spoke about her life, it was a conversation of being a landowner and raising

crops, particularly in La Barca Jalisco. It's a very rich soil, and so they had not only crops but they also had cattle and all.

Well, when my grandfather became ill, my mother used to take care of him. My mother's mother died and, of course, my grandfather, Papa Abundio Gonzales, when he became ill, he needed a lot of care. So my mother was the one that took care of him, because all of her other brothers and sisters got married and left the house, and so it was my mother who really took care of him.

So when my mother and my dad got married, it was quite a tug-of-war because on one side here was the son of a maid marrying the owner of the house and that land and everything. So they got married. My dad was very handsome, and my mother was very beautiful also. So, you know, it was just a struggle and it continued to be a struggle.

The importance of that is that I was raised in an atmosphere of pulling for equality and trying to remedy inequality on the part of my dad, and the equality and well-being of my mother, which was very beneficial to us, but trying to reconcile that. So when people ask me, "Why are you in the civil rights and why are you such a social activist working for equality?" I said, "Well, I was born within that struggle," because I loved my dad and I loved my mom. So, naturally, you love your mom and you love your dad, and you don't see the differences, economic differences, because, to me, my dad was really great. He dressed well and he served the church and was very liked by everyone. As a matter of fact, he had quite a nice personality. My mother used to say, "He's spoiled," because all of his sisters, he was the only male, and so everyone catered to him. He was like the king of whatever, of the family, and my mother had all of this wealth and all of this property.

When my grandfather became very sick, my grandfather left the property to my mom. They had like a little store. Really, my mother started to do away with the cattle. I'm not very sure how her brothers and sisters dealt with it, because I know some of them but not all of them, and how they dealt with the estate of my grandfather. But anyway, she was left with the store, she was left with the main house and they had other houses. I'm not sure, but I guess the other brothers and sisters of my mom stayed with the other houses. As a matter of fact, I think I do remember that some of them, particularly the male, stayed with some of them.

Anyway, to make a long story short, my mother stayed with the business and with managing the land, and what she did, because she didn't want to get involved with hiring and planting and hiring men, who would then go out and plant and then do the harvest and all, what she did was she rented the land. Then the ones who ran the land would plant the seed and make sure that it grew, and then they sold the harvest, but then they gave the seeds to my mom, and that's how her business was. My aunts and uncles, I remember my mom, they said she went around with a sack of seeds, collecting. The people that she rented the land, she would go and claim her

part. They paid her with seed and maybe a percentage of their sold, but that's how she made a living.

It was very typical in those days, because La Barca Jalisco was very rich in its soil and its produce. Even now when you go to La Barca Jalisco, all the vegetables just taste so much better than they do here, and even the frijoles. The frijoles, when you go the store, they're sort of bitter, the pinto beans and all. Well, historically what happened was that a lot of that land was purchased by American farmers and then they started to mix chemicals with some of the—but, more important, they brought the seed here to the United States. Oxnard is very important because Seminis Seed Company is here in Oxnard, and they really received a lot of their seeds from Jalisco, and the company had their corporate office in Saticoy.

*ESPINO*

Wow, it's all connected for you.

*ANGUIANO*

Very connected. And they kept growing because they were the seed company that just sold to the entire United States and all. Eventually they grew so much that they wanted to move, and Oxnard just offered them a very good deal. So they kept Seminis right here. If you go to their corporate headquarters, which is here in Oxnard, it's just a lot of seeds. You see seeds growing, and, of course, whose the one that take care of it? The Mexicano. Our people are the ones who take care of it. Now I'm very disappointed because Dow Chemical has purchased the company, and I'm just very, very concerned with how they are playing with seeds and putting chemicals and all, and I don't know the integrity of the seed that comes from Mexico, just what is happening here. Boskovich Farms, for example, here in Oxnard owns farmland in Mexico, and they grow some of their best. We think that produce that comes from Mexico are owned by Mexicans, and that's not true. Much of the land is owned by United States growers, United States businesses.

*ESPINO*

What's interesting also is the fact that although your mother was of this privileged background, it sounds like she had to work.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, she was a business owner. She was really the business owner. My dad, his big job was the railroad when he came to the United States and worked in the railroad. Well, then the revolution changed everything because Pancho Villa and Zapata confiscated the land, my mother's land. She kept the house, but I don't know what has happened to the land. I don't think our family has ever recuperated the land.

*ESPINO*

Do you think that it was taken in a violent way?

*ANGUIANO*

No, it was just part of the revolution. Then the big issue, the big neglect of the Mexican government because they were in battle first with the French,

who colonized part of Mexico. The French colonized part of Mexico and that was Guanajuato. You still see the French haciendas, which are beautiful, and there are a lot of mines, gold and silver mines in Guanajuato, and you can still see the haciendas, which are beautiful and their chapels are laden with gold.

I stayed in one of those hotels when I was trying to do work with Mexico and the United States, Lupe Anguiano and Associates. I stayed in one of those hotels, and they have twenty-four-hour guards because of the gold. The chapel is laden with gold. The water, the way they cultivate the water, the hacienda is self-sustaining. Their water is always purified in there, and they have beautiful gardens, and the hacienda home is now a hotel.

Some of the mines, if you go to Guanajuato and you go visit some of the mines, they still produce silver, very little gold, but now it's owned by a cooperative of families that own the mine. There's still some French connections there, in terms of financial and all. But the war with France was a very serious war, and it was an issue of taking all of the gold from Guanajuato and taking it to France, and just making spoils of it, and then treating the workers like—the miners were just exploited. So the call for revolt and a revolution was really called by Catholic priests who were natives to Mexico. You look at Benito Juarez, he's an Indian, part Indian, and he's a Catholic, and he was the one that called for the independence of Mexico. So that war, the Cinco de Mayo War, was won from the French, and then the war with Zapata and Pancho Villa was really a war that was one with Spain, because the Spanish, they came and they colonized Mexico and they brought their religion, and a lot of their religion was built trying to convert the Indians into Catholicism.

The one thing that you could say about the Spaniards in relation to the difference between the conquest of England when they came in the Pinta—what do you call them? When they landed in Massachusetts or wherever, is that when they came, they conquered and they fought the Indians and killed the Indians and took over their land. In Mexico, it was an intermarriage between the Spaniard and the Indian, which is what we are, Mestizo. What I am, what many Mexicans are, are a mixture of Spanish blood, Indian red blood, and the white, the Spaniard. So when they came in a religious manner, they came and the Queen of Spain did not want the [Spanish word] to be brutal and all, but they were. They were. They lovingly took the land of the people, "lovingly," so to say. They didn't create reservations, but they did it in a different way. They conquered the people. But then there was this intermarriage between the Indian, the Aztec, the Mayan, the very progressive Indian in Mexico, which their monuments, you could still see them, the Aztec monuments, the Mayan, which were so advanced in science and in technology and all. Their lives and the way they lived was so far superior to Europe, to European culture. But, see, that is really our history. That's really who I am.

In one way, I celebrate as a Catholic. I celebrate what I call the pillars, the giants of the Catholic Church, which was St. Ignatius Loyola was a Spaniard. St. Ignatius Loyola was the founder of the Jesuits, and who are the Jesuits? They are the pillars of the Catholic Church. They are the intelligence, and that's the intelligence of the mixture of the Spaniard and the Mayan, the Indian highly intelligent natives. Then you have St. Dominic. The Dominicans are the great preachers, and he was a Spaniard. So St. Ignatius Loyola was a Spaniard. St. Dominic was a Spaniard. The great St. Teresa of Ávila was a great woman doctor of the church, the great mystic and female. There are very few females that are considered doctors of the church. St. Teresa of Avila is one of my favorites. She was a doctor of the church, and that is what our Catholic heritage is about.

So when you look at the pillars of the Catholic Church, you look to Spain. St. Frances Xavier is a Spaniard who really was the great liberator of—did he go into India or Africa? St. Dominic, the great theologian. St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Thomas Aquinas is a Dominican. Really the theology of the Catholic Church goes back to St. Thomas Aquinas.

When you look at St. Teresa of Ávila during the Inquisition, the horrible things that happened that the Spaniards did both in Europe was their big adherence to the Catholic Church, when the Catholic Church, in reality, in the Middle Ages was corrupt, because you had the church being submissive to emperors and kings, and the kings or the emperors would then select who the pope was going to be or who the bishop was going to be.

So there was a lot of corruption in the Catholic Church, which resulted in the Protestant revolt led by Martin Luther, who was a Catholic priest. I think that Martin Luther should be canonized a saint because he opposed great corruption on what was going on the part of the Catholic Church. When people moved from the Catholic domination in Europe to the United States, the colonies that came from Europe to the United States, that's when the law of separation of church and state started, and that is very important because when you have the Catholic Church, the churches being intertwined with civic and government, you find corruption, because it becomes elections and it becomes money, and money corrupts.

So St. Teresa Ávila and St. John of the Cross lived through that, and they prayed for the cleansing and the survival of the Catholic Church. They did that through a lot of sacrifice and just giving up all riches and going back to the basics of being poor and being humble, like our lord was. So St. Teresa of Ávila was caught between the Inquisition, when St. Joan of Arc was burnt at the stake, St. Teresa of Ávila and St. John of the Cross were caught between that, and what they did, they threw away the riches and being influenced by their parents who were wealthy, and led a life of poverty and went to the Carmelite Order and reformed it and took away a lot of the riches and the influence of governments.

But when you read St. Teresa of Ávila and St. John of the Cross, you see, particularly St. John of the Cross, he was persecuted by the monks in his order because he did not give in to the influences of political. So he died a very young monk because he died of—his legs and all, because he fought furiously, fighting against the influences, political and riches and influences. So some of the monks in his order put him in jail for seven years because he would not accept the political influences that many of the monks were involved in.

*ESPINO*

Did your parents teach you the stories of this?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember your earliest recollection of when they started to educate you?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, I think my father and mother always—as a matter of fact, my religious teachings came from my mother and she always read the gospel. In Delhi, we had Mass once a month. The priest would come from La Junta or from Trinidad to say Mass, and so my mother would get us on Sunday and she would read some of the gospels. She taught us the value of humility and not being arrogant and being so attached to riches, because that was the life of our lord. Even though she came from a very wealthy family, in the gospels she would read and showed us the life of Christ, who was very forgiving, very loving, and came to convert sinners, and taught us that we were all created in the image and likeness of God. So there was no such thing as the rich and the lower. We were all children of God, and we lived by the means that we worked for.

*ESPINO*

Did she have some favorite passages, some favorite that you recall?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I became very attached to the—she used to tell stories of baby Jesus and how he was born. He was born in a stable and all. So every Christmas my mom and dad would—we would relive our blessed mother going and seeking shelter, and St. Joseph taking her, Jesus being born in Bethlehem in a stable. That would be like a big celebration, because for nine days we would have the seeking shelter, the pastorelas. So that would be like a big celebration for us, and in the bunkhouses we would go from house to house asking for shelter, and then they wouldn't give us shelter. Then Satan—in the pastorelas there's always the devil, who is dressed with his horns in red, and don't give him shelter and then this and that. Then the good shepherd would come and they would take a fork and chase the devil out, and then they would finally let us in and then we would have chocolate and pan mexicano and then we would have a piñata. Then the following day we

would replay that. So the birth of Christ was always very dear and important in our lives, and maybe because we looked forward to Christmas. [laughs] My mom and dad always brought in Santa Claus also, because if you were good, Santa Claus would come. Then they would take off the chimneys. Because we lived in a bunkhouse and we lived with a stove that was wood and coal, and so we had a chimney. So they would take off—I don't know how my mother and dad did it, they would take off the chimney to let Santa Claus in. 0:35:37.6 So we ate chocolate and the cookies and, of course, you'd fall asleep, and then when we would wake up in Christmas we had this big celebration. We always had a Christmas tree. But we always had a nacimiento, and a nacimiento was always the Christ child. They always had all kinds of animals. When you see a nacimiento in Mexico, you see all kinds of animals. It's almost like a pasture, a pasture scene where a lot of animals are there, and then the cave where he was born. Then when Christmas came, the baby Jesus was all dressed up, his beautiful clothes. I don't know, my mother used to make beautiful clothes for him. Then we had to wait for the big gifts when the three kings came. So if we were not good, we would receive ashes in our shoes. If we were good, we would receive gifts.

*ESPINO*

Did anyone ever really receive ashes or was that just an idle threat?

*ANGUIANO*

It was sort of like an idle threat, because my mom and dad didn't want to—but if a few days before the three kings came and we were very bad, one of our shoes was filled with ashes. [laughs] Then that was another big celebration. It was huge. What I liked about those days was the fun, the pastorelas and the fun with the community and the piñatas and celebrating, and the devil was always a bad guy and he would be thrown out. But then we were always having Christmas. Christmas Eve, we always had tamales, always. So we spent the night making tamales and all, and then we helped my mom with the masa, when you put in the tamales with the corn husks and all, the leaves of the corn. So the smell was so great. Then for the three kings we always had buñuelos. Then also for New Year's we always had buñuelos. Our lord's garments, the baby Jesus, was changed. My mother always used to make different—did you have that in your family?

*ESPINO*

Have I ever had that? No.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you asked me why I'm a Catholic. My early childhood was all surrounded—all the fun that we had and the celebrations were around the liturgy, around the birth of Christ. So on Sundays, to go back to your question, a priest would come only once a month, so on Sundays my mother always used to take the Bible and she would always read to us passages, and then she would tell stories of how good Jesus was and how he was so loving. He was the son of God. Even the birds would come. He was no threat

to the birds and all. So I always remember. So many times, you know how children are, you imagine things and all. So I used to be enthralled with baby Jesus, and so I used to sort of imagine myself playing with Jesus and being his playmate and all. The beauty of the Catholic faith is really living the life of Christ as a child and learning his virtues and learning who you really are. What impressed me the most is that I'm a child of God, and I was made in the image and likeness of God, and that I am like baby Jesus, I am like a Christ who lives in me. He doesn't live out there. Well, he's everywhere. My whole life is that experience, the beautiful experience of experiencing the life of God in me. We lived in a railroad community where Delhi is just a vastness. If you go right now to visit Delhi or Hoehne, Colorado, there's still the store there, but the bunkhouses have been removed, but you see just the vastness of land.

*ESPINO*

Trees, grass or—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, there's grass, there's trees, but Colorado is close to the Rocky Mountains and it's cold. Yeah, there are trees and there's a lot of green but in brushes and all. But I remember the weeds that grew and they grew huge, and then during the winter when the wind came, they dried, and then the wind would come and they would just roll those big weeds around.

*ESPINO*

Your family, were they able to maintain the ability to grow crops once you moved?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yeah, yeah. In the summer, because summer is a lot of rain, and then the moisture of even the winter is in the aquifer, and even though you can't see it, the roots of many of the crops are there, so that it freezes, but the water is there and makes it very rich and so on. My mother always grew corn, she always grew green beans, and we always had chickens and we had pigs and we had goats. I remember my little brother, Joe, he would go and milk the goats and then we would drink milk. So I think we were so healthy. We'd drink goat milk. Then the green beans my mother would can. My dad built a big tower, a windmill tower that used to fill the batteries, and he dug a sotaraño [an underground cellar] where—I don't know what you call a sotaraño

*ESPINO*

Basement?

*ANGUIANO*

Underground cellar. Yeah, he built a storage cellar and it was like a cave, big cave, and then the windmill would produce the electricity and the energy that would keep the area sort of cool and not freeze. My mother, in the summer, she would can green beans. She would make apple butter. She would can apples. She would can also chickens and make them in the glass,

in the glass container. She was a businesswoman, so she knew all of that stuff, and then she would make jam. My dad would bring strawberries. During the watermelon season, I remember my dad would bring a whole carload of watermelons, and so we had watermelons under our beds.

[laughs]

*ESPINO*

Was she selling these items later on or were they for your consumption?

*ANGUIANO*

No, it was for our consumption. We had watermelons, even though we ate a lot of them, and cantaloupes. But the sandías were really my favorite. Then she would make root beer, and my dad would bottle the root beer. He also made beer and he would bottle the beer. So this cave, this cellar was the place where we kept all of the beer, the root beer. It was very good. When I think of the apple butter that my mother used to make, the apple sauce and the strawberries and the cherries were in abundance and the apples were in abundance. Even now when you go to Colorado you see delicious apples and cherries. Cherry trees were all over the place, because cherries like cold, apples also. That's why Washington State grows such delicious variety of apples. So my mother was very resourceful and so was my dad. I went to Colorado about a couple of years ago and was looking for the windmill, and I have it someplace, a picture of it, because my sister went to Colorado and she took a picture of the windmill.

*ESPINO*

It's still there?

*ANGUIANO*

It's still there.

*ESPINO*

That's incredible.

*ANGUIANO*

It doesn't have the [unclear] because it was made of steel. My dad made it of steel.

*ESPINO*

It sounds like they were forced to leave Mexico after the revolution when your mother lost her property.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yeah. Well, didn't I say that? Yeah. Well, they confiscated my mother's land, and then my dad—we had family already in Colorado.

*ESPINO*

I see.

*ANGUIANO*

We had cousins, family of my dad and my mom who were already in Colorado. You know, one of the things that history forgets is that really in our times there was really no border between Mexico and California and Texas and all. There was just no border. Particularly when the Mexican who

lived in California was already farming the land, where did they get those techniques? From Mexico, from La Barca, Camarillo. This is what is lost and frustrates me. What is lost is the fact that we lived in California. The agricultural industry is what made California rich, and who grew that? Who developed that? It was the Mexican who developed that. The owners of the agricultural industry, in terms of working the land, in terms of developing the land, in terms of bringing the seed, in terms of nurturing and growing that seed, is a Mexican tradition, and it comes back from our ancestors. California is an agricultural community and the industry was brought, was grown, developed, and nurtured and with the expertise and ingenuity, knowledge, and expertise of Mexicans and our tradition and our ancestors. They talk about the Chumash Indian, but we brought it. Our Indian ancestors here and our Indian ancestors in Mexico are different—could you say states? It's just like Guatemala or you're Cuban or you're Guatemalan or you are from Argentina. It's people. And these borders were created for profit's sake, and in that profit we're losing a lot of our agriculture right now. But we still have Oxnard. [laughs] We still have Oxnard, which is the largest city in Ventura County and it is still an agricultural community. And who comes and grazes and grows and nurtures and babies and gives birth to the strawberries? It is the people from Oaxaca.

*ESPINO*

Considering that you have lived in this region for so many years, since the 1930s, do you see much difference in the fields of that period and the fields of today? Are they the same? Are they in the same location?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yeah, they're in the same location, but the process, the chemical process introduced in the lands to change this or that is doing violence to the soil and the land. In Oxnard, we harvest three strawberry harvest seasons. We don't only have one harvest; we do one after another. It's incredible, but it reduces the soil, the land produces. The chemicals that are detrimental to the growing of that little strawberry or that celery or the onions is another story. I'm very concerned because Dole Chemical is now in—you know, it's sad that in order to produce for profit's sake, the land is not respected. That's a tragedy. I'm not going to live to see the results of that tragedy, but your kids are. And then the taste, the taste of a strawberry is just so delicious when the sun is able to hit it, but look what global warming is doing, and look what it's doing to what I showed you in the ocean.

*ESPINO*

Can we talk a little bit about what people used when you were little and you were growing things in your yard? How did people keep away what they consider now the need for pesticides, the need for chemicals? What was the strategy back then as far as keeping the bugs away? Can you give us some idea of how your parents took care of, in the natural way?

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah. Well, we had a lot of respect for little lizards, because little lizards would come in and would eat some of those pesty things, and my mother would forbid us to even interfere with those little lizards. [laughs] To us, the little bees were sacred. We respected those little bees because they were doing their work; they were pollinizing. My mother used to tell us the queen bee and how sacred the bees were. We even had a honey hive, and my mother would go and she would teach us, show us the honey, and we would eat the honey from the comb. She always taught us how respectful we need to be to the little bees. Boy, if we would swat those, "It's going to come and bite you. Defend yourself, because she has every right to be roaming around because she's protecting what we grow." There were other spiders. We weren't supposed to deal with the spiders except the black widow. There were some snakes. I hated snakes. I was terrified of snakes. We had a dog, a German Shepherd, who used to protect us. The German Shepherd would take us to school and would come back and bring us back, and then if any kids would come back from school, would interfere, Popeye would get into the middle and wouldn't let anybody touch us.

So one day I remember getting up from a nap and going out, because we had an outhouse, a toilet outside, going to the restroom, and there was a rattlesnake, and I was stunned and I was terrified. Popeye came immediately and got between the snake and me. I was terrified, like I froze and I couldn't—but Popeye kept barking, barking, barking, barking, and, of course, the snake got up, it got up like this, and then my dad came and killed the snake. I don't remember all, but I remember that little lizards were sacred and there were some that were good and there were some that were—not lizards, all the lizards were good, but there were spiders that were good and some that were bad. The bees were always sacred. I really don't know, I don't know what they used. Well, I think my mother used to use cal.

*ESPINO*

I don't know what that is.

*ANGUIANO*

It's a thing that they use to make soap, that makes it hard. She used to use that. I think she used to use that in some of the roses. I remember also sulfur was used.

*ESPINO*

That's interesting.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah.

*ESPINO*

Because the bugs were always there.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah.

*ESPINO*

But if you can find alternative ways—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, even now, there's a lot of—Agromin is doing a lot. I want for you to go into the website and look at Agromin, what they're doing to preserve the soil. It's Bill Camarillo who's the chief executive officer of Agromin, trying to preserve the soil and the richness of the soil, to deal with organic and trying to pull away from chemicals and all. So they're here in Oxnard, and so it's very interesting. I know that there is a lot of research going on, and some of the farmers, when they see a certain insect, they turn loose certain insects that will go and eat them. That is happening right now. Have you heard of that?

*ESPINO*

No. I'm not familiar with the new—but it seems like that's the wave of the future.

*ANGUIANO*

We lived in Colorado and we always used to go to the mountains to pick up our Christmas tree. We would go, it was snowing and all, and we'd go way on the mountain and we would look. The whole family went, and we went to look for our Christmas tree. Then we would get pine nuts and then we would bring pine nuts and roast them. So life was really great, and the different seasons brought different excitement. Then in the summer we'd play baseball between family to family, and we got our exercise.

*ESPINO*

Did you ever feel poor, that you were poor?

*ANGUIANO*

We never were poor. Even now, when people tell me, "Golly, you worked, picked walnuts and you picked this and that." I said, well, as a child I never—my mom and dad always—and maybe that's part of our heritage, because we were raised in the farm and we loved to pick and we loved to plant, and my mother was great in planting. Of course, you know, she used to own a lot of land and she knew seeds like nobody else did. So the respect for land has always been—it's part of our heritage, part of who we are.

*ESPINO*

You also mentioned that for Christmas you made tamales. That sounds more Mexican than Spanish. Can you talk to me a little bit about [unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, we lived in Mexico and I'm a Mexican. I don't consider myself Spaniard. I relate to St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Dominic and St. Teresa of Ávila, St. John of the Cross, in terms of my Catholic religion, but culturally, language-wise, and tradition and ancestors, I'm a Mexican.

*ESPINO*

I'm going to pause it here. [interruption]

*ESPINO*

It seems like we're going to stop right here because you have some people visiting. We left off where you're going to talk about your feeling Mexican and not so much Spanish, and maybe we can enter into that discussion about your parents.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, but, Virginia, I am a Mexican. I am a Mexican because my mother was raised and born in Mexico. She grew up in a Mexican country and grew up with the language and the culture and all. I don't remember her ever going to Spain, never.

*ESPINO*

She never visited Spain?

*ANGUIANO*

I don't remember. I don't remember.

*ESPINO*

How about food-wise? I'm thinking tortillas are different for the Spanish than they are for the Mexican and [unclear] and paella.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you have to remember that the Spaniard invaded Mexico, but the Mestizo, the Mexican and the Spaniard is the Mestizo. So that's why we call ourselves Chicanos. Excuse me. We call ourselves Mestizos and we call ourselves Mexican. In the United States, growing up in the culture, we are Chicano because we weren't accepted in one culture or another. But my mother was born in Mexico, she was raised in Mexico, and she adopted traditions of the Mexican, they adopted many of the Spanish, Spaniard traditions. So you see a lot of similarities. The tamales were really part of Mexico. If you ask me something about the Spanish, I don't know that. So I'm really Mexican.

*ESPINO*

Yeah, it sounds like it. That's interesting.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah, it's very important.

*ESPINO*

That's really important, because although she had the genealogy of the Spanish, culturally, linguistically she was Mexicana.

*ANGUIANO*

Mexicana. Absolutely.

*ESPINO*

The way she spoke Spanish—

*ANGUIANO*

She never really identified with the Spaniard, only in the religious aspect did she, in the biblical, but then that also was Mexican.

*ESPINO*

How about the Virgen de Guadalupe?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, well the Virgen de Guadalupe, you see her in Spain. The Virgen de Guadalupe is very much of a—I'll show you that next time.

*ESPINO*

Okay. We'll stop it here. Thank you so much. [End of April 6, 2011 interview]

## **1.2. Session 2 (April 12, 2011)**

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is April 12th, 2011. I'm interviewing Lupe Anguiano at her home in Oxnard, California. Last time, Lupe, we finished off talking about your heritage, and you were explaining to me how you identify and how your mother identifies, considering your mother's genealogy goes back to Spain and your father's genealogy is mixed. It's Mexican, it's Spanish, and Indian [Mestizo, meaning mixing of Indian and Spanish blood]. Can you continue that discussion you were telling me about? Because I was asking you if you grew up culturally or ethnically did you ever identify with the Spanish side of your family.

*ANGUIANO*

I never considered myself a Spaniard nor of Spanish heritage culturally. My mother [Rosario Gonzalez de Anguiano] was a Spaniard, but I don't remember her ever visiting Spain. She was born in La Barca Jalisco, actually, and so her brothers and sisters likewise. It was my grandfather [Abundio Gonzalez] who was a Spaniard, and I don't remember him ever going to Spain. I think our roots were really in Mexico. My dad [Jose Anguiano] was a Huichole Indian and he was not mixed. He wasn't—

*ESPINO*

Mestizo.

*ANGUIANO*

He was not a Mestizo. He was a full-blooded Huichole Indian, and so, of course, as were my grandfather [Encarnacion Anguiano] and my grandmother Francisca Estrado. His father and mother were Indians [native South American people]. I don't know, the word "Indians" doesn't sound—because in Mexico you use the name of the tribe. You don't use Indio; you use the name of the tribe. Because in Mexico when you say India or Indio, you're talking about India, the country of India. So we always considered ourselves natives of South America or mestizos, born in the Americas. Mexico, as I indicated before in California, New Mexico, etc. all were really Mexico or South America or Central South America, at least when I was growing up and when I was a child. So coming to California or coming to Colorado, a lot of my uncles worked in the railroad. As a matter of fact, there is a book in Mexico which really talks about the Mexican worker built the railroad in the United States. Well, it was really the connection between Mexico, Texas, California, Colorado, and Arizona. So I had a lot of uncles and

aunts who lived here, and when my dad came, he came with a relative of his. I think it was his uncle who was already working in the railroad in Colorado when he came. But in terms of our celebration and our religious celebration, we're Catholic and always centered around the liturgy of the church, be it Christmas, Easter, Lent, Advent, or a big celebration of the Feast of Christ the King, when you just adorn the streets and all to have Christ, the blessed sacrament pass through the streets and all. My mother [ always referred to herself as being a Mexican and my dad also. Then when I grew up, even being born in the United States, I was always taught that we were Mexican because that is our heritage, and so when people would ask me, "Who are you?" "I'm a Mexican. That's who I am. I'm a Mestiza." And I knew about our Spanish culture. I guess the predominance of our Spanish culture really related, was focused on the church, Catholic, Catholicism. The culture, language, and the work and the love of the land and agriculture was really Mexican. So my dad always taught us to be very proud of Mexico. I didn't go to Mexico until I was about twenty years old. I was grown up. I remember having this mystery of not knowing what Mexico was about, and learning from school, "You're a Mexican," and sort of being looked down upon because you took tacos to school and all. But when I went to Mexico, it was an eye-opener for me, and it was so beautiful, because my dad took us to the Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City, and as I roamed around the museum, I was just at awe at the history and the culture. Really, I learned more about our culture from that museum than I did from my classes in school. And then I cried. I cried because we went to the cultural—what do you call the cultural arts in Mexico City?

*ESPINO*

Bellas Artes.

*ANGUIANO*

Bellas Artes, and I saw the art of Diego Rivera and Tamayo, Siqueiros, and I was just—I said, "What a vibrant expression and strong expression of the life of people portrayed in those paintings. The United States doesn't have this. The United States doesn't have art as beautiful and as expressive as this," and so I cried. I said to myself, "I'm not deprived." That was the first time that I said to myself, "I'm not deprived. What are people talking about when they say that Mexico is a deprived country?" But that was my first experience, and since then I became even a super Mexican. Then I told my dad and mom, "Why did you come? Why didn't you stay in Mexico?" They would say, "Well, you know," talk to us about the revolution and the confiscation of the land and all.

But my dad always kept us alert and always taught us to be proud of our heritage, our culture. Then he became very disappointed when we didn't speak good Spanish. We learned Spanish because of my mom and dad, but in school we would always talk English. So the teacher would speak English and we spoke Spanish. I don't know how we made it, but we did very well in

school, and eventually all of our classes and all were always taught in English. So I don't remember being taught Spanish in school except when I was in high school. Then I took Spanish as one of my language courses, but that was just one year of Spanish, and you really don't learn to read and write. You do not become literate. I can speak English and Spanish, but I'm not literate in Spanish. So when people give me a flyer in Spanish, they expect me to be able to read it and I can't, and then I say, "Do you have one in English?" And they're disappointed. "Well, aren't you Mexican?" "I am but I don't read and write." [laughs] Because the teachers in school would punish us if we spoke Spanish. Primarily I think that punishment came because she didn't know how to speak Spanish or she didn't understand what we were saying, and probably thought that we were talking behind her back.

*ESPINO*

What kind of punishment was that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, we were in school. We either had to stay after school or we were asked to take a note to our parents and tell them that we were in school and we needed to learn English, and then my parents were very much in agreement with that. They wanted us to learn English, and so I didn't receive any sympathy from my parents. "That's why you're going to school. You're going to school because we want you to be educated and not have to work the way we have to work. So we're living here, this is the language of the nation, and we want you to learn it." They never downplayed Spanish. As a matter of fact, they wanted us to speak correct Spanish. They taught that to us. But we were going to school to learn reading and writing and to learn to speak English.

*ESPINO*

You mentioned that you didn't feel deprived when you saw the beautiful Rivera murals and the Siqueiros murals. Were there other ways in school, when you were in the U.S. going to school, that made you feel that you were from a culturally deprived group?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yes, when we went to elementary school. We went to elementary school in Oxnard—I mean in Saticoy. When we were in California when we came in the summer to pick, you know, we came every summer. My mom wanted to spend the summer with her sister Maria Sanchez and then during that time we also worked, and we worked to pick chabacan in Piru and in Moorpark. Then after the apricot season, we would go up north to pick plums. After the plum season, then we would come back to Saticoy and we would pick walnuts. Well, that was already in the school time, so my mother registered us in the Saticoy school. It was a farm-worker school in Saticoy, so we went to school in the morning and we were let out at noon, and at noon we would then go and pick walnuts and work. Then the next morning

we would go to school and then let out. So I saw the difference. You know, the rest of the kids went to Upper Saticoy, the regular school, and we went to the farm workers' school. We were all agriculture workers, so naturally I saw that kids went to school all day in Upper Saticoy, but we went to school just half day.

My sister Esther Desaulniers and I graduated from elementary school in Saticoy, and I was elected the president of the class, the eighth-grade class, and my sister the vice president. I had a wonderful teacher, Mrs. Parr. She was the wife of the sheriff in Ventura County. She was our teacher and she always encouraged me and always said, "You know, you can really do a lot. Your grades are really very good and you can excel, and I hope you will go to college. This is something that you can really accomplish." So she encouraged my sister and I. When we graduated from eighth grade, we wore formals. I remember my formal. Then we went to Ventura Junior High School, that was ninth and tenth grade, the junior high. Then for our eleventh and twelfth grade we went to Ventura Junior College, which is really now Ventura High School.

*ESPINO*

What grade was that when you met this teacher?

*ANGUIANO*

The name of the school was Agua Manantial, and I have a picture of that school. Some of the kids would go to school barefoot. They were agricultural workers. We always had shoes because my dad worked in the railroad and we would come in the summer and then we would go back to Colorado, but some of them were really poor and so they didn't have shoes and they went to school barefoot.

*ESPINO*

That's really interesting that you found a teacher who was the wife of the sheriff. It's interesting, the stereotype of a sheriff. We're talking the forties, correct?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

The stereotype of a sheriff is somebody who is unfriendly to Mexicans, and then you have the wife who—

*ANGUIANO*

Was a teacher.

*ESPINO*

Can you talk to me a little bit more about her? How did the rest of the students respond to her? Do you think she treated you special?

*ANGUIANO*

No, she was—you have to consider that it was—I don't know if this is a correct term, but it was like a migrant school, a school for migrant children. It was a school for children of farm workers. I guess you would consider

ourselves migrant because in the summertime we would come from Colorado to California, stay with my aunt, and then we would pick apricots, plums and all.

She was very cordial, a typical teacher who really loves her students and wants to educate them. I don't think that she—at least I never saw that she played favoritism to anyone. We were all her students and she wanted to teach us, and wanted us to learn English, to learn math, spelling, and history and all. And we graduated. She would always stay after school and help those who had a hard time.

I never experienced discrimination. What was discriminatory was the fact that we were segregated, that there was a school in Upper Saticoy close to the golf course, which is still there, and then the children of agriculture workers had a different school, and it was like we went to school half day. We graduated and finished all of our work, and had honors and all. I attribute a lot of that to the spirit that was created in the school and the teachers and also the concern that the parents had that we be educated. All of the parents of agriculture want their children to excel in school. They work in the fields, and even though they didn't see it, because my parents never saw working in the fields as degrading. My dad always said, "All jobs are honorable." How would you say that? You know the term. It was a legitimate job and all work is honorable, and it doesn't matter where you work, in a bank, at the store, because we also worked at the store, and all work is honorable. So we never looked at working in agriculture as degrading. You know, we had cousins who used to pick lemons. My uncle was a foreman in one of the ranches in Piru, and was in charge of a lot of agricultural workers. In the ranch, there were several homes provided for the agricultural worker. But we never saw that as degrading. As a matter of fact, when we went up north to pick plums, it was fun because we lived in a tent, except when it rained. It rained once, there was a big storm in San Jose, and so the rancher didn't know what to do with us because the tent was all wet and our beds and everything was wet. So we went to sleep in the shed where the plums were dried, and so we went to sleep there.

But I never considered, none of us, nor did my folks, my parents, ever speak in a derogatory manner about working in the agricultural field. They were really strict about us doing our homework and about us complying with the school, and we never complained if we misbehaved or if the teacher sent notes. We would also get it at home, because we were supposed to be obedient to the teacher, and they never took our side. If the teacher said it was wrong, it was wrong. My parents never went to school and complained because we were scolded. [laughs]

### *ESPINO*

In some of my interviews, the narrator or the interviewee has told stories about the teachers mistreating them and the teachers insulting them, and the parents going in and challenging the teacher. Do you think that if

something like that would have happened, your parents might have changed or was it just obedience no matter what?

*ANGUIANO*

I think if Mrs. Parr—I don't remember ever being mistreated. My brother [Andrew Anguiano] went to World War II. He was a veteran, and there were a lot of young men who went to war. When they came back, I remember Baca, a young man by the name of Baca, and my brother and others came together and they forced the school to close down, and had all the children go to the regular Saticoy school.

*ESPINO*

Do you even remember what the sentiment was behind that, considering you had a good experience? It sounds like you had a good experience there.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the problem was that we only went to school half day. I'll tell you when I did really experience culture shock, that was when we went to junior high, because here we were in an elementary school where we were provided for, and when we were bused to Ventura to the junior high school, I did experience separation. There were a lot of fights between some of the students from Saticoy and the students from Ventura, because they were looked down upon or said, "You're being bused from Saticoy and you are an agricultural worker," or this or that. But I remember that more from the student relationships. I played sports and so did my sister, and when you play sports, you don't—I had a lot of English-speaking Anglo friends, Helen McCook [phonetic], Darlene, and I have pictures of when I was a letterwoman because I played sports. Then I had participated in the Tri-Y, which was a debate team, where we debated issues and all. But a lot of my girlfriends dropped out of school, and also the boys, the guys dropped out of school. As soon as we went to junior high, they just continued to work in the fields and didn't finish their school. Esperanza Pillado, Guadalupe [unclear], and just a lot of them.

*ESPINO*

Well, those were difficult years economically for the whole country. How did your family deal with the [Great] Depression and with World War II? Do you remember your life changing?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, we worked in the agricultural field, and so there was a lot of work in that area. So, yeah, it was economic hard times. My mother was very—she just knew how to manage money very well, and she always bought the necessities. We lived with my aunt, and my oldest brother, Andy[Anguiano], used to pick lemons and worked also. So we always had an income and so we never really—because we didn't have a home, a mortgage. In the long run, my aunt did buy the house, and it's still there and her grandkids are still living there. But my mother was always really resourceful. She always saved. So did my aunt. I grew up in a family who

used to can green beans and make applesauce, and chickens. We grew chickens. We always had goats, we always had pigs. We had gardens, and my mother had a wonderful thumb for gardening, and so did my aunt. So living in Saticoy, the lot was big, and so we always had a garden and then we always had goats and chickens and pigs, and a cow was always there. So, learning to milk a cow and a goat, and garden. It was hard economic times and we knew that there was a Depression, but we didn't feel it as much as one who had the responsibility of a car, a mortgage, a saving, was working in a bank, because agriculture was plentiful. Ventura County was a garden that fed the whole world. [laughs] You know, you did feel the economic pinch, but I never remember being hungry or my parents worrying about if they had enough money to buy milk or feed us.

*ESPINO*

How about some of the opportunities to obtain clothing or free food, like milk and cheese products? Because there were clothes that were issued by the government, you know, county jeans. You could tell, apparently, who was getting that kind of help because there were specific types of clothes. Do you remember that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, my mother ordered. I remember Montgomery Wards and Sears, and they always ordered via the catalog, and then we had hand-me-downs from cousins and from my oldest brothers and sisters, etc. But on Christmas we always had a new wardrobe and for Easter, especially Easter. But we never had to rely on the government. I don't remember. My brother [Andrew Anguiano] was drafted. He really volunteered to go to World War II, and all my cousins went to serve in the war. My brother was the one that had the hardest time because he served in the infantry and was under [General George S.] Patton. He worked under Patton. He was in the invasion of Sicily, and so it's a miracle that he's alive. His story is just an incredible story, of his service in the war. Also my cousins, all of them went to war, all of them were. My brother was wounded in the invasion of Sicily and we hadn't heard from him, so it was the first time that I experienced a crisis in faith, because we used to pray for my brother every day. My mother would have us pray the rosary every night for my brother's safety and his return, and when he was missing in action, it was very, very hard for us. I kept saying, "Lord, how you can do this to us if we prayed every single day? We are on our knees. How could you not protect my brother?"

My mother died, and when we came back from the funeral, we received a telegram from Andy, my brother, from New York, that he was found. He was in a hospital and he was wounded in action, and that he was recuperating. I guess in those days they kept everything very secret, where they were and all. We finally got to see him. So he came and we had already buried my mother. So it was very hard for him and for us too. But Andy, my brother—

*ESPINO*

Your mother never got to see him again?

*ANGUIANO*

No. No, that was hard. As I said before, for me it was like a crisis in faith because every day we prayed the rosary, the Litany of the Saints and all, and he was protected, and it is a miracle that he survived just going through the battles that he went through with Patton in Africa and all. War is horrible.

*ESPINO*

Can we back up a little bit? Because I'm curious to learn a little bit more about your understanding of being American and living in the United States, because earlier we started off talking about your sense of Mexicanness, and now we're talking about a war that brought out extreme patriotism for people in the United States. Do you remember feeling any sentiment about this country at that time? Can you talk to me about that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, my brother was, and still is, very patriotic. My brother felt like we had benefitted a lot by living in this country, and he was ready to go to war to protect. Then my dad was also, he really appreciated my brother's desire to go to the war to protect our country, and my mother also, even though it was very painful for her. Then my cousins, all of them, they were willing to defend this country. So the patriotism was always there.

You know, when I say this, you have to understand the historical context of those times. It's very different now, because in that time there was no such thing as a border. California was just part of Mexico. California was just—we were Mexicans. I've always considered myself a Mexican, and I've been very proud of that, both from a standpoint of my religion and my standpoint in my culture and my history, because we have everything to be proud of. Mexico has always fought for independence, the story of Pancho Villa and [unclear] and all.

Now it's so different because of the corruption that there is in the Mexican government, but there's corruption also in the United States government. But people ask me, "Who are you?" and I say, "I'm a Mexican." I am, because that's what I am. And I say, "I'm a Chicana."

When I went to college and really started to deal with the whole issue of social injustice and all, the great awakening for me was the treatment in Latin America and the United States supporting the military juntas in Latin America. In the sixties, it was an education for everyone in the United States of just corporate injustice and grabbing of land and the treatment of people, and going to the extent of militarizing Argentina and Mexico and all.

Well, Mexico understood the United States better than Argentina and Chile and El Salvador and Guatemala. But the sixties was really an awakening of greed, corporate greed, and the injustices and the grabbing of land, and taking away resources from a country. Then as a missionary sister I even

learned more of the injustices in Latin America, in the treatment of Indians, the treatment of Mexico and all.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember, just going back and looking at the World War II era, how or why did you support the war effort? Do you remember ideas about Germany, about Japan?

*ANGUIANO*

You know, Virginia, you just couldn't help but see that. When you see bodies just piled high and the Nazis just brutalizing people and killing them, and then the mass graves, and then when you saw people as skeletons, you know, World War II was a very justified war, and defending world justice was very important to the whole world. So my brother was very proud and so was I, so was everyone, because you just couldn't help just to see the treatment of the Jews, but not only the Jews, but the treatment of Catholics and the treatment of Polish people, because [Adolf] Hitler was out to destroy the church also, but not only the church, from the standpoint of people, and so the invasion of Nazism in Italy, it was the heart of Catholicism and Poland and just seeing the Jews just being slaughtered. I still remember that, and I don't see how anyone can say that that didn't exist. I saw it with my own eyes. And what is so horrible is the piling up of bodies and just digging graves and just putting them in, without any sense of humanity, any qualms of human beings. All human beings, I've always known that we're all created in the image and likeness of God, and whether you're a Jew or a Muslim or whatever, you just don't go in and kill people. You just don't do that. I mean, how can anyone stand and see the slaughter of human beings?

*ESPINO*

Do you remember how you saw these images? Because this was before—

*ANGUIANO*

I saw them. That was during my lifetime.

*ESPINO*

But I mean, I'm trying to get back to that period, the forties. Was it through newspapers or [unclear] ?

*ANGUIANO*

It was the Life magazine, you know. They had the picture. And Geographic. What do you call it, the one that has—

*ESPINO*

National Geographic?

*ANGUIANO*

The National Geographic. Have you seen some of those pictures?

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. I mean, it's horrible. And when you see children just being slaughtered, and then how Hitler, as though—and then just coming in and destroying a

family just because they're Jewish or because they're Catholic or because they're whatever, that's inhumane. World War II was a—I'm very proud that my brother was in that war and that we, the United States, we came together in solidarity to defend humanity. Then we saw when Japan decided to attack Pearl Harbor, that was—I didn't even know who Japanese were.

*ESPINO*

You didn't have any Japanese in this area during that period?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yes, we did. We had Yeto, who had a store in Saticoy. We were great friends and everything, and we were very upset when they were sent to concentration camps, the Yetos, when all the Japanese were really placed in camps. We were upset about that also, because we knew the Yetos, and we knew that they were here and they were Americans. They were not responsible for what was happening in Japan. I remember them coming and the Yeto store just being confiscated and the people being sent. Those people didn't have anything to do with the decision of Japan. And then Italy, [Benito] Mussolini, stupid Mussolini, just got in with Hitler and also participated in the destruction of Jews. Of course, I always learned that that was killing and that was an error and that was prejudice and that was going against every law of humanity. You just don't go and kill people because they are a Jew or because they're Catholic, and now because they're Muslim or because they're Hindu or because whatever, or even because if they're unbelievers. You know, you don't go and kill people because they don't believe. I mean, faith is a gift of God. It isn't something that everyone receives. I think all of us are made in the image and likeness of God and we all have our brothers and sisters, all of us, everyone. So World War II was another awakening that really brought the world together in terms of human dignity, and I'm very proud that the United States was a leader in that. I'm not very happy that we're stealing some of those countries.

*ESPINO*

Well, later on we're going to talk about the moratorium and the Vietnam War. I asked you about World War II because people of your generation can give perspectives on those two wars. I think that's really important. But I was wondering about the Yetos. Did they ever come back?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, and they received their store back, and I think they're still running it, it's still Yeto's, yes. Their children are still running it, yes. It was awful.

*ESPINO*

Did you ever have a chance to discuss with them what it was like?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes, definitely. We visited them. We used to go visit them and take them fruits, etc., in the concentration camps.

*ESPINO*

What was that like?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, they say, well, you know, it's just part of—they did not complain about the United States placing them in a camp. They said, "This is just part of what happens. We don't agree with Japan or the Japanese joining the Nazis and joining Germany in the destruction of Jews and all." It was just like now. You go and you visit—if people are going to try to destroy a mosque, I would go and stand with the Muslim, because it's a religion and they have every right to be, or a Jewish synagogue. You know, this is a free country.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember what it was like, what it looked like? Can you describe the sensation of going there?

*ANGUIANO*

It was like going to a prison camp, yes. Because I was familiar with the German prisoners that came to Cabrillo and were used to pick lemons, and they were in prison. They were guarded. The Yetos, the Japanese, didn't have the confinement that the prisoners had, but they were imprisoned, they were in confinement. But we'd go visit them and we would talk to them and tell them we knew who they were and they were our friends, and we did not hold them responsible for what the Japanese were doing in bombing of—wherever they were.

*ESPINO*

Pearl Harbor.

*ANGUIANO*

Pearl Harbor and where else, joining the Germans. Then, Mussolini, I always saw him as a—I don't know if you understand the word *títère*.

*ESPINO*

Puppet?

*ANGUIANO*

A puppet. He was a puppet of Hitler, and he was out to prove that he was macho. He was really not very intelligent. And then just looking at the atrocities and Italy being a Catholic country, so to speak, well, I saw that from the United States, but it was unthinkable. You didn't know how can a leader like that be—I didn't even know Japanese, you know, the Japanese nation, but I certainly was familiar with the Italian nation, and I always thought, "What is this guy, leader of Italy, doing joining in the elimination of God's children?" Then Jesus is a Jew, and for me Jesus is my Jewish master, and so I've never had any hostile feelings against the Jewish people, against the Jewish. I have problems on their "economic aggressiveness," but I don't have any problems with them in terms of their religion, because I always grew with the notion they were the chosen people. They didn't recognize the Messiah, but I think eventually they will. Some of them still recognize Christ as the Messiah. They're working at it. I have a lot of very good Jewish friends, you know.

*ESPINO*

You described that period as a time when there was a lot of insecurity, but yet it was also a time that you were thriving in school and enjoying your school years. Can you talk to me about what your social life was like at that time? What did you do after school? You told me about your sports, but is there anything else?

*ANGUIANO*

Living in Saticoy, my mother saved enough money to buy a little store, the La Palma Grocery Store. On Saturdays we always had the responsibility of cleaning the church, and if we did a good job, we could go to the dance at night. There was a fantastic hall in Ventura that we always used to go dance. Harry James came there, Benny Goodman, and the famous bands of that time.

Then on Sundays we would dress up and then sometime we would go on outings. We would go to Santa Barbara sometimes and go to the mission and go to the beach. I loved the beach. We spent a lot of time in the beach. Then our boyfriends were always guys from—the women, there was big [unclear]. Oxnard always had a big—they didn't want the girls from Saticoy to go around with the guys from Oxnard. So there was always a competition, but then we would find a way to just meet the guys from Oxnard anyway, and we did it in Ventura, but there was that rivalry.

I remember that there was a group of girls, and those are in the pictures in my archives. We would get together and we would dress up and then we would go walking and then we would go to the show, and then the guys would come around and they'd want to take us for a ride, and sometimes we'd go with them or we'd go to the show together, but we always went as a group.

Then at the dance we always went as a group. My sister, Esther [Anguiano], was always like a chaperone to all of us. There were strict rules. We weren't allowed to go in the dance with a guy out of the dance hall. We were to stay in the dance hall, and if we ever went out with a boyfriend, out of the dance hall, we weren't allowed to go the next Sunday, and then no drinks, no hard drinks; only sodas and etc. Then we were to avoid the guys that were drinking. We all had our boyfriends.

One of our favorite pastimes was going to Ojai, and Steckel Park was one of our favorite picnic and sort of area, so we used to go to Ojai a lot and walk. I remember catching poison ivy because I wasn't every protective of myself, you know, when you go into the water streams. So I didn't pay much attention not to get into the weeds because the lakes and the water streams in Ojai were beautiful. I don't know if they're—Steckel Park, I haven't been. Steckel Park, the last time I was there a couple of years ago, was kind of rundown. It wasn't as beautiful as when I was growing up.

Of course we went to the ocean. The ocean has always been a favorite of mine. I remember my mom and dad, particularly my mother and my

cousins, we'd go during grunion hunting. When the moon is a certain—grunions [small fish] come out, and so we'd go and spend the night in Ormond Beach and catch grunions. We'd take a bucket and catch the grunions, and then the little fish, tiny little fish. They're so small, how can you eat them? Well, some people eat them. So we would throw them back into the ocean.

But we had a great time. There was the movies, the dance, hearing Harry James and Glenn Miller. Glenn Miller was one of my favorites, the Big Band era. Then we would go to Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara has so many beautiful places. There's an incline in Santa Barbara where you go and you park your car. I don't know if it's still there, but then you could just see the car just come up. There's an energy there where your car will—I don't know if it's still there, but we used to love to go there, and go to the mission there and go to the beach. Sometimes we'd go to Santa Monica because the Big Bands, Benny Goodman, always went to the pier in Santa Monica. It was very popular and had a beautiful dance hall. I don't know if it's still there.

*ESPINO*

You actually saw some of these popular bands, like Benny Goodman?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes. Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller. Oh, Glenn Miller was my favorite, yes, yes.

*ESPINO*

How exciting.

*ANGUIANO*

We'd dance. I loved to Jitterbug and dance in those days.

*ESPINO*

So you mentioned that you had a boyfriend, but did you have a boyfriend that you really cared about or was he just somebody that you—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I had a boyfriend that I was—when you say, "Yeah, I'll be your girlfriend," and you get the ring, you get a sweater. You know, I had a lot of them. [laughs] Joe Garcia was one of my boyfriends who was a letterman, and I used to be very proud when he let me wear his sweater, and I was always—you know, when you're a girl, you're always parading because your boyfriend is a letterman. But I was a letterwoman too. Then during the war, Tony Payan was a boyfriend that I promised to wait for, and I did. I was true to him, but when he came back, he wanted to get married and I wasn't ready to get married. I was thinking of going to the religious life. So I don't know who he finally married, but he wanted to get married and I wasn't ready. But I felt like he came back from the war and really didn't give himself time, because he was a sailor and he really didn't give himself time to get back to normal life from Saticoy. I just wasn't ready to get married, and he was.

*ESPINO*

Did he come back different?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yeah. Yeah, he came back different.

*ESPINO*

Can you describe—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, number one, he wanted security and he really wanted a partnership and he really wanted to get married. I saw him as my boyfriend and someone that I wrote love letters to, but I wasn't ready to get married, primarily because I had a lot of friends who—and then I was thinking of a religious life. I hadn't finished high school and so I just wasn't ready to. I wanted to graduate from high school. Then another that I met that was a boyfriend, he and I were going to get married, but then I decided to go to the religious life rather than to marry. That was when I made my final decision.

*ESPINO*

How old were you?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, how old was I? When I entered, I was about twenty, twenty years old, yes.

*ESPINO*

Did your parents—how did they respond to these proposals? Did you tell them about them?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, my mother had died already, and my sister was working as a bookkeeper in the Rivera store, and my dad was still in mourning. So the only one that really took care of—my dad, he wasn't a mother. [laughs] He was a dad who felt that his job was to be a provider, that's it. And my sister, my older sister, was the one that took care of us, and then she was working. No, they didn't know. They didn't know. But how could they not know? Because I had my picture of Tony Payan in my dresser and my picture of—so I don't know.

*ESPINO*

You didn't consult with them about, "What should I do?"

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, no.

*ESPINO*

"What do you think I should do?"

*ANGUIANO*

But Esperanza had a wonderful life, Esperanza De Los Santos. I remember her husband. He invited me to the show, but it wasn't like a boyfriend, girlfriend; it was like a friend. Sometimes we'd go together, all together. We went together to the dance. So we did a lot of things as a group, and sometimes we'd go on our own. Like when we went to Santa Barbara and to

the beach, we would go, but there wasn't this drugs, this smoking, this liquor. You know, in those days we didn't have those pressures. It probably was there, but among our crowd, it wasn't something that our crowd picked up.

I knew that there were gangs in Oxnard, but we always stayed away from gangs. My brothers were always very protective of us, and then I had cousins that were my age, José Sanchez and Ruben, Ruben Castro, who has been awarded for all of his social contributions and all. They were very protective of us, and so they would alert us to what some of the guys did, and they were there when we—they protected us from being abused.

Then there was the Pachuco area. That's when the Pachucos were. I remember I really liked Esperanza's brother, Tony Pillado. He was one of the ones—oh, I was starry-eyed about Tony Pillado, and he was a Pachuco. He ended up in jail, and I remember going with Esperanza to visit him. I think Tony Pillado's boots are still in the sheriff's case as a Pachuco.

During that time, I remember Point Hueneme was established and the sailors would come. Then they were all running around and going to the show, and sometimes some of the sailors took advances. For example, if we'd be in the show, they'd come and want to put their arms around us, and, boy, that caused—the guys, our friends, there were fights over that. Then a lot of the police would then break up these fights between the sailors and some of our friends, but then the police always protected the sailors and then they would imprison some of our friends. So that wasn't very fair.

*ESPINO*

Is that what happened to your friend's brother? Was he wrongly imprisoned, arrested?

*ANGUIANO*

Who?

*ESPINO*

The one you said that you had a huge crush on and you would—

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, Tony Pillado. You know what? I really don't know, because he used to drink a lot and I think he probably took drugs also. Because I know my cousin Joe Sanchez and Buchina, he was his cousin but not my cousin, but they were very protective of me because I was one that was always into dances and things like that. They always warned me about him. "You be careful about Tony Pillado. Don't you take anything that he offers you. Nothing. If he gives it to you, you bring it to us, and don't drink anything that Tony Pillado gives you." He was a Pachuco. So when I'd go visit him in jail, I used to go with Esperanza his sister and I didn't tell anyone, because I knew my family would just be—

*ESPINO*

What was it about him that was attractive to you, do you remember?

*ANGUIANO*

I think it was his being unafraid, willing to take on the police, willing to fight for his rights, and just the attitude of strength and not going to allow himself being slapped over and whatever. I used to—wow. He was good-looking. He isn't anymore. [laughter] Well, when you're a teenager you think of—

*ESPINO*

We're all good-looking when we're twenty.

*ANGUIANO*

We're are good-looking in our twenties, yes. But he straightened out a lot and he became a businessman and got married. He has a daughter who really excelled in school. I'm not sure if she went to Harvard [University], but she went to one of the outstanding schools.

*ESPINO*

That's wonderful.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Your life can change like that.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes

*ESPINO*

Well, tell me then about—I don't know if you're comfortable talking about this, but for women, sexuality is key to a lot of the decisions that we make, and those kinds of pressures are put on us very early, when we're very, very young. How did you negotiate that, considering that your mother passed away, and how did you deal with those issues, those pressures?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, in my time, during the forties, 1940s, I didn't exactly have a lot of those pressures, and maybe it was because I was so busy in sports and in our faith and our community. I don't remember ever being not busy. Even when I was going to high school, I used to work after school. I worked not in my dad's store, in the Rivera's store, because my dad wouldn't pay us. So we worked with his competitor.

So I went to school, did my homework, had a lot of fun on weekends, and after school I went to work. So those sexual pressures were not—I had boyfriends, but with the guys there was never that pressure of sexual intimacy. There was always that respect. Maybe they went around and fooled around with other women, but not with us. You know, when I think about it, they probably did go and have their fling with other women, because there was always the women in the night, whatever. But with us, there was a great deal of respect, and I never felt that pressure of sexual intimacy.

I think because I loved guys and I was with them and I loved being hugged and kissed and all, but never really felt the pressure of sexual intimacy.

Then I became a religious, and when I decided to become a religious, I did

have a choice to get married or not to get married. I remember I wrote a story about that, the choice of being married or going, because my sister decided to marry George Tapia, and I decided to go to the convent. She and I were inseparable. I wrote a story about that, because my spiritual relationship with Christ became very strong and it became one that I honored.

The sexual, real sexual awakening of my sexuality didn't happen until after I left the convent, when I met Bill Williams, who was a professor at USC [University of Southern California] and he was the assistant to Congressman [Augustus] Hawkins during the Watts Riots. He became very attracted to me and I became very attracted to him, and he invited me. He asked me to marry him, and we were going to get married before we went to visit the priest. He had been married before, even though he was not a Catholic. It was about a year or so that I had left the convent, and the priest was surprised that I was in an intimate relationship and that he was black. In those days, that pressure of racial was very strong, and for me I didn't see he was a black person; I saw him as someone I loved. But we decided to part. That's when the sexual awakening for me came, so I was sexually awakened quite late in my life. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

That's a whole other conversation I think we can have about this person that—

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, it is, it is. It is a long, long conversation because it also relates to the sixties and the struggle and racism, and the thing that led me to leave religious life was the housing discrimination. So that is a complete—

*ESPINO*

I think we're going to be there in the next session. You mentioned that your mother passed away, so I'd like to sort of follow-up on that in this session, and talk about what happened to her.

*ANGUIANO*

She had cancer. She died of cancer. She had a miscarriage and she didn't take care of that, and that resulted in her getting cancer in her ovaries. So, at that time she did not even know, and then she didn't see doctors, like, the way we see doctors. Every time something hurts, we go see a doctor. She didn't do that. And, of course, we lived in Colorado and we lived in the railroad bunkhouses, so to go to the doctor meant going to La Junta, Colorado. I don't know, she just didn't take care of her—and I don't even think—because she died very young. She died when she was forty, forty-some.

It was very hard for all of us, because here was our mother being very industrious and picking and saving money, opening a store and being very entrepreneur and teaching us to conserve and be well dressed and well educated and all, and she became very ill. I don't know. When she went to

the doctor, I guess the cancer had spread, and then it became worse and worse. She never complained, and so I never knew what really took place. But the cancer just ate her away, so that she was skin and bone when she died.

It was very hard for us, because my dad started to drink and he started to drink a lot. It was like he lost. Well, he really did. My mother was really the cornerstone of all of our lives, and so he just lost it. Then he mismanaged the store and he drank a lot, so we became very angry with him.

Then we had to make a living, so my sister went to work for Mr. Rivera, a competitor store, competitor of my dad, and we also used to work after school. Then my dad used to just run the store and my brother put up with him, but I didn't want to deal with his drinking, and so it was my sister who really took care of us. My dad just lost it.

So I decided to go to the convent, and he said, "Lupe, you're not really serious about this. Look at all the boyfriends you've had and all the things. You want to go dance. You're a party girl." He said, "What are you going to do in a convent? You're going to go and take up space and waste the nuns' time? Then you're going to come back."

I said, "Well, I'm going to go. I'm going to go." He just refused to just give me his blessing and say, "Okay, go." So when he saw that I was serious and that I really put things in a perspective and I started to give all my things away and everything, then he knew that I was serious about it. So then he gave me his blessing and he said, "You come back. If you don't like it, you just come right back. Don't feel that you have to stay, because I don't know about that life. You're all shut in. You're accustomed to being here and there, and I don't think that's the life for you, but if you want to go, well, I give you my blessing," and so he gave me his blessing and I left. I gave my sweater to Virginia [Hernandez], a friend of mine, and a lot of my high school mementoes I gave to her friends. I feel bad that I don't have my sweater, but Virginia, my friend that I gave it to, she died, and I don't know where it is now.

Then my dad used to go and visit me when I was in the convent. He was very proud of me and so was the rest of my family. You know, a religious life is quite a commitment, because the first year you're a postulant and it's sort of like an exploratory, to see if you like it and to see if the order likes you, if you fit, and of course I wanted to fit. I really wanted to.

I used to receive mail from Tony Pillado, I used to write, but I never knew that those letters came from him. My postulant novice—because they don't give them to you; they destroy them. They don't even tell you, because you made a commitment, so they open all your mail. I didn't know that, but that's part of the commitment that you make.

But on Christmas I would have a call, and I talked to all my girlfriends and to Tony and to everybody. "When are you coming home? When are you coming back?" I said, "Well, I'm not coming back. Just get it in your mind I

am not coming back. I'm going to stay. I'm going to be a nun." So after the first year I wrote my letter to the Superior General, requesting that I be accepted as a novice, and they accepted me. So then after my first year [unclear], I petitioned to be a three-year novice, three years, and I was accepted.

After those three years, then I was ready to take my vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and then I petitioned again. "Are you sure this is what you want?" "Yes." So I made a retreat, I wrote my letter petitioning to take my vows as Our Lady of Victory Missionary sister, and I was accepted. Isn't that great? So I rejoiced. So I took my vows for one year, and then after the one year then I petitioned again that I wanted to remain and I wanted to take my three-year vows. I petitioned and it was accepted.

After my three years, then I did a month's retreat to see if I wanted to take my final vows, my perpetual vows. That was a beautiful retreat, being one month without talking and all. It was very beautiful. Yes, that was what I wanted. So I petitioned and I got accepted, and I took my final vows.

Then I was sent—after I took my final vows, my first mission was Brawley, and that was a beautiful mission. My superior was Sister Loretta Ann. I loved Brawley. I fell in love with the community. It was agriculture workers in Brawley, and the people were just the people that I had worked with, that I knew, that I related to because I knew what it was to work in the agricultural industry. I mean, as a picker and all work in the fields, agricultural fields. So they'd come. I managed the clinic and did a lot of social work, and then I also taught the kids first communion.

I was having a great time. Well, my superior thought that I was a young kid, this nun, and she's just in seventh heaven and maybe she's getting too attached, so she changed me. I was heartbroken. On August the fifteenth, you receive your letter saying, "In the name of Christ, you are assigned to—." So then I was moved to Ontario, and Ontario was okay because I worked with the Cucamonga. In those days, Cucamonga was really a good field and I enjoyed working in that area. I was in Ontario, I think, for four years. Then I was moved to—where did I go from Ontario? I was moved to Imlay City, Michigan. I was moved to Imlay City, Michigan.

*ESPINO*

[unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, and that was really different. Well, it was very much like Victory Noll [Center], because Victory Noll, where I studied to be a nun, was Huntington, Indiana, and the winters. Victory Noll was a beautiful mother house in Huntington, Indiana. So going to Imlay City was close to the mother house [of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters], to Victory Noll, and I enjoyed that.

I'll never forget the Our Lady of Guadalupe, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The priest—Imlay City, Michigan, they didn't know about Our Lady of

Guadalupe. They had a requiem Mass. I was just annoyed, because here's the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe and they weren't even recognizing her. Well, what happened was that there were a lot of agricultural workers, migrant workers, who came to pick—I can't remember what they picked in Imlay City, but they wanted to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the parishioners used to say, "Oh, the migrants. They're migrants." And they always sat in the back of the church.

One day I came to Mass and I was kind of late, and the church was full, and the usher said, "Oh, sister." My name was Sister Mary Consuelo [of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters]. "Sorry, but there's no room." I said, "Well, there's room there with the migrants. I'll just sit there." "Oh, no, you don't want to sit there." I looked at him and I said, "Of course I'm going to sit there. I used to be a migrant." He became very surprised, and I went to sit there.

The next day, I went to visit the pastor and I told him about that, and I said, "Father, did you know that I'm a Mexican and I used to work in the field of agriculture?" And his face just turned red, green, whatever. Because I was very popular in the parish. And I said, "And to top it off, you celebrated a regular Mass instead of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Do you know that the migrants had to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the migrant camp? And they should have celebrated it here in church." He apologized and everything.

The following year, the migrants had full rein of the church and everything. We celebrated, we had Lady Guadalupe, we sang "La Mañanitas," and all. So that was quite a revelation.

One of the things I remember was that some of the owners of these fields, the women would bring cupcakes and all to give the workers. One day I just said, "You know, it's really nice of you to give the people cupcakes and refreshments and all, but what the people are really asking for is better wages and better working conditions. Have you ever talked to them about that?" Some of the women, the wives of the ranchers, were, "Oh, Sister, no. Well, I'll talk to my husband about that. I'll talk to my husband about that." I don't know if they did it or not. I don't know if things went well, but after three years I was moved.

*ESPINO*

That's a fascinating story, because it sounds like, and correct me if I'm wrong, because you haven't talked about that in your previous experience in Brawley and some other places, but you're evolving into an advocate. Or were you always like that?

*ANGUIANO*

I was always an advocate, even when I was in my first year. In summer, I had an opportunity to either continue my college education or to go and work in the summer with the migrants, and I always chose to go and work with the migrants, all the time. I'll tell you, one summer—well, I went to

school to what is now Loyola Marymount, I went to school to Marymount as a nun, summer school, and one semester I took Shakespeare. I loved that semester. As a matter of fact, I remember that as one of my happiest college courses that I took, taking Shakespeare. I was taught by the Madames of the Sacred Heart, the sisters – the teachers and founders of Marymount in Palos Verdes California. They're the Madames of the Sacred Heart. It's a French order, really very conservative but very highly learned nuns.

Then the next summer, I decided I wanted to go to work with the migrants, and they sent me to Arizona. Virginia, I'll never forget, some of the Arizona workers, migrant workers, the men were sleeping under a tree, that's where they slept, thanks to Barry Goldwater. I was furious with the bishop that he did not speak out of the injustices. They said, "Well, it's either they go to work or else we cannot give them housing, because according to the Arizona law, they were forbidden from housing, developing housing for the agricultural worker." Isn't that atrocious? I lived in the area. They had showers, but they slept under a tree. I was so angry at the bishops for not speaking out. That was horrible.

*ESPINO*

How did they respond to you?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, their line was, "It's their choice to have a job and get a salary and send it to their families or else they don't have work. So that's a choice." Because it's the law. What a horrible law, isn't it?

*ESPINO*

When do you think you started to question your role? Because it sounds like you were very upset with the bishops. I don't think they teach that to you when you're in your—how do you reconcile those feelings with your commitment?

*ANGUIANO*

Our Lady of the Victory Missionary sisters, I'm a missionary sister and we are taught that. We're taught as a missionary sister it's why you go to the missions, to be a symbol of Christ in the missions, and your advocacy for social and economic justice is part of what you do. Your teaching religion is just part of that. You don't go and tell kids that you're made in the image and likeness of God and that you're a child of God and everyone is a child of God, and that you treat everyone as you would have them treat you, and that you have a responsibility to feed the hungry, to be holy and just, and to speak out. So that's part of what you learn as a missionary sister. Then you learn that you don't go and change people's language or culture; you respect their language and culture. But then the teachings of the church have always been for the worker. Earning a decent wage is part of the teachings of the church, and the respect that you have for workers. That's part of the teachings of the church has always been.

*ESPINO*

Well, how do you reconcile, then, the commitment or the promise to obedience? Because just in looking at the hierarchy of the church, there's a certain hierarchy, an order and discipline and expectations. How do you negotiate those things?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, first of all, for me the church is not made of a building or stone; it's made of living stones. The church is made up of living stones, which are people, not an institution. And the teachings of Christ are very clear. There's never been any difficulty for me to see my role right now in working for clean air and working against nuclear energy. I did that when I was a nun. Our sisters are still doing that and working in support of immigration, and understanding that the root problem of immigration is really the imbalance that exists in the global economy of cheap labor and the right that workers have for a decent living wage. I mean, that's part of the teachings of the church. So there's no real conflict.

Now, in terms of practice, there is. As a matter of fact, I was just talking to Father Luis [phonetic], a Jesuit priest, yesterday, who's doing his Ph.D. He's doing his dissertation on the [Spanish word], the Latino in the Catholic Church, and I was telling him that it's very clear that the Catholic Church in the United States, culturally and socially, is aligned with the social and economic culture of the United States and Europe, and that has always been the case, the church in Rome, the church in the United States.

Our struggle for the church in Latin America has always been a struggle, a struggle of indigenous people looking toward its social, economic, and political independence as expression as people, as the rights that we have. The church, in my estimation, has never been culturally, socially and culturally relevant to the Latino or the indigenous people in Latin America. The Catholic Church in the United States and Rome teaches—and I'm aligned with that—the teachings of Christ, the sacraments, spirituality, and it observes and holds those, teaches and practices, but as it relates to social justice, it is very separate from the social and economic reality of the Latin American people. That is why in Latin America our giants, which is the Archbishop Hélder Câmara from Brazil and Gustavo Gutiérrez, the bishop from Peru, and Martin, Father Martin, who died, you know, the Jesuits who were killed, martyred, really, for their faith in El Salvador, and then Bishop Romero. Pope John Paul was starting to reconcile that differences, but he never really accomplished it. He ordained a lot of bishops and all and he loved Mexico, but he never really integrated the injustices, the need for the church to speak out of the injustices, social, political, and economic, which are very serious. The church has never done it, even today.

I go to Mass every day, go to holy sacraments and all, but I know that there are thirty-nine Protestant ministers that were Catholic, baptized, received the sacraments, received confirmation and all, and that are now Protestant

ministers because they were never embraced by the Catholic Church. Even at Sacred Heart, I used to serve in Sacred Heart, and the Mass, the liturgy in celebration in Spanish, in the language and the music is not in primetime. It's always the last Mass. So do I reconcile myself to that? Well, I know it's a reality, but it's part of where I live. The social education and economic realities of where I live is just part of what the Catholic Church is about, the church in the United States, the church in Rome, the church in Europe. Does it relate, really, in the celebration of the majority of Latino Catholics? It doesn't.

Cardinal [Roger] Mahoney did a great job in taking a very strong stand on immigration, but I don't think he went far enough. He didn't talk about the root cause of immigration, which is the global economy and the imbalances that exist between worker and economic wealth. However, in the United States I see that the technology sector is doing a great job in terms of correcting that imbalance. In the technology sector you have people who purchase and use technology in Latin America. It creates wealth for them. It creates a better living. It creates an education for them. It provides an education for them even though their country isn't becoming an education. So I'm excited about MEChA [Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán] de UCLA [University of California, Los Angeles], because I see these kids just being on top of that, and I'm very encouraged by [unclear] youth, youth throughout and youth in Mexico, particularly, I think, the young people, the Zapatistas in Chiapas. They're now going, "Viva la raza!" and all of that, but their integrating into the social and economic structure of the country and really moving into an economic independence. I celebrate that because that's where it should be.

We need to control our own political system, our own economic system, and do it our way. That's the value of Chicano studies. Plan de Santa Barbara really spelled out the need for an education system, a Latino education system, that really deals with the reality of the Americas, our indigenous background, our indigenous reality and integrating that, and we're growing. The important thing is for Chicano Studies to survive. They're trying to kill it in Arizona, but they're not going to. At UCLA, there's no way they're going to eliminate Chicano Studies at UCLA. We're not going to allow that.

So to get back to the Catholic Church, the Catholic Church is part of the fiber of this social, economic, educational system of the United States. The Catholic Church is that. That's what it is. It's part of Rome, it's part of Europe. It doesn't understand at all our indigenous background, and they don't know that they don't know. But then we have Hélder Câmara we have some of our new priests that are coming up, hopefully, some are wiser than others. We have Virgil Allesandro at Notre Dame, and we have Juan Romero. He moves all over the place.

But the church, the Catholic Church, I see that in two levels. My spirituality is very grounded in the teachings of the church, but really it's the teachings

of Christ, I should say, but that's the church. It's made of people; it's not an institution. I pull my hair, become very upset with bishops and with our current Pope [Benedict XVI Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger]. I don't know if our current Pope is—he's very conservative and he's trying to do away with theology of liberation. He just doesn't understand. But do I put up with him? Yes, he's the pope. Just like I put up with [Barack] Obama, he's the president.

*ESPINO*

[unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

And Obama wants to put twelve nuclear plants in the United States. Even though he sees the atrocities in Japan, he still wants to move forward. So it's the same as the pope. He doesn't understand what's going on in Latin America, just like Obama doesn't understand what's going on in Japan. He just wants to be elected. And the pope just is—I don't know. I don't know where he is. He certainly isn't within the gospel of Christ.

*ESPINO*

Do you think there's room in that gospel for a critique of capitalism? Because you're talking about injustice.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, there is. Yes, there is.

*ESPINO*

Can you tell me about that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, our lord said, "Give unto Caesar what's Caesar's, and give unto God what is God's." So he was talking about separation of church and state. Then in all of his teachings, you read all of his teachings and he always goes to the poor, the sinner. In the gospel he demonstrated the injustices done to Susanna, Susanna in the Old Testament, where the judges, the Jewish judges, which was the church, wanted to have sex with her, but she didn't, she refused, and so they testified against her and they were going to kill her. Then Daniel came up and spoke on her behalf, and then showed the injustice, that because she did not have sexual intercourse with them, they were going to kill her. Because other women would give in to those judges. Then he gave the example of the woman caught in adultery, and he brought her, and in Moses' law they're supposed to stone her, and so he brought all of the elders of the Jewish synagogue and said, "Okay. The first one that is without sin, be the first one to throw a stone at her." And one by one, they left, because Christ showed them the sins that they, the elders, were committing, and who are they to kill this woman. Then afterwards, our lord came to her and he told her, "You have done wrong, but I didn't condemn you. Go and sin no more." The prodigal son, our lord, the son comes and asks for his inheritance and he goes and he squanders that, but then he receives his son back and forgives him. Perhaps the greatest example was in

the readings today, where the scribes and Pharisees were trying to kill our lord because he taught them, he showed them. They did not believe that he was the son of God, and they were very strict in the Jewish laws, and one by one they didn't adhere to social justice, to economic well-being and all, and so he condemned them.

In comparison to also when the woman came and gave a small coin, and the Pharisee, the priest, came and he says, "Oh, I fast and I observe the laws, and I'm glad that I'm not like this tax collector." Then our lord came up and showed them that the woman with the small coin did more, gave more than they did because they were so full of pride. Throughout the Gospels, our lord—perhaps the best is the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes, when he said, "When you die, you're going to come before me. You did not give me to drink, you did not visit me in jail, you did not clothe me when I was poor. You did not give me food to eat when I was hungry." Then they said, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or in jail and naked and we didn't clothe you?" "As long as you did it to these, the least of my brothers, you did it to me." So throughout the Gospels the social justice and forgiveness. Then when he washed the feet of the apostles he says, "If I, being the son of God, wash your feet, he who is greatest among you needs to be the servant of all. Whoever wants to be the greatest, needs to be the servant of all." So throughout the Gospels you have social justice and peace, and his cry for peace. So whenever he would stop and teach, his teachings were all about loving God, loving your neighbor, forgiving, being economically—like the very wealthy Jewish merchant who wanted to follow Christ, and he said, "Lord, what do I have to do to get to heaven?" He told him, "Go and sell all that you have and give to the poor, and come and follow me and you will have riches in heaven." And what did the rich man do? It was too much. He was very wealthy and he wasn't willing to give his wealth. And there's a lot of others.

*ESPINO*

When you left the church—

*ANGUIANO*

I didn't leave. I didn't leave. I have never left the church. I left religious life, but then I've continued to do what I vowed to do in religious life, which is live—I live only on Social Security, I don't live in any—I have given up big contracts because it has been against my—I have refused to do—the LNG [Liquefied Natural Gas supercooled for import to US], they wanted me to receive a position with the governor. It isn't that I do extraordinary things. I just do things that you're supposed to do as a Christian, follow my conscience, and then our lord takes care of me. He's always taken care of me.

*ESPINO*

I think that's a great place to stop, and we'll pick up next time on your next stage in your life. I'm going to stop it here. [End of April 12, 2011 interview]

### **1.3. Session 3 (April 27, 2011)**

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is April 27 [2011], and I'm interviewing Lupe Anguiano in the library in Oxnard, California. We were having a great discussion about your current issues with environmental protection organizations and groups, but before we get to that part of your life story, I want to talk about some of the transformative things that happened to you around the period of your decision to leave the order. I was wondering if you could explain to me your understanding of Vatican II, and then later on we'll move into talking a little bit about how that affected you.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, Vatican II was a renewal of the Catholic Church's doctrines and teachings, and led by Pope John XXIII. His whole perspective was that he saw a lot of the turmoil in the sixties that were happening and our challenging, the world challenging the exploitation of workers in different parts of the world, so he went back to the encyclical letter of the church that one of the popes wrote about the right of workers and the right that workers have to collective bargaining, and the right that people had to really come together and express the common good of everyone. So he saw the conflict of the sixties, really young people challenging our corporate structure, our financial corporate structure, that was really using the goods of underdeveloped countries and exploiting the lands and the mines and all of different countries only for their own benefit, and not for the benefit of humanity, of the common good for the whole world. So what he did, he went back. If you read the encyclical, some of the writings of Vatican II, you will see Pope John going back to the European serf era, where serfs were beholden to a king and he used them to work their land. They paid tribute but they lived in shacks and they lived in poverty. He said the church took a position during that time of the protection and the dignity of the worker. So we want to go back now, in the sixties we want to go back to those times and really see the development of human into the social good of everyone and the social justice and the right that the worker has for a decent wage, an income, a living wage that will provide for him and his family. Yes, we need entrepreneurs, and the world is better off when it has entrepreneurs that really provide goods for the common good, and that the consumer buys those goods for its common good and that the worker is paid a living wage for the work that he does.

So what was really very significant in that time was that at that time we were seeing the rise of communism and the rise of socialism as an answer to some of the inequities of rich and poor. He came out and he showed how we needed the entrepreneur, we needed the worker, and then the respect that is needed between worker and corporate structure. Then the separation of church and state, you know, that the church has its mission, and the mission

of the church is not to become involved in the political of the people, but its mission is to advocate for social justice and for the right that the worker has. So those writings are really very, very significant. Vatican II writings and teachings of the church is really going back to the Christian, the spiritualization and growth of Europe into a way of life, of dignity and support and all. So you saw a lot of the kings, who used to give their wealth and then go give it to the poor and then go and spend some time in prayer, or else you saw kings and queens who would share their wealth and be more just and holy. So one of the statements that he made that really affected me was that we needed to move out of a cloister atmosphere and move into Christ teaching in the world, and go out of our convents and be that voice of Christ for social justice during the sixties. You have to remember all of this happened within the historical context of what was happening in the world today. So many of us, I, myself, and priests and nuns in Los Angeles, even before the civil rights law was even thought of, we were already advocating for housing, for integration, for doing away with barrios who were segregated and doing away with separation of people because of race and color.

I became, and a lot of priests and nuns became involved with the Rumford Act, which was open housing. It was in California. California has always been a leader in so many of these social actions. It was fighting redlining, particularly in Beverly Hills, particularly in Los Angeles, where communities were redlined so that a black or a Latino couldn't move into that neighborhood. If one was allowed to live there, it would become very scandalized and they would sell their homes and run to another place. That was the notion of the Rumford Act, that we needed to have neighborhoods. They always spoke about, "Well, poor people or low-income people are better off in their own little, like East Los Angeles, and we need to have them have their own place and their own communities, but we don't want them in our communities. We don't want them in our communities." So we started to fight that, and when Vatican II came out, we just saw that as a calling of the church, a renewal of the church, and just saying, "Hey, you need to go out and work for social justice, and you need to see the sixties as a good thing, and a thing for the equality, fighting for the equality, advocating, advocating and praying and being an instrument of change, of equality and social justice for all people."

There was nothing about the Rumford Act [aka Proposition 14] or "No on 14" Campaign speaking against real estate. We weren't talking against real estate developers. What we were saying is that we need to build communities that are integrated. We need to build communities that are free of prejudice. We need to build communities where the rich, the working class, the middle class, the poor, the rental live in a community, so that people can see out of the rental I can move to a house that I can afford, and from there I can move into a better home, and then when I have a little

income, I can move to Pacific Palisades or wherever. So that was the whole trend. Of course, Cardinal [James Francis] McIntyre in Los Angeles really was concerned that us, the priests and religious that were involved talking about open housing, which was "No on 14" [Proposition 14], that that would alienate the developer in Los Angeles who were paying and working with him to develop Catholic schools. That was the issue. Bishop [Timothy] Manning was his head of religious, and so he wrote a letter to a lot of the religious saying that it was not appropriate for religious to be involved in political action activities. Well, we saw what we were doing in open housing as a social action, an area for everyone to have equal opportunity to move into housing and to grow, and then to do away with the barrios, the graffitis in East Los Angeles, and the gangs in East Los Angeles and all. So I and a lot of priests just continued to get involved. We just said, "Well, we have this from the pope. The pope and the Vatican are encouraging us, and not only encouraging us, saying that our vocation is to be Christ-like and to work like Christ did in the streets, to advocate a common good for everyone, and the tolerance of people and the working relationship between people. Then the right that the worker has, and to have a home wherever, and to break these barriers between, that are really creating poverty."

So I continued to get involved, and my superior one day used to just say, "Well, you know, it's true that the pope wants us to get involved, that the church wants us to get involved, but you're overdoing it. You're going into the picket line and you're going into the demonstrations." I said, "Well, it's not only me. It's Father Coffield, Father Juan Romero, and Sister [Mary] Corita." The ones that were really out there in the lines were the Immaculate Heart Sisters. The Immaculate Heart Sisters was a diocesan order. They had not yet received their approval from Rome to be a religious community. They were functioning as a religious community within the archdiocese. So, of course, they were beholden more to Cardinal McIntyre than our order was. We were beholden to Rome because we were already approved by Rome. But they had not received their approval from Rome, and so they had to be beholden, obedience to the local, to Cardinal McIntyre. So what some of the Immaculate Heart Sisters did was—hiding away from the world means you wear a habit, and so if we take our habit off, we will be just like a person working in the—and so they took off their habit and they started—and so a lot of us started, people started to take their habits off and just work as—because the nuns are not priests. Nuns are more of a lay order that had their approval of the church, but are not bound by vows to Rome or to the cardinal and all. They're more like lay congregation. They're not ordained as priests. We receive our priesthood in baptism, but we're not ordained as a priest to provide sacrifice and the holy Mass and the sacraments.

So a lot of the sisters, particularly the Immaculate Heart Sisters, and that was like a revolution in the Catholic Church, where religious priests and

sisters started to speak about social justice. Then we started to speak about what was happening in the sixties as being a peaceful revolution, that the country needed to address the wealth between the wealthy and the poor, because there was a strong middle class during that time. So we were speaking of the wealth and then the poor, where the poor were, and when we saw the poor, they were in the barrios, they were in gangs, and they were not graduating from schools. Education was not really a high-quality education for them. One day, the breaking point was when I went to the cathedral to picket with some Protestant, non-Catholics, on open housing. That was like a big step for me because I went with my habit. The question was, "What are you doing in a habit and picketing in the cathedral, the cardinal?" To tell you the truth, I really didn't put too much importance to that, the fact that I had a habit or that I was working with non-Catholics and all. My whole thing was the work of equality and social justice, and the right that we had to really eliminate segregation not only in our neighborhoods, because we didn't have segregation in our schools, but we had segregation in the barrio. So we had a school, but it was a barrio school. I was called on that and—

*ESPINO*

Did somebody report you or how did they know that—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I was involved with East Los Angeles, and we had our meetings in the community college, East Los Angeles Community College. So I was involved with a group of advocates in our community. I lived in Soto Street and very close to the Sears. I think the Sears is still there, isn't it?

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I lived in East Los Angeles, what you call the Hoyo gang. Well, it was an area where I think that there's a Christian Brothers have the Salesian.

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

The Salesians are, and then Infant of Prague Parish is there and then our convent was across the street in a sort of like a hill. It's still there. So this whole issue of redlining became a community issue in East Los Angeles, and we used to meet. I was a missionary sister, so I was working in the community. I did work with kids who were in juvenile. I used to interpret. I used to have meetings with parents, and I worked. I taught religious education at the Infant of Prague Parish, and also a mission where Father G.[George] is, where father Boyle is, I also taught in that parish. Anyway, to go back to the issue of the cardinal—

*ESPINO*

Before we go back to that, do you remember some of the other people, some of the community activists that you worked with?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, some of them are in my archives. I remember a young man by the name of—what was his name? He used to be a very charismatic young guy who used to hold the meetings in East Los Angeles Community College. Also there was a newspaper, and I used to write articles in the newspaper. I was forbidden from writing Sister Mary Consuelo, so then I started to put Lupe Anguiano. Some of those are in my archives. We used to meet almost every week, and then we used to have demonstrations against ghettoizing. I worked also very closely with—some of the campaign offices that we had for “No on 14” were at Cleland House in East Los Angeles.

*ESPINO*

Father Tony Hernandez?

*ANGUIANO*

Tony Hernandez, yes.

*ESPINO*

Reverend.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. So there was a campaign. One day I appeared as a sister and then a few months later I appeared with my regular clothes and continued to work on the “No on 14” campaign. Then Sister [Mary] Corita of the Immaculate Heart Sisters, the famous artist, Sister Corita used to really be an artist that was admired, really nationally and international for her work on peace, her posters. Have you seen her works? Oh, they’re beautiful, on social justice, on peace. So, droves of us left the convent. Anyway, for me, I was called by Sister Lorraine, my superior, who was really a good friend of mine. She said, “Well, Sister, you’re not obeying the rules. Why are you staying?” I had already made my perpetual vows. I had been in fifteen years. And I said, “You know, Sister, you’re right. Why am I staying? I’m not obedient to—,” because in my conscience I believe that I need to be in the community. That’s where I’m called. So that night I started writing my letter to the pope asking for a dispensation, because I had already taken my perpetual vows. I asked for a dispensation and it took a year for me to really get that dispensation.

But during the time away, I continued my activism, working with the community, working with “No on 14,” teaching the students that I taught, particularly the high school. I taught them how to observe, judge and act. You go and you see. One project that I did was to have them see the prices of fruit and of groceries in the stores, Safeway stores, in East Los Angeles, and then to go to Hollywood and check the prices there, and then to go to Beverly Hills and check the prices there. Well, you know how young people are. They discovered that some of the groceries, some of the goods, particularly the green vegetables and fruits and all, were moved from

Beverly Hills to other middle-class communities, and then they were moved from there to East Los Angeles. So by the time the fruit, the goods were brought to East Los Angeles, they were not as fresh. They were not ready to be thrown away, but they were not as fresh. So, observe, judge and act. What do you do? I said, "Okay. So you see this." So the first thing that the kids did, they talked to their mothers. So then they started to go shopping in Hollywood. [laughs] Then some of the kids started to complain to the store owners, and then some of them would follow the trucks. You know how kids are, you know, young people. Then we started a big rally, "We want fresh fruits. We want fresh vegetables. This is what we want, and we're not going to have leftovers." One day, I'll never forget this, when I was talking to some of the high school kids about all of this, and they were saying, "Oh, no, Sister. This is the way we want to—this is what we're going to do." I remember the superior coming and said, "You know, Sister, those kids are not really very respectful."

I said, "Well, I'm teaching them not to be respectful. No, I'm teaching them to be—" That isn't true. "I'm teaching them to be respectful but to be active in what's happening in their lives because all of us are made in the image and likeness of God, and we are not pushovers. We're not here to be mats, you know, and the only way they're going to become better is to see how Hollywood lives, how Beverly Hills lives and how we live here. So we need to change that." That's what this is, and if you see Christ, this is what he did. He went and talked to the rich man about selling so much stuff that he had and come and give to the poor. Then he said to some of the wealthy people, even some of the priests in those days, how hard it was for them to be detached from their wealth, detached from their wealth, and so they were not really hearing the message of Christ, so they did not recognize that he was the son of God because they were so attached to their—they thought that the savior, that the messiah was going to come and be a warrior that was going to defeat the Roman Empire, and he tried to tell them, "My kingdom is not like that. My kingdom is love the poor and don't be attached to wealth, because your spiritual life is greater than that. It's about all of you, the poor, our brothers, the sisters to you. You're not better than they are." So the call that God wants is for you to love each other and to work for the common good of everyone, not just of accumulating wealth for a temple and all of this. One day he went and he just threw all of the tables of the people who were selling doves and all of this, and just threw away their enterprises, their sales, and said, "Don't make the temple a place of selling goods. It's a house of prayer."

He also told the people his story of the rich man and the story of Lazarus, who was a beggar with sores in his body. He was sitting at the home of this wealthy man, asking for food. Then the wealthy man died and Lazarus died, and Lazarus went up to heaven and was rejoicing with Abraham. Then the rich man died and went to hell—well, went to a place of suffering, and then

the wealthy man saw Lazarus, a poor man, rejoicing in heaven. He asked him to "Come down and dip a drop of water into my tongue because I'm burning in fire here." And Abraham said, "My son, those down here can come up here and those up here cannot come down." The rich man said, "Well, have Lazarus go back and tell my brother so that they don't have to come." And Abraham said, "You know, they have the prophets there telling them. They won't listen to Lazarus, even if he goes down and tells them." What he was saying was that here I am, Christ, telling you and you're not listening to me. So I am a man come here, and God coming here, as the son of God, coming here to tell you to be loving and kind, and share your wealth and be for all humanity. Wealth is not bad. It's just that hoarding it and being unjust to the worker and to the people in your neighborhood is sinful.

*ESPINO*

Did that Vatican II change your religious perception?

*ANGUIANO*

No, because the teachings of the church have always been the gospel, the teachings of Christ. Christ, for me, is what Christianity is all about. The interpretation of Christ's words is what is different. You have the fundamentalists, you have the crazy minister who burnt the Torah, you know, Christ would never do that. He even went lovingly even to the Romans, and he would never desecrate another religious scripture. Now in the church today, I see that the church needs to be speaking about the deadliness of nuclear energy, and extending our hand to the Japanese people and helping Christians understand the horrific of using deadly chemicals for the environment and for the Earth and for our air. I mean, that's deadly. It's killing people. The Catholic Church speaks about abortion, the sacredness of life, but they don't go far enough. They're not all-inclusive about the deadliness of war, the deadliness of nuclear energy, how deadly is polluting our air that we breathe in, that to live on, how fossil fuels are just polluting our air and damaging our environment. This hole that is in our environmental system that is just bringing the sun, that layer that protects us from the sun, is just being eroded by fossil fuels. That's affecting our lives, not only the lives of humans, but of animals, of Earth, our plants, our ocean, two-thirds our ocean. The church needs to be not politically but needs to be teaching the teachings of Christ and advocating the harmfulness that is to our health and our well being. So, I go to Mass every morning and I go to holy communion, and I listen to the teachings of Christ. I live those teachings and this is what I do every day. I try to live those teachings. It's not that I'm perfect, but because I make mistakes, I'm very impatient person, and I get very angry at [Barack] Obama because he advocates nuclear energy to Chile. It's a developing country. Why does he go south? Nuclear energy? Come on, Mr. Obama. You want to spread deadly chemicals to Latin America? Is that what you want to do instead of spreading California's solar energy, wind, what we have discovered? Our technology

sector, the Google, the communication system that we have, that's what he should be advocating, not nuclear energy. He should be stopping the subsidies to oil companies. To me, it is simple. The companies are making such huge profits on oil that is polluting our air. And that's what Vatican II was all about. That's what the message of Christ was all about. But is the Catholic Church teaching that? No.

*ESPINO*

How do you reconcile your disagreement with some of the religious officials, like people who are popes and bishops, when they disagree with what your position is?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, they put up with me and I put up with them. I see the separation of church and state as being very important, because in the Middle Ages that's what got the church in the wrong track. They became involved with the political, and so pretty soon they were advocating for this king to be elected or that, and the church needs to stay out of that, definitely. But we need to speak on the gospels and we need to advocate what the gospel says.

Today's readings on the rich and the poor, and all of our reading in the Mass, that's what feeds me, and then I go to communion. I'm very close to Christ. I mean, I try to be very close to Christ, and my conscience is very sensitive to the words of Christ, which is the love of God, the love of our humanity, that all of us are made in the image and likeness of God. All of us are brothers and sisters, and that all of us have a responsibility to love each other and to help each other, and to do whatever I can in my life to live that message, and that's what I do daily.

In my work, I spend 90 percent of my time every day working for clean energy, advocating, just rejoicing at Steve Jobs' creation of the iPad 2 and Google's hiring of 60,000 engineers. I rejoice in Google investing in geothermal. I rejoice in REC Solar moving into Ventura County and building solar systems. Last week I received the Hero Award from the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, and that award was part of the work that I'm doing with Supervisor John Zaragoza to really support Bill Camarillo of Agromin, who is working in soil conservation and dealing with recycling of greens and of food to create energy, and then to create soil that is organic soil, a soil for food that will be grown from that organic soil that is tasty like you wouldn't believe because it's free of pesticides, it's free of that. So I live. I go to Mass and I'm there for Christ, and I'm nourished by the sacraments, and then I come back and I live that. What the pope does and what the church, I don't know. I'm very disappointed that they're not on top of nuclear energy, of clean air, but then I'm not in that level of influence, but I am influencing my life and in the lives of the people around me and the people who I work together with. I just love Rose Braz from the Center for Biological Diversity because she's the coordinator for the Clean Air Act. That young woman, she's a lawyer, she is so brilliant. She went to organize a

meeting with Diane Feinstein to get her to support the Clean Air Act. Of course, Barbara Boxer has always been an environmentalist, she's always been right there. But Diane Feinstein works both aisles of the fence, and so I said to her, "Hey, you know, you get along with everyone and we really need you to protect the Clean Air Act because that's the only instrument we have." That's the only law we have to protect ourselves from pollution and from nuclear or whatever. The Clean Air Act is what helped us here in Oxnard defend ourselves from the LNG [Liquefied Natural Gas] facility that they were going to establish here.

So I pleaded with her. I met with her chief of staff in Los Angeles, and he was funny, he says, "I want to assure you that Diane is going to be on your side." Then he says, "By the way, Lupe, how come you left the convent? Did they kick you out?" [laughs] I laughed and I said, "Well, not really. They didn't really kick me out, but they did say, 'Well, you're not obeying.'"

*ESPINO*

They gave you an ultimatum.

*ANGUIANO*

They gave me an ultimatum, and I took the ultimatum that I'm living right now, and for me I'm living that dedication to Christ. I'm living that religious life. I am a nun in a different whatever. But this is me, you know, this is who I am.

*ESPINO*

Were you angry at the time?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, no. No, I've never been angry, because our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters, we're friends, we communicate and we go to each other's parties, even the sisters from Victory Noll. The other day we had a celebration in Redlands, where we had our big summer home, which was a beautiful mansion. I think Bishop Buddy helped us buy that mansion, and it was our retreat. It was our summer home but also we taught in San Bernardino and other places close to Redlands. But when many of our sisters left the order, Our Lady of Victory Missionary, had to sell it. Now it's being used as a place for abandoned children. The owners invited Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters to go to the dedication of Queen of the Missions. We call it Queen of the Missions. That's where I took my perpetual vows. It's a beautiful mansion in Redlands, but now it's used for abandoned children. But they invited all the sisters. I was going to go, but then I had a doctor's appointment and so I couldn't attend. I'll share that with you. Didn't you see that in my Facebook?

So we're in communication with each other, and I communicate very well with my pastor, but he won't assign me to be the Social Justice Committee. Some parishioners have been asking him to put together a Social Justice Committee, and he has never—he hasn't done that.

*ESPINO*

Why do you think he hasn't consented?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I don't know. You know, Ventura County is very conservative, maybe. I don't know. I've never asked him.

*ESPINO*

Well, in looking back at that period when Vatican II talked about social justice, did people embrace that idea, people in your community, or were they, like this pastor is today, afraid of that topic being controversial or stirring up the pot? How do you remember it?

*ANGUIANO*

Both ways. There were some who were very stronghold, and there are some who were reluctant, saying, "Well, the priest doesn't want us to get involved in political things, and so the church shouldn't be involved in that." I have a lot of Catholic friends who are totally involved in the social action and social justice, many of them, and many priests also, but we don't often speak about it.

I support the division of church and state, I really do, because I think that's where the church should be, but I believe the gospels of Christ speak very loud and clear about social justice, about the love of the poor. I don't think any parish can really call itself a real lover of Christ if it's not involved in working for social justice for the poor, particularly for the working poor. I believe that very strongly. Sometimes I think that Christ puts up with us, and there's some churches that he doesn't feel very welcome. I think in the Catholic Church, the great value of the Catholic Church is the sacraments, where we receive Christ and we receive his blessing and we receive his teachings. But is it active? It isn't. The Catholic Church in the United States is part of the fabric of the political system, social and political system of the United States and Europe. The Catholic Church is influenced greatly socially, economically by the political system of its time.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember when John F. K. [Kennedy] was running for president and the issue was his Catholicism, and this is before, I think, that the—

*ANGUIANO*

Before the civil rights.

*ESPINO*

Yeah, that climate that you're talking about didn't exist back then.

*ANGUIANO*

That's right.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember having an opinion about that or did you care that he was Catholic? Was that important to you?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I was very glad that John Kennedy was elected as president. I worked in that campaign. I was a religious at that time, but I really advocated and

was happy that he was elected as president, and I rejoiced. I thought that he handled his Catholicism very well. I thought he did a marvelous job in separating church and state, and I thought that that was very eloquent. I think that we should elect a Jewish president, too. I think that [James E.] Carter was a strong Christian. He was a very strong Christian. I don't think some of the presidents were that strong, but I know Carter was. John Kennedy understood his separation of church and state, and so did [Edward M.] Ted Kennedy. But I think Ted Kennedy regretted, at the end of his life, that he wasn't closer to the church because of his support of abortion. I think that his conscience bothered him, but I was very glad that the cardinal was there that was there. I thought that the pope should have just embraced Ted Kennedy's regret or whatever it was, his conscience, his confession that he regretted. But he was a political—he was elected to represent the interest of Massachusetts, and I think he did a very good job as a Catholic, as I see [Joseph R.] Biden. He separates his Catholicism. I think if I were in the shoes of Ted Kennedy, I don't know, but I would have liked to have him talk more against nuclear energy and against oil. He did some, but in the Senate he didn't work to remove the financial incentives that we give to big oil. Then for nuclear, \$15 billion of our government money we give, taxpayer money, to develop nuclear energy that is chemically killing. You have to understand nuclear energy. It's used for the creation of the atomic bomb, and that is ludicrous. I think everyone needs to speak against that. Why the Christian church doesn't speak about it is beyond my—you know, the Catholic Church, all Christians, why we don't speak against that and we speak against abortion, what it says to me is that the Christian church in Europe and the United States is influenced socially, politically, economically by the political system of our country and the corporate structures of our country. I don't agree with that, and my life is an example of that. But I'm not the president. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

Let me just get back to that one issue that you brought up with Kennedy and his position on abortion. When you were leaving the church, that was the period of the Women's Liberation Movement, birth control, abortion legalized. Was that something that you were—

*ANGUIANO*

Supporting?

*ESPINO*

Well, I guess was it something that you were grappling with, those issues?

*ANGUIANO*

I was, but let me tell you how I saw it. Number one, I'm totally against abortion, and Gloria Steinem knows that, everybody knows who knows me, that I'm against abortion. My involvement in the Women's Movement really is centered around the Equal Rights Amendment. That's my issue. The thing that I am the most passionate about is about the equal rights. The equality

of women in society is what the Women's Movement is to me. That's what it is. I led the Catholic Church's support to the Equal Rights Amendment in the United States. That's one thing that I did. It was me who really did that. I started it when we started the Women's Political Caucus. When we started the Women's Political Caucus, it was about the Equal Rights Amendment and the right that we had for women to be in political office, to be represented in positions of power in the United States. The Women's Political Caucus was about electing women to be elected to the political system in the United States and to influence policy.

On a very personal level and on a social level, the Equal Rights Amendment was what I advocated, the equality of women in the workplace, in life, in respect, in marriage and all. That is, to me, what the Women's Movement is, it still is for me. I'd like to see more women elected. I want them to be representative of all people, not just of their sexual—the other part of the Women's Movement was the issue of abortion and sexuality. Well, I personally believe that that is a very personal thing that belongs in the bedroom. I call it a bedroom issue. I think of that the church needs to advocate, speak about social justice and the love of life, but if it's going to speak against abortion, then it should speak against war and against nuclear energy and against oil domination, the economy in our world. So whenever friends of mine invite me to an abortion, I say, "Well, I want to talk also about nuclear energy and I want to talk about war, against the war, and I want to talk about this." "Well, no, that's—" I say, "No, that's life." That's what life, to me, is about. What are we doing? We have so many issues to deal in the United States. Why are we so hung up on bedroom issues. Here we are, our planet is being attacked and workers are being brutalized, our middle class is being destroyed. That's where our political voice needs to be, and the bedroom issues of sexual intermarriage—what do you call it?

*ESPINO*

Same sex.

*ANGUIANO*

Same-sex marriage and intergender, when people change their sex, those are personal things. Why are we spending so much time and money? Those are personal things that belong to people as a person. We need to respect people and their conscience. If people are working, making a living, they can take care of their bedroom issues or their divorce, their remarriage, their whatever, and of having an abortion. I don't agree with abortion, but having their own personal sexual life. It doesn't have to be out in the public. My annoyance with that is that we're in very serious trouble economically in this country, and so much time is spent on personal issues that we really can't control.

*ESPINO*

Do you think the church should have a mandate about those things? Do you think the church should have rules and expectations? Like what you're

saying about Kennedy, how he felt alienated because he did support abortion. Do you think that Catholics cannot be good Catholics and support the legalization of abortion?

*ANGUIANO*

I think that that is a very personal issue, and I think it's an act of conscience, and I think that that really relates to the conscience of a person. If you have a well-educated conscience, you know right from wrong. That's how I feel. The church's teachings need to be in the teachings of Christ and the gospels. The teachings of Christ teach, number one, that we are all made in the image and likeness of God, everyone in the world. Number two, that we are all children of God, and so we have a duty and obligation to respect and love one another. Number three, that all of us are going to mess up in our lives, and that we need to be forgiving and we need to see right from wrong. The right from wrong really rests on love your neighbor as yourself, which is the love, the responsibility you have to love yourself. If you love yourself, you're going to love your neighbor. The responsibility that we have, we are our brothers' keepers because what I do influences others, and we are our brothers' keepers, and so the way I live affects—particularly a woman, a woman's life affects five hundred they say, five hundred families. So we have a responsibility for that.

Then Christ's whole gospels and everything, his great love for the poor. Why? Because it is the poor who is in great need. That is how we live our gospel, by being charitable, not charitable in an abusive way, meaning we're going to allow him to step on everything. No. The discipline, but the being understanding and then helping that person to get out of drugs, to get out of gangs, to learn to love other people. That's where the teachings of the church need to be. When Kennedy dealt with the issue of abortion, I don't know, but maybe he was supporting the [U.S.] Supreme Court's—what is it?—Roe versus—

*ESPINO*

Wade?

*ANGUIANO*

Wade. He was supporting that and maybe he had a person—I don't know. It's hard for me to deal with political figures, because political figures are so much about being elected, number one. Number two, getting money to get elected, reelected, and, number three, obeying the laws of the country and obeying the rules of Congress and the justice and all. I worked in Washington enough to know that it drives you crazy to really deal—I worked very hard in the writing of the bilingual bill, but it has never been implemented. I worked my tail off, my butt off, on the Equal Rights Amendment, and it hasn't passed. They attach this and attach that, but it's not like the Equal Rights Amendment. We need the Equal Rights Amendment for the life and protection of all women and men. Because I see the Equal Rights Amendment as equality for everyone, and when that Equal Rights

Amendment passes, it's going to be liberating for men, women, and children.

That's what I like about Gloria Steinem and that's what I like about Bella Abzug. For me, Gloria Steinem has done more for the wellbeing of women than the church has, very definitely, and worldwide. She's a strong advocate. Bella Abzug, Bella was a woman of peace. She was the first one to put together a United Nations Women's Strike for Peace. I miss her. Oh, I miss Bella. Whenever she came to the halls of Congress, everyone listened to her voice. Oh, Bella, if you're in heaven, help us. Gloria Steinem also misses her because she was a peace advocate to the core. She was an equality person to the core. She defended one of the first black men that was being prosecuted by the Ku Klux Klan. She used her money and her talent to go and defend him. So that is the Women's Movement for me.

*ESPINO*

Well, it seems to me that you highlighted how women and men are different in some respects. The fact that we can get pregnant, that changes a lot, and that was part of the Women's Movement.

*ANGUIANO*

Absolutely.

*ESPINO*

But it sounds like that wasn't an area where you felt you needed to be an activist.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yeah, I did. I did, Virginia. I worked very hard to help women who were single parents to become self-supporting. I worked for twelve, fifteen years to create a model program, the National Women's Employment and Education. It was a model program that really dealt with women's economic stability and independence. You know, for me, you have a woman who is economically independent, she's going to take care of her body.

*ESPINO*

You're not in opposition to birth control or [unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, no. I support birth control, but not abortion. I have to preface that by saying that I've never been a mother. And I love children. I think children bring the light of what is beautiful in humanity, their innocence, their intuition, their creativeness, their want to explore everything is the beauty of children. So I love children, but I was called by Christ to a life of celibacy and I'm happy living that, even though I understand the love relationship between a man and a woman, and it's very hard for me to explain that, because Christ speaks of his love for the church, us, as a marriage, as an intimate marriage, a love between a husband and wife. He is the bridegroom and we, as the church, are his bride. That's the way he sees it, and it's very beautiful because that's how I see the love relationship and the sexual intimacy between a man and a woman, that they become one. It is in that

sexual intimacy that they become one. In my love relationship with Christ and in communion and in my prayer and in silence, I experience other intimate relationship with Christ that is beyond the sexual experience. I see it as even higher. It's a transforming. I mean, I think when you're sexually involved, at least that was my experience, when you're sexually involved, at least my experience was that I felt I wanted to become one with the person that I was sexually involved. It was like an experience of oneness, and I remember wanting to be one with the one person I was sexually involved, wanted him to be one with me and I wanted to be one with him. But it doesn't reach that level of going beyond that sexual experience into the spiritual, which is that real union between God, the spiritual life of God and the soul.

So that is, for me, a very beautiful experience, but it's hard to explain. It's hard to explain because it goes to a certain level in a sexual experience but it doesn't reach. But I think it's supposed to. I don't know. [laughs] I don't know. Have you ever had that? Oh, golly, how did I get into this conversation?

*ESPINO*

I think it's so important to understand those connections that you make in your own mind because you've lived both. You've lived the marriage with God and also, you weren't married per se, but you had a very intimate relationship with a human, with a man. So you can tell from your experience what it was like for you. That might not be the same for other people, of course.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I was married, but I only lasted one year.

*ESPINO*

Oh, you actually did get married.

*ANGUIANO*

I got married and it lasted one year. It was a horrible marriage. My whole sexual experience was with Bill Williams, and it was a very beautiful experience, but it just didn't reach—I wanted it to reach that level of that spiritual that you experience with God, and I believe that, you know, on a spiritual, we're body and soul and that's integrated. I think there is supposed to be in a perfect relationship. I don't know. I think there's supposed to be, because Christ always spoke of the bride and the bridegroom. Every time he speaks of the church, he speaks of the bride and the bridegroom, of the soul. For Christ, the church isn't a building; it's a soul. It's a church of living stones, which is a person, and that is his view, that intimate. You know what? To come and think of it, I think that is what St. Teresa of Ávila and many of the mystic saints experienced when they reached that level of intimacy with Christ, that complete union with God. St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Ávila.

You read the hermits and you read the lives of the saints, St. Catherine of Siena was totally in love Christ since she was a little girl. I don't know. Well, yeah, yeah. It really is, and I think when you see, particularly with St. John of the Cross, because St. John of the Cross suffered a lot from his religious order, from the Catholic Church. Because the religious order, the Carmelites [Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel], were very influenced by the political influences of that time of Spain. He wanted to separate that, and he was put in prison in his monastery for not agreeing to the election of somebody. He did not want to participate in that influence. He wanted to move it away from political influence, and so they put him in prison. St. Teresa of Ávila, in her writings she's always apologizing to the Catholic Church because it was when they burned people on stake in Spain for being a heretic.

*ESPINO*

The Inquisition.

*ANGUIANO*

The Inquisition, yeah. I think Martin Luther King should be declared a saint because he was the one that broke that political maneuvering of the Catholic Church with government, the states. It's a long history, and when you're a religious you read and you study and you know all of the pitfalls. Then your conscience is formed to live a Christ-like life. I think so many religious do that in a different way.

For me, currently the sexual predators of priests, young people, that cuts to the heart of my soul, my heart. It's just a gruesome, horrific pain that Catholics need to bear, and I think we need to bear that because it is. It's the truth, and the horrific experience of a priest destroying the life, the love experience of a child for future for all is just terrible. I mean, those young men that were abused sexually, I don't think they'll ever be able to experience a gratifying sexual experience with a person they love, a marriage or a person that they really love, because this happened to them. It's like killing a person, and it's horrible. But the church has to bear responsibility for that because they hid that and it wasn't exposed. Even now they need to expose that. I know that some are going to accuse—there's always a thing of well, they're going to accuse a person even if he's not, because they want money from the church. Well, I think we need to step that line and just work with the law enforcement. Maybe that's a suffering, a cross that we need to bear as a result of the sins of a few priests. I can tell you that I'm very proud of our parish priests, Father John and Father Marco and Father Mike. I know dozens of priests who are loyal to their vows and dedicated as Christ. Look at Father G.

*ESPINO*

In your experience, that wasn't something you witnessed?

*ANGUIANO*

No. I never witnessed it, but I do know a few years ago when I was working in Los Angeles and living in Van Nuys, there was a Jesuit, a priest, when he was in the seminary he saw that. He witnessed an abuse of one of the seminarians, and he left the order and he is agonizing, even though he went to the priesthood and he was ordained, and he's still agonizing that. I guess it's because it's become a public thing and he—I'm not sure if he actually had experienced—maybe he did, but it has destroyed his life. I know a lot of others who have experienced. I haven't seen it myself, but know others who have been and parents whose children have been abused, and it's horrible. What I have seen is the sexual abuse of women, when I worked with the Women's Employment and Education. I counseled many women who were raped and brutalized sexually. When I attended the United Nations International Women's Conference in Mexico City in 1975, I saw a lot of the women from Chile, from Argentina, from Bolivia, Brazil, who had been literally raped by the military juntas supported by the United States. And it's happening now, the sexual abuse. But, you know, sexuality is played up in Hollywood. Like the meeting that I was yesterday, I know a woman like that. A great part of that was the sexual enjoyment of couples, and that's okay, but you see the sexual abuse of a woman or a man or a youth or a teenager, which is so horrific. So sometimes sexuality is held up by the popular media, but the abuse of that sexuality has never really been condemned. Well, it is condemned by the laws and all. Here in Oxnard we have in the transportation center here in Oxnard. When I go to Los Angeles, sometimes I take the train, and I've come off the train and waiting for my sister, sometimes I'm alone there, and I see predators coming, getting money out of their pocket and sort of going around, and you don't pay attention to them. Then there comes another one, and then there comes a taxi driver [unclear]. You can see that, that a woman who's not protected, particularly a woman who is undocumented, sometimes is taken hostage and used as sexual trafficking. You see that. I mean, I've seen that.

*ESPINO*

You seem to be sensitive to all the different injustices that can exist in a society. When you left the church, how did you know what to commit to, what issue was going to be your issue?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, that's a very good question. I think that what I have done in my life is I have responded to issues that I see or that I have been introduced by others. People come to me, like in the issue of the LNG, the environment, people invited me to a meeting and I just saw this. Then I was a member of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the beginnings of it in Oxnard. I was invited by BHP Billiton to review the program, what they were going to do. I saw right away what they wanted to do in Oxnard and places. Then the more I investigated it, the more I saw that they were giving money out nationally. Then I met Susan Jordan, and then I really became educated.

Then I went to meetings and I became part of that. In education, I've done the same. So I haven't gone out and looked for issues; it's just that they have been there and I have been asked or I have been invited, and then I have gotten the facts together. Then I take a position and I support it.

*ESPINO*

Can you tell me a little bit, and this will be the final question for today, but you started talking about the Rumford Act [aka Proposition 14] in the very beginning. I didn't really get a strong sense of what role you played, the "No on 14" campaign. That seems to be the period when you left the church. Not left the church, but when you—I don't know how you articulate it. How did you articulate it? Because last time when I said you left the church, and you said you never really left the church.

*ANGUIANO*

I asked for a dispensation of my vows, because I had perpetual vows. I was in the order for fifteen years, and I had already taken life perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. So in order to be dispensed of that, you have to apply to Rome.

*ESPINO*

So when you received the dispensation, what was the next stage in your life?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I continued working on the "No on 14." I was involved in that because I was invited by a lot of the people in East Los Angeles who were fighting segregated housing. I was invited, and so I participated in the political campaign to fight segregation, housing segregation. So I became educated. I learned about it and I started to speak out. I saw the campaign and saw how unjust it was, and I talked to other priests, Father Coffield, Father Juan Romero, a lot of other priests, the sisters that I associated with, Immaculate Heart Sisters. So we started to communicate about that and we saw the injustice. It wasn't only me who took a position against the Rumford Act, but it was many of us and the priests also. So I started to get involved in the community. I was invited to attend some of the meetings. "Come on, Sister, we want you to support us on this," and I went to the meetings. Then I discussed it with some priests and discussed it with some other religious, and many of us got involved in that open housing. Fighting against segregated housing is what it is.

*ESPINO*

Who were your biggest enemies at that time?

*ANGUIANO*

The developers. The developers and then the cardinal. "No on 14," the Rumford Act, was really introduced in the California legislature, and we were fighting against that. Cleland House loaned their hall, their facilities, as a campaign office. So we used to congregate around there. There was a guy by the name of [Fernando] Peña, a young activist. What was his first name?

Then there was a newspaper gentleman in East Los Angeles, who used to write articles about—

*ESPINO*

Do you mean Ruben Salazar?

*ANGUIANO*

No, no. It was before Ruben Salazar, because Ruben Salazar was a kid. I'm talking about maybe even before the Civil Rights Act.

*ESPINO*

Oh, in the fifties?

*ANGUIANO*

When was the Rumford Act?

*ESPINO*

You said you received your dispensation in '64.

*ANGUIANO*

1964? That's right. I was thirty-five years old when I left.

*ESPINO*

So the Rumford Act. The Kennedy campaign was in 1960, and then Brown v. Board of Education was 1954. Ruben Salazar would have been around in that time, but so a journalist would be—I'm not sure.

*ANGUIANO*

No, no, no. It was—what was his name? You know like you see the local papers?

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

It's in my archives, but I didn't keep the whole page. I should have kept the whole page. I wonder if some of them are still living. You know, I don't know. I don't know. But the Rumford Act, I have that in my papers somewhere. You know, it's in one of the articles where I was interviewed by the Ventura County Star for my archives at UCLA. I'll look it up and I'll let you know.

*ESPINO*

Okay.

*ANGUIANO*

But it was like a community effort, and then we were fighting for that and then I came. I left as a nun, and then when I came back, I went right to the campaign office and continued to work on that.

*ESPINO*

What was your strategy?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the strategy was really a political—I didn't manage the campaign. It was other people who were managing the campaign. The strategy was to defeat the "No on 14."

*ESPINO*

Did you make phone calls, did you—

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yeah. We leafleted and we would walk precincts, and then we would make calls and then we would get people together. Our big meetings were held in East Los Angeles, the community college there. His name was Fernando Peña. Was it Fernando Peña?

*ESPINO*

I can look that up, see if I find anything on the Internet.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah, look up the Rumford Act and look up the—because that was the big—

*ESPINO*

What did you learn from that? What skills did you acquire from that campaign?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, Virginia, I already had acquired the skills as a missionary sister. As a missionary sister, you learn a lot of skills. Number one, you learn to respect peoples, and then you learn the social teachings of the church. When I used the “observe, judge, and act” with the students, that’s somewhat of a political—I don’t know if you’re familiar with the Catholic Workers Movement.

*ESPINO*

A little bit.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, that’s what it—observe, judge, and act. The total advocacy of that is the social obligation that governments have for the protection of the worker, a living wage. It doesn’t mean that everybody has to be paid nine-ninety-five. It’s a living wage, and a living wage is different for everyone, and respecting that.

*ESPINO*

That’s interesting.

*ANGUIANO*

That’s the Catholic Workers Movement, to respect the right that a worker has. A worker, a human being isn’t a slave. We did away with slavery a long time ago, but the United States is turning into a slavery right now. It’s destroying the middle class, hindering people from the right to organize, collective bargaining. Here we have associations. We have associations for Chamber of Commerce. We have the association for the oil, energy, association for industry here, industry there. You’re denying the right for a worker to come together, to organize, for an association. A union is an association. That’s what it is, and it’s a form of communicating with the employer for social justice, for equality. That’s all it is. What is so radical about that? Our whole democracy is based on that. We have a right to vote. We have a right to assemble. I mean, I think the Tea Party doesn’t know that we have a Constitution. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

Well, I think I'm going to stop it right now, because we're coming back to the present again, and I want to talk about that as well. But I'm going to turn it off. We'll leave it there, and next time we'll pick up. Because we're still in the point where you start to work for the War on Poverty, and I'm really interested in your take on the War on Poverty, what that meant for East Los Angeles.

*ANGUIANO*

Okay.

*ESPINO*

Thank you. [End of April 27, 2011 interview]

#### **1.4. Session 4 (May 11, 2011)**

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is May 11th, 2011. I'm interviewing Lupe Anguiano and the daughter of her niece in Oxnard, California. I'd like to start today with your experience on the campaign to defeat or to support the Rumford Act [aka Proposition 14], to defeat Prop [Proposition] 14.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it was to defeat the Rumford Act. The Rumford Act, it was "No on 14." The Rumford Act was segregating Latinos and blacks from predominantly white communities. The real estate community argued that if a black or Latino moved into the neighborhood, specific neighborhoods, then people would just sell their homes or just move out. It was a time of the sixties when there was a lot of racial discrimination. The Rumford Act was finally defeated and also called illegal by the state courts, but it was very, very popular. So we called it "No on 14." The Catholic Church, many of us religious sisters and priests, the laypeople, Latinos in Los Angeles became very involved in that campaign.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember how you got involved? What role did you play?

*ANGUIANO*

I worked with high school students, and I used to use "observe, judge, and act," meaning we used to study social issues, and then we looked at the facts around that issue, and then we talked about what we needed to do, what our responsibility as a Christian needed to be. So when we saw redlining, which meant that homes in Beverly Hills and Hollywood, there were certain homes where high income or rent-class income people lived, and the real estate community felt that if a black or Latino moved in that area, that there would be vacant homes because people would just fly, would just flee that area. We argued that that was discriminatory, that that was an act of discrimination and hindering, really, people to become integrated and to work together for the common good. So as religious, as

laypeople, and the churches, all of the churches were heavily involved. The Jewish community was heavily involved; the Latinos were heavily involved; the black community was heavily involved. And a lot of white community people, like Marcia Burnam [phonetic], my friend who lived close to UCLA in really the Beverly Hills elite area, she also was involved in that. We used to have meetings and all. So we really worked to defeat that.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember your strategy?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it was a campaign, and we campaigned just like you do for elections. We would leaflet communities and then we would have community meetings. In East Los Angeles we had a lot of community meetings in East Los Angeles Community College. I remember—I guess his name was Fernando Peña. I believe he was in the Peace Corps. He was a volunteer. No, because the Peace Corps hadn't started. But anyway, he was involved, and then Latino community newspapers were also involved. So it was a lot of organizing that we had, and the churches also. It really brought together a diverse group of people, both black, Latinos, white Latinos and middle-class, higher middle-class, who really fought the Rumford Act.

Cardinal [James Francis] McIntyre did not like the fact that religious were involved. The Vicar of Religious was Timothy Manning, who later became cardinal, who later took the place of Cardinal McIntyre. But Bishop Manning was the Vicar of Religious, and so he would really request, sent a letter, that it really wasn't a good idea for us to be involved in political campaigns. But Pope John XXIII had already—Vatican II had happened, and we were all asked to really become involved in social issues, and we did so. So that was a big major turning point of the Catholic Church because we were all looking at Vatican Council and what the Vatican Council had told us. I brought an article for you to read and for you to examine, which is the history of the church's involvement in social issues and social injustice issues. *Rerum Novarum*, which was really the first encyclical written by [Pope] Leo XIII, really dealt with the issue of cheap wages and the exploitation of the worker, and that became a very important issue because there were a lot of Italians and Irish who were coming to the United States via New York, and they were all being segregated into the sewing factories and into cheap labor, and they were highly discriminated against. So the pope spoke about the injustices of that, and the right that the worker had to organize, and that's when the Union Movement began and it began in New York City with the garment workers. So, since then, a lot of the popes have used that encyclical to really show that workers have a right to organize, workers have a right to be represented, and that slave labor constituted social injustice. So we have carried that out even up today. So I brought this to you because I thought that you might like to—I started to underline some of the passages, but what is important is that John XXIII in Vatican Council reiterated and went

further to really bring understanding to the sixties, the revolt in—well, I should say it was a nonviolent revolution in the sixties. Some of it was violent, you know, because the racial integration, the issue of being segregated in the buses.

For the Latino, that was very important because in the state of Texas, and that's where LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens] was involved, in the state of Texas, the Texas Rangers would—one of their, should I say, statement in order to become a Texas Ranger was their aggressive behavior against the Mexican. So there was a thing called if you had blood in your boots, Mexican blood in your boots, you were a good Texas Ranger. You go into the history of Texas and you will see that. There's a lot that's been written about that. So that was part of the issues of the sixties. Well, that was really the issue in 1929 when LULAC was formed, but in the sixties it became like a national. The 1960s was really when everyone, students, community groups, everyone really saw the injustices of racial segregation and we saw communities were divided.

*ESPINO*

Do you have any eyewitness accounts, any recollections of people telling you of their experience of segregation, of not being able to purchase a home? Do you have any memory of situations?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes. Congressman [Edward] Roybal, for example, he couldn't buy a home in an elite area in Beverly Hills.

*ESPINO*

Was he trying? Do you remember he was trying to?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I don't know if he was trying, but that was the message. And Congressman [Augustus] Hawkins from South Los Angeles. It was very evident in the whole community.

I guess many people of your age probably find it hard to believe that that happened in Los Angeles, in California, but it did. My experience was in seeing and knowing the reaction of real estate people, and it was in the news all of the time that if a black person or if a Latino person moved into the neighborhood, there would be just a flight, and homes would not be able to be sold because people would just run away if they saw a black person or a Latino person. Some of that still exists. I think some of that still exists in elite places of Beverly Hills, Century City, in Los Angeles. It exists in some of our areas here also, not as much as it did then, but mainly because there's a lot of Latinos in real estate and there's a lot of black people in real estate, and really economically things have made a difference, I think. I think that some of the prejudice, some of the rationale, excuse that they used was that if a black person moved, they wouldn't take care of their property, it would be run down, and those sort of stigmas that you place on Mexicans and Latinos. Of course, as the income grew and you saw highly income people

could afford to buy a house, then that sort of started to change. But really, in all honesty, the sixties was about that, that some people had the income to afford a home in a high-end community, but it was really shunned, selling a home to black person or a Latino person. In Texas that was really unheard of. My experience, you asked about an experience, I worked in Texas when I was working with the National Council of Catholic Bishops, and I experienced that. I was traveling from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, and I went to a restaurant and they just wouldn't serve me. I looked around and I saw people would come in and they would serve them, but not me. Then I started to talk to the waiter or the waitress, and they would just ignore me totally. So, yes, I have experienced discrimination, yes.

*ESPINO*

What year was that, do you recall?

*ANGUIANO*

When I was working with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops as a layperson.

*ESPINO*

Were you by yourself?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. Yes, yes, yes. But anyway, I thought that you might like to look at this and really see the teachings of the church. The current pope has come out with an encyclical on the responsibility that they have to take care of Mother Earth. But on another hand, going back to the Rumford Act, "No on 14," Cardinal McIntyre received a lot of support, a great deal of support to build Catholic schools, so he did not want to offend the developers, and so he did not like the fact that a lot of priests and religious were in this campaign and we were picketing real estate offices and all. He didn't like that, and so Bishop Manning, when I was involved in that picketing, he wrote to all of the superiors saying that religious should not get involved in political campaigns, and that it was not appropriate for us to be picketing. We did it anyway, and so many of us got into trouble, per se, for that. But I think it's important, what I have to say, anyone who really looks at my life, it's important for them to look at the history of that era when I was born, when I was working, when I was a nun, and that was a big turning point in the whole international community, fighting against racial discrimination and against segregation, and really looking at blacks, Latinos as an underclass people.

*ESPINO*

Well, can you tell me, then, how you rationalized being disobedient when you were taking vows for obedience? How did you rationalize that in your mind?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I saw, number one, the pope had mandated that we have a responsibility in social justice to really—the church has always been in support of social justice, and we needed to get involved in the common good

and in making sure that everyone—all of us are made into the image and likeness of God and all of us have the inalienable rights as a human being to excel and to develop. So that is a mandate that is close to all missionary sisters and we're taught that as a missionary sister, and I learned that at home also from my mother. More important, that's what Christ was—his life was about that. He communicated with—his whole message was about the love of the poor and that God loved all of us equally. So it was very easy. It's just part of your conscience, part of what you are as a Christian, to know that equality, social justice, is not just for some, it's for everyone, and that all of us are neither Jew nor Gentile nor Catholic nor Protestant nor Hindu, all of us are children of God, and that God loves all of us equally. That's the message of Christ. Even those who wanted to crucify him, the Romans, he did a lot of miracles for the Roman soldier who came and asked for his support, and those were the people who crucified him. He really went to the temple where the Jewish priests were, and confronted them but also told all the people, "Follow the Ten Commandments," and what Moses taught was what he came to explain and to see. Then many of the stories that he said dealt with social justice.

So, for me it was a matter of the pope says this and the church is explaining this as the renewal of the church, and then seeing the sixties, what was happening, the injustices of the sixties, and seeing the "No on 14" segregation in housing. It was very easy for me to see that. So, for me, shall I obey God, the pope, rather than the cardinal who I understood was looking after the well-being of the schools, because the archdiocese of Los Angeles is the largest Catholic school district in the world. So I understood that, and priests and sisters understood that, and we confronted the church. We were living our conscience and we were teaching and we were supporting and we were getting behind the movement for social justice, for equality, to show that we are not, as our lord said, Greek, Gentile, Jew, whatever, all of us. And particularly the Greek, they were considered, quote, "pagans" by the Jewish people. So, for me it wasn't a big deal. It was just something that went like a breath of fresh air to really live the teachings of Christ. I think that we were confronted by the church, the Catholic Church, just like Christ was confronted by the Jewish priests. And there's a parallel there. He was teaching that God loves all of us as his children and equality. So the priests had a special interest that they were defending, but as a baptized Christian and vowing to live the life of Christ, I was just doing what any Christian who wants to live a life of Christ would do. Sometimes politically, look at what happened to Christ, he took a political stand and he suffered for it. So, for me it wasn't difficult at all, just like it isn't difficult for me at all now.

*ESPINO*

Was that your first political campaign?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, no, because I was involved with teaching some of the high school kids from Garfield High School, and I would teach them to observe, judge and act, and we would study social conditions and they would see the injustice. One of the things that we did was went into a Safeway store in East Los Angeles, and I had the students go and check the prices, and then had the students go into Beverly Hill, a Safeway there, and check the prices and the quality of food, and they saw the injustices. Then we would sit down and say, "Okay. What are we going to do about this? What action are you going to take?" Some of the kids would say, "Well, we're going to go and shop in Beverly Hills," or, "We're going to go shop in this—," and then some of them would take cameras and they would follow the trucks who went from Beverly Hills and Safeway, and at night they would transfer some of the foods, particularly the fresh vegetables and all, they would transfer them when they were getting old or when they were going to be almost at a point where they were not useable, they would be transferred to the East Los Angeles area. So I've grown with that and understood that. So, no, it wasn't—

*ESPINO*

I guess I'm thinking about like an official campaign, where you're working with other organizations, where you're picketing, where you have a strategy, that kind of—

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. That was my first that I can—let me see. Well, there was another when I—usually in summer as a nun you select where you're going to go to summer school. You're either going to go to summer school to really upgrade your educational level or you're going to go to the missions, and most of the time I would select to go to work with migrants in the summer. I remember this one time I went to Arizona to follow the migrants, and I was just horrified when I saw that the agriculture workers were living under the tree. That's where they slept, because Arizona had a law whereby they were not permitted to build housing for the agricultural worker. They were forbidden from doing that. In California we had a lot of migrant camps, but in Arizona they were forbidden to do that. So if somebody wanted to work, they just lived under a tree, and then the ranchers would have showers and toilets and all of that for them to go to. It was really horrible, and I spoke out against that, the injustices of that. Barry Goldwater was the senator from Arizona during that time. And I'll never forget when Goldwater was debating John [F.] Kennedy. John Kennedy didn't exactly bring that out, but the underlying of his tone was—Jack Kennedy was talking about equitability and fair treatment of people and the importance of bringing about the common good in the United States. Jack Kennedy was the first to really start challenging both Democrats and Republicans, because, remember, the Democrats were really from the South. Yes, from the South, Democrats were from the South, and, see, he was challenging his own party on some of the social, the inequities. He spoke very eloquently, and one of the things

that I remember very clearly was John Kennedy saying, "If nonviolent revolution is not made possible, violent revolution becomes inevitable." So that was the coming of the sixties, really, when we challenged the United States in equality. We had it in the Constitution, but we weren't living it.

*ESPINO*

What did you learn from that first campaign then? I'm looking at it as a first campaign in the sense that it's something that was more organized and something that was more calculated, with other people involved. It sounds like—you said it was a diverse group of people throughout Los Angeles. So you weren't just meeting in East L.A. but you were probably meeting in some of these other places, like you have somebody from Beverly Hills who was working with you. How successful were you, first off?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, we were very successful because everyone knew in their hearts that it made sense, and everyone knew that we had really gotten away from slavery, but we really hadn't. In one sense, we spoke about that [Abraham] Lincoln really broke racial injustices, but we really weren't living it. We were still combating the same prejudices and the segregation of people in South Los Angeles and in East Los Angeles. We used to call the South L.A., we called it the ghetto, and in East Los Angeles we called it the barrio, and there was little difference between that. I guess my response to you would be that really anyone who has any sense would really automatically see that as—the reason why I think we really won or we made an impact in the sixties against racial discrimination, against cultural discrimination and division of people, was because we had a lot of white people, black people, Latino people working together. You look in the South, you had a lot of white people who really got involved with Martin Luther [King Jr.]. I saw that in Los Angeles. I saw that before the Civil Rights [Act] was passed. We were already doing some of that. And to tell you the truth, my experience in combating that really was looking at the Pachuco area here in Ventura County when I was a youth.

So, you're right, it just kept growing and growing and growing and becoming more sophisticated. The Rumford Act [aka Proposition 14] was one that, at least our opinion, the collective opinion of everyone, was that we needed to build integrated communities, communities where people of all races and income could come and live together.

*ESPINO*

There's an interesting element to that. Looking back, taking what has happened from those initial struggles of desegregating to today, and some people argue that, for example, African Americans were better off when they lived in their own communities and went to school separate from whites, that they didn't necessarily gain more from integration. Have you ever thought of those questions?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes, that's completely false. That is not true. And I'm still fighting that right here in Oxnard today. I'm fighting that. You look at the results, go look at South Los Angeles and you go and look at East Los Angeles. Is that better off? I mean, what has happened is that Latinos have become educated, very well educated and they don't stay there; they move out. I mean, that's a sign. You have black people owning homes in Beverly Hills. You have black people living in mansions in Malibu. You have Latinos. That is completely false. I argue that point. Do we have better schools in South Los Angeles? Do we have better schools in East Los Angeles? No, we don't. Why? Income, housing, integration with all of our neighbors and the spirit of getting ahead. I'm fighting right now for a SouthShore project here in Oxnard. This is to give you an example. I'm supporting it because it's an integrated development. You have rental, affordable housing, middle-class housing, and what's going to result from that? You have people who are renting, working and saving money to move to housing that they can afford, and then moving from there to the middle-class. Then after that, moving I don't know where. And yet we have some Latinos who argue for just affordable housing. Well, you know, I'm against that, because what you do when you do that is you create a barrio, you create a low-income area, you create a low-income ghetto, and I'm totally against that. We have another project that is similar to what I'm working on in SouthShore, is RiverPark. In RiverPark we have rental, we have affordable housing, and we have middle-class and we have upper middle-class, and then we have homes for executives. So when you have an integrated community, you shop together, you take the transportation, you're in a neighborhood where you want to have—if you did anything in those schools, those middle-class people would be right there in front, and the affordable housing would be there right there to argue for equity, for better education, teachers, better classrooms, better equipment. Anyone who says that a barrio or a ghetto would be better for blacks, I don't know what they're thinking about. Maybe they're thinking about self-politically strength rather than the common good, and I would argue that the common good has to dominate and that the integration of people has to dominate. We cannot be fighting each other. We fought that in the sixties. Why are people still—and you know what? I may as well tell you this. I get very annoyed by people still promoting the sixties, as though we were still living in the sixties and segregating people, still looking at the white person as being the target or the white person looking at the Latino as your—every time you get in to do this, you trash your house and you do this and you do that. The ghettoizing, barrioizing, I don't know what people are thinking of when they see that as—I think the common good, generally speaking, they want to get out of there. You go to Homeboy Industries and you talk to some of the gang members, they'll tell you that. "If I had a good job and all, I would move out of where I'm at, because it's a rat hole." They will tell you that. Go and talk to them.

We were just there a couple of weeks ago, and we were talking to some of the former gang members that Father Greg talks about, Gregory, Father Boyle talks about, and they were telling us that. Now they are faced with their children being introduced to drugs by the drug dealers in the schools, and being introduced to having tattoos. One of them had tattoos on his face and he had those removed, and he was telling us how painful it is. So he would like to move out of that rat hole. I have had women, when I was working in Harlem in New York City, I had—this is sort of vulgar and I don't know if you want to edit this out, but some people were still promoting welfare and welfare rights. "We need to get more welfare, we need to get more welfare." And some of the women would say, "We want to get out of this." And they said, "Our welfare, some of our welfare social workers don't really provide the support that we need." Then some of them would laugh and they would say, "Yeah, they're welfare pimps." They were selling them out to poverty.

You know, there are some who really—Alicia Escalante, for example, in welfare rights, I really admire her. She was a champion in fighting. But I proposed a different solution, and that is getting women to go to work and get off of welfare and move themselves into an economic base so that they could raise their children. Welfare rights was working for more welfare and they still are, but I lobbied and worked for changes in that law. It doesn't make any sense to trap a woman and her kids in a cycle of poverty, and this is what I see as wanting just to keep the barrio as it is or keep the ghetto, Harlem, as it is. That's crazy.

*ESPINO*

I didn't understand when you talked about integration as also—I thought you were speaking in terms only of race, but you're talking about communities. At that time of Prop 14, were you promoting communities of diverse economic means as well as race?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, of course. Well, housing is the core of that. Housing is the core. That's the core. When you live together and you work together, you grow up together and you learn the values and you see that in a middle-class community you can go to the show, you can go do this, you can do that, you can go to an opera, you can go to Los Angeles to watch a play, or you can go to Disneyland or whatever. And when you don't have the income or you live in a torn-up neighborhood, you spend most of your time fighting drugs, fighting gangs, fighting delinquent people, you know, and it perpetuates itself. Do poor people bring about different behavior? Not necessarily, but when you live in a low-income community, you don't have the opportunity or the resources to do what the middle-class or the affordable housing can do. When you own your home, you're going to take care of your house because it's yours. You're not going to allow your kid to make a hole in the wall because it's you who has to pay for it.

I mean, it goes together. You can't separate race or income or social concerns. It's all part of human life, and my feeling is unless we build socially, economically diverse communities, we're always going to have this battle. And I'll tell you, some people they feel that the only way that they can get elected is through having people segregated, and that's not true. Look at La Colonia in Oxnard.

*ESPINO*

Tell me about that.

*ANGUIANO*

The Colonia in Oxnard, many of the homes in Oxnard are owned by Mexican Americans or Mexicans, and they rent it to the lower income, and they don't want that to change. Why don't they want it to change? Because they're renters. And will they fix that house and bring it up to standard? They're not going to because their income. I call it revolution of saliva or whatever you want to call it, but we are all made in the image and likeness of God. All of us have talents, all of us have our dreams, our hopes, to be a firefighter, to be a policeman, to be a senator, to be a computer genius. All of us have dreams of a better life. Should I say all of us want to grow our talents and express our talents, be it in art, in music, in the marketplace, in education or whatever. And living in a ghetto where you spend most of your time going to get food stamps you stand in line—when I was working with women in welfare, helping them to move off of welfare, they spend most of their time going to—their trip to the doctor took a whole day because they had to wait, or going to food stamps, you'd have to stand in line. That doesn't happen anymore; it gets mailed to them. Or going to a dilapidated school. Income has a lot to do, but more important, the human spirit wants to grow, wants to express itself, wants to live a life of love, joy, expression, competition, of prayer. Not that everyone wants to become rich, rich, but most people want to live—like my niece, my niece could have a home in River Ridge, but she's not interested in money, money, money, and neither am I. I've worked for four presidents. Money has never been my motivating factor.

But it's funny, the people who many times promote living in a barrio are people who are making good money or political people who see that the only way they can get elected is—I don't know. Maybe I'm out of line in trying to judge.

*ESPINO*

But I think it's definitely still an issue, like you say. It's still an issue today. We haven't come that far that it's been resolved, and so people are still thinking because we still have the low performance in the schools and we still have segregated communities, even though the laws are different, but you still have certain people living in certain places. So it's still definitely something that—and I think your point of view is very interesting. Then I also want to get to—later on, I want to talk about your work with welfare

rights or with—I guess it wasn't welfare reform, but it was more like [unclear].

*ANGUIANO*

I want to say, before we go into that, that very little has changed. Things have changed, but not significantly where we have resolved integration, economic stability, diversity and all. We haven't gotten there, but we're striving for it. I will say that I am in the camp that really works for employment, better wages, a better education and a better way of living. I am for that. The way we do that is by building integrated communities. And if you want to really see an example of that, if that is true, just look at what happens when a farm worker's daughter finishes her education, she or he. They want to get their master's, they want to get their Ph.D.'s, and then they want to get the heck out of La Colonia.

*ESPINO*

That's interesting. What was the outcome of your campaign to defeat [unclear] ?

*ANGUIANO*

The courts decided that it was discriminatory and they moved it out, and that's why we have movement for integration in Los Angeles.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember that day when you first heard? How did you respond?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, one day I was working, as a nun, working in the campaign at Cleland House in East Los Angeles. The following week I was a layperson, dressed as I typically am, and what I remember about that experience is that my legs used to get cold. [laughs] Because, you know, the habit goes all the way and then you wear closed shoes and everything, so wearing a short skirt and all that was really something else. So I remember that very distinctly.

*ESPINO*

Did you enjoy those short skirts, though, or did you feel that [unclear] ?

*ANGUIANO*

My skirts were always knee-wise, my knee. I have never felt comfortable working— I was thirty when I left. Was I thirty? Yes. I have never felt—mini-skirts? Hey, I was thirty. What was I going to do wearing mini-skirts? And then my legs were cold. [laughs] I was glad when long skirts started to come out. But then in very hot days, I wore shorts.

What helped me was that I wasn't the only one. There were a lot of nuns, particularly the Immaculate Heart Sisters, they just took off their habit and were a scandal to Cardinal McIntyre. And Sister [Mary] Corita, she was an amazing person. Of course, she was a well-known artist both in the religious and in the entire state of California. So I had a lot of company, and then the priests also left. Many of them left. Some of them I'm still talking to them, who didn't leave. Father Juanito Romero, who went to my archives, and I communicate. Father Coffield died a couple of years ago. Some of the priests

are still—they're teaching and some of them are married, and some of the nuns also.

*ESPINO*

Well, after that campaign, what was your next move? How did you decide what you were going to do after that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I left Redlands, Queen of the Missions. I left Redlands, and my sister Rosie, whom I lived with, went for me, and her husband, and then I moved in with my dad, who lived in Saticoy. He has a grocery store and moved in Saticoy. Then, you know, there isn't much to do in Saticoy, so I decided to go to Los Angeles to look for employment. The first thing I did was I checked into Cal State L.A. and went to see about getting my master's degree, and took some courses at night because I saw that East Los Angeles, really, the gang issue was—so I took some classes in juvenile delinquency and I took some classes in sociology and social behavior, social action behavior—well, it was juvenile delinquency, sociology, and psychology.

Then I started to look for work. I would drive down. Instead of driving to Cal State L.A., I wanted to live close to the university. So I found a lady, a church woman, Mrs. Holman [phonetic], who lived close to City Terrace, and I rented a room from her. I got a job with the Youth Training and Employment Project in East Los Angeles. I got a job there as a counselor, and I started to work with dropouts, women and youth. I was pretty much familiar with that area because I had been a nun at Soto Street, so I was very familiar with the Hoyo gang and the Soto Street and Whittier area. I was very familiar with, had worked with youth and with people in that area. When I moved close to the university, close to City Terrace, then I started to look for a job in the Youth Training and Employment Project, and there I saw very similar—you know, the problems of youth getting into trouble and dropping out and the inequities of the schools. I had an opportunity because I also worked in Fetterly Street as a nun, in that convent, and that's where I used to teach the high school kids from Garfield High School. So I saw youth that really got into very serious trouble, and so I was trying to help them find jobs.

*ESPINO*

Not education?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, they dismissed them from education because they got into trouble or they dropped out of school. That still exists, where students are not received very favorably in the school districts and so the kids just drop out. It's not a friendly atmosphere for them, and then they're not wanted. I call it being pushed out of school, and that's still happening. Some of the homeboys from Father Boyle organization, that's happening to some of their kids also right now.

I started to develop GTE classes, and then started to work to really assist in getting better counseling for them, and at that time I was very successful because that was that was the time when aerospace industry was growing and there were a lot of jobs in Los Angeles. You still find some of the buildings of that in Huntington Park. You still see the buildings, but at that time there was just a booming of Rockwell, Northrop, a lot of a lot of jobs, and some of the employers would agree to take some of the young people if they would straighten out. I helped some of the young people to straighten out if they were really serious about getting a job. Some of them were lost to gangs. Cleland House had some programs where they had sports and other things that they helped for the kids.

*ESPINO*

Can you talk to me a little bit more about Cleland House? I've heard it mentioned many times, but some details, who was running it, what kind of facilities did they have.

*ANGUIANO*

It was really run by the National Council of Churches in the Los Angeles area. The National Council of Churches had various houses that they had, more like YMCA, YWCA, like the YWCA system. As a matter of fact, maybe that's where the YWCA really got its start-up. They had where they would have youth come and play basketball, baseball. I remember one of the teachers even did boxing and sports, and they would have some classes in GTE and counseling. So there was a lot of efforts on the part of a lot of the churches to get involved in keeping kids out of gangs and out of trouble, out of killing themselves, really. I was hired as a counselor in the Youth Training Employment Project in East Los Angeles to really work with employers to really get them to hire some of the young people. So the support of Cleland House, which is where the "No on 14" campaign was, so as a nun I was very familiar with that, and then also Catholic Charities. You know that Catholic Charities dealt a lot with food and clothing? I never really saw them really dealing with education. At least I don't remember them doing that.

*ESPINO*

Interesting. So when you were working for a War on Poverty Program after the—

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, yes. Well, yes, the Youth Training and Employment Project was a project of the Department of Labor. You know, to tell you the truth, I don't remember where—I knew the money came from the Department of Labor that the money came to the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, and they were supportive of Cleland House, of the National Council of Churches, and that this project was—so I don't know, because I remember during the Rumford Act, I don't think the Civil Rights [Act] had passed yet in the War on Poverty. [crosstalk]

*ESPINO*

I'll look at some dates, so we can see when the Civil Rights was passed in the sixties. [interruption]. Okay, we're back, and you were going to explain to me a little bit or explain to me your relationship with the Youth Training Employment Project, which I think was under the War on Poverty. If you could talk to me about what your experience was and the role that you played in that project.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, as I said before, I was a counselor and I worked with the youth that were dropouts. I counseled them in terms of getting a job and getting a GED. Cleland House had some GED programs and we also had some at the Youth Training Employment Project. You have to recall that that was a huge population. It was a large population. The students that dropped out of school in that time was higher than 50 percent, and so we had a large dropout population. So they were getting into gangs, they were just getting into jail, and a lot of deviant behavior, and I worked very hard to help them get into a job. At that time, the Youth Training Employment Project received money from the Department of Labor to do this, and so we had a lot of employers. As I was saying before, some of those buildings are still in Los Angeles. I used to have a cousin who lived in Huntington Park, and you go through the Alameda corridor, you see all of these buildings, and those were just brimming with jobs, the aerospace industry, the auto industry, working with parts, working with machineries and the aerospace industries, etc. So there were a lot, a lot of jobs. So we would channel some of the dropout students. Those who really had not gotten into drugs or into gangs, we would channel them in there, because, really, education did not serve the community well. They were dropping out in droves.

*ESPINO*

What kind of jobs were you thinking about? Were you thinking about job training or were you thinking about [unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

We helped them with their GED and then the employers—the assembly line, you know, unskilled labor. So many of those jobs were unskilled, unskilled labor. They're not in existence anymore. You don't have those kinds of jobs anymore. That's why you have so many of the empty buildings in East Los Angeles. Well, on the Alameda corridor you see all of those empty buildings.

*ESPINO*

Did you have a political ideology about this issue like you did with education and desegregation and those kinds of things?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it was part of that. I mean, I think that my whole education is about that. It's intertwined in a sense.

*ESPINO*

Well, how about the issue of putting them on the assembly line versus getting them some training?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it was training because they had to be trained to get into the assembly line. I mean, all jobs require—you have to learn. You have to know how to follow orders, you have to read the instructions, you have to be able to understand how you put parts together or how to weld, working in the manufacturing area and in the auto industry, etc. So employers, just like now, they do a lot of the training. You get a person who is motivated, very interested, you start from the bottom and you get training, and then you move up the ladder. So there were a lot of jobs, and so we were able to get—I think that if you would interview a lot of people in East Los Angeles that are middle-class, you would find that many of them started in the assembly line, in the aerospace industry, in the auto industry, when the United States, we weren't getting jobs to China or Japan, we were it, and so there were a lot of jobs here. So we really moved a lot of the dropouts to that.

Later on, as some of the workers started to get an income and started to move, get better housing and even buy a little house or whatever, they would go back to school, and that's the importance of a community colleges, because they would go back to East Los Angeles Community College and they would start getting an education and then start moving into better jobs. The one argument that I have in education is that they don't understand that people do a lot for themselves. They don't have to have a law or a guide or whatever. If you have an integrated neighborhood and you have jobs, people will go to—particularly the Latino, the Latino has always been a hard worker, particularly the Mexican. You know, you come here, they're the best workers. Everybody wants a Mexican to come and work for them because they're very good workers. We see that in Oxnard. We see that in Oxnard a lot. We have some cars that come in from the port, and you see the CEOs come and praise the Mexican worker because he's very industrious and all, and then some of them go to school at night to learn English, to learn whatever. That happened in East Los Angeles. We got them into a good job, to Northrop, Rockwell industries and into the auto industries, Chevy, where all of the parts were being made here in the United States, and they just moved up. Then the people would then go back to school, but some of them we would lose to the gangs and to drugs and to the jails, etc.

*ESPINO*

Well, I'm glad you brought that up because, in my mind, when you said assembly line, I thought sweatshop, I thought you said low skilled, I thought exploitation. What you just mentioned, you're talking about UAW [United Auto Workers], you're talking about the aerospace industry, those low-skilled jobs, but were you thinking about trying to get them into union jobs, was that an issue?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, all of those were union jobs, and then some of them got in either through training from the unions or others, and we would have to sometimes fight the unions to get the people hired.

*ESPINO*

Do you have a specific example of that, something that you can recall?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, for example, the ironworkers and the autoworkers, you know, being a former nun, I would just argue that, "Hey, this kid, they pushed them out of school and they need a job, and they just need to get—." And you have to remember that many of them were Latinos or blacks, and they would get them in one way or another. My brother used to work for MAOF, the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation. He had an office here in Oxnard. He worked with Dionicio Morales and Andres Herrera, who was a city councilman who used to work for Northrop, and so my brother would work to open up those jobs and get the kids in, and Andres, who worked with Northrop, would open the doors. Some of them were union and some of them were not. We just got them in one way or another, and it was Latino helping Latinos or blacks helping blacks. It was us really getting them into positions because they were unskilled but they were good-paying jobs, and they had an opportunity to get—the sweatshops, the sewing is a different story. Those are very, very different, because you had women working in the sweatshops. In the others, you had men. You had Latino males who would work the system to get people in.

*ESPINO*

Well, let's talk about that. That's another really important point. Did you have issues with gender, as far as trying to get women in some of these jobs, high-paying, low-skilled jobs?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. Very few women would be hired in the aerospace industries and in those jobs because they were mostly men. In some cases, you had to deal with sex situations, and that the girls were not very protective of themselves. So the women were not aware of sexual importance or the women's issue had not risen, had not gotten to that level of them understanding. Even though I tried to work with them because after—even in the GED classes you would find them coming together in a car kissing and just getting into a lot of deviant—or becoming pregnant, and then the women would have a child and they had to deal with them being pregnant, and what did you do? Well, you went on welfare. That's where it was a track in the poverty cycle. Once the women got into welfare, then their kids got into welfare. It was horrible. But some of the guys got away because they didn't have kids or they weren't responsible for the women that they got pregnant, and then the woman just wasn't aware or made aware. Even though I instilled with them a lot of protective issues and the responsibility that they had and the guys, it wasn't known publically, the pregnancy issue,

the issue of women's rights. Then you had very few women who even got in as nurses or—I mean, they got in as nurses, but you wouldn't have women that got in as attorneys, as doctors, as lawyers, fire people, police. You know, those were the high-end jobs for men.

*ESPINO*

Did you have some of the people that you worked with go into those high-end—well, they must have had to go to school for that.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I did. When I was a nun, I promoted some of the high school kids that came from Garfield. I had them get scholarships, helped them get scholarships and get into the universities, in Loyola or some of the other universities. Some of the priests would help raise some of the money to get some of the kids in. Most of the women at that time, what they looked for was being a secretary. Their ambition was dressing nice so that they could go and be a secretary, a receptionist, a clerk typist. For them, that was a big job. For the guys, it was working in these manufacturing industries. For the women, it was getting hired as a secretary, getting hired as a phone operator. In those days, we didn't have the technology that we have now, and so you had a lot of women really needing to learn to type and to answer the phone, and that was the skills or being a nurse's assistant, a whatever. A lot of the women got into some of those sweatshops when they couldn't get into being a secretary. But if they got a job in a bank, wow, that was big time.

*ESPINO*

So how did you counsel them? Was it one-on-one, group counseling, workshops? Can you explain the whole process?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, I had a lot of workshops, and I would talk to them and would tease them and then would play them, what I did as a nun. I pretty much did many of the things that I did as a sister, I did with them, and then brought in support from either the Cleland House, the social workers. And then really dealt with some of the men also, about the importance of a woman being respected. You have to remember that everybody knew that I was a nun, had been a nun, and so I had that level of respect from everyone.

Then I went to Cal State L.A. and was getting a degree, and so I learned more about the juvenile delinquency. I knew some of that because as a nun I used to visit some of the kids in jail.

*ESPINO*

You used to visit them in jail?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, visit them in jail, and so that was a big issue.

*ESPINO*

What was that like?

*ANGUIANO*

Visiting them in jail? Have you ever been to a jail?

*ESPINO*

Once, waiting in line. The only jail I've been to would be L.A. County Jail downtown. But when you would see these kids, what was that experience like for you?

*ANGUIANO*

It was terrible. It was just like being locked up, and seeing Youth Authority, and the Youth Authority, they saw that as being a glorified jail, but it was still being in jail, being locked up doing nothing, really. I worked in jail ministry also, and so I had an opportunity to visit some of the jails. And then even as a teenager, I visited one of my boyfriends who was in jail. He was a Pachuco, Tony Pillado. So visiting the jails and working with the jail mates, it was very hard for me because I was very nice-looking and the guys always wanted to gravitate to me, and as a nun, I would stay back, but without the habit, it was very hard. The guys would write to me, and I saw that I needed to support those who went into prison ministry and not get into—you know, the guys were just eager, the women were also eager to get out because they're locked up all day, and then they're guarded all day. What do you do when you get delinquent people together? You get more delinquency.

*ESPINO*

When you look at the whole picture of incarceration, and let's talk the 1960s, what did you take away from that experience, visiting some of these young people? 1:21:17.5

*ANGUIANO*

You know, our lord said, "I was in prison and you visited me. I was condemned to death and you spoke up for me." And so for me it was very horrible to see people locked up and to see their talents just die with them, and to see the discouragement of, "I'll never get out of here," or else, "I'll get out of here and this is a good way of living. At least I can eat three meals a day. So I'm going to go out and going to get back in." It's no way to live. Then some of them, they have the experience of maybe their dad being in jail or their mom being in jail, and they say, "Oh, my mom is in jail," or, "My dad is in jail." It was just like no big deal. That's what poverty does. You know, the people who talk to you about, "Wow, it would be great if we had a Harlem or we had another Watts or we had another East L.A. or another Colonia," anyone who really appreciates human dignity and all doesn't glorify poverty.

*ESPINO*

Well, I think the point that I was reiterating of what I've heard being said is that not so much that you replicate the poverty of the segregated communities, but you put people—like, for example, separating girls around the teenage years, around adolescent years, and putting them in all-girls' classrooms. They've done studies and it shows that girls perform better when they're on their own and they're not in a mixed-gender environment

because boys throw a whole different dynamic. So that's not really a class thing; it's more of a gender thing. So some people argue that African Americans in their own community would have control and self-determination and can focus on—that they are more successful than, for example, when they were bused out to white schools. So it's really complicated, and I guess that was more the point that I was trying to—  
*ANGUIANO*

Well, it's not complicated for me because it's segregation, and that's not normal, that's not how you live. You get a girl that goes only to girls' school and then you put them in when they go to college, it's not their normal way of living. We need to know how to work as an integrated community, both racially, sexually and all. I just don't believe in this separation. I don't believe in creating barrios. I don't believe in creating—it's not normal. It's not living in a community. It's really segregating a community. You have groups that do that in the United States. What do you call it, in Texas you have the people who just—

*ESPINO*

Communes, cults.

*ANGUIANO*

Communes, and then you have the cults and then you have the ones who wear bonnets and they are in a separate community.

*ESPINO*

Amish.

*ANGUIANO*

Amish, the Amish communities. I just don't believe in that, primarily because you're not integrated. We live in an integrated community, holistic community. A holistic community is one where you share, you learn, you get along, you see deviant behavior corrected together, and you are honest and truthful, you learn the common good for everyone. Just because I think that pot would be good for me, doesn't mean that it would be good for the community as a whole or things like that.

I think the main point that I'm trying to make is the common good, that the common good needs to drive what we do and what we say, what policies, laws should be established for the common good, and not because I'm black or because I'm Latino, because I'm a woman. I would do better if I'm segregated from a man. Well, I don't know if we want to have an all-woman city. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

That would come later in the seventies, that call for that separation. That's an interesting question, but we won't talk about that now. So before we end, I'd like to ask you what the instructions were that came from your employers, that came down from the government. Did you have any mandate, any instructions or any direction, or did you create your program on your own?

## *ANGUIANO*

Well, the Youth Training Employment Project was already created. It was created by the laws from the Department of Labor for training dropouts. It was a youth program and it was specifically aimed to help the youth that dropped out of school, and the whole goal was to get them into school, back to school, or get them into a job. Well, it was really job-related. The employers were very much involved in this also, because they needed workers, and so we prepared them for entry level, and then in the entry level then they grew into higher positions. In some instances, a lot of the employers would then pay for them to get additional training or else get them back to school. I think some of the high—should I say the employees that were really doing very well, they invested in getting them back to college because they saw the potential of them growing, because they saw that their company would grow in that. So the employers promoted and helped for the upward mobility.

I've always seen that it takes about a year for a person to stabilize, and many times I had that in the program that I developed. If they didn't fit in one job, you knew that within a month, and then you had counselors ready to put them into another job, and then if they didn't work out, you put them into another job. People have to be happy in their job and the employer has to be happy with them. It's like marriage. Either you're going to put up with each other or you're going to stay in that company, and it usually takes about three years and then you stabilize. I saw that they stabilized in employment within a year, within five years. Within five years, you saw the upward mobility. Then there were some who just wanted to stay in the job that they were in because they didn't want to move up the ladder because it meant more responsibility, and some of the women, particularly, had a responsibility with their kids, and it worked for them. The times that they worked for them so that they could take care of their kids. So it was a matter of flexibility and working with the government mandates, and then working with the employers and just making it all work, and I'm a firm believer in that because I saw it work very, very well, and I didn't believe in hammering down the guidelines. All guidelines seem to be very flexible because people are people and they're different. So you have to be very flexible. You can establish employment and things that you work with people. You have to understand this is the way it's going to be. You're doomed to failure because people are sort of different, very different, have different tastes, different goals, and then some want a higher education, some don't. Some want to stay in a company, some want to move. After a person is employed for a long time, they want to fulfill their dreams. Once a person is economically okay, they themselves will make decisions about what's best for them, either having children or not having children or whatever, but they're free. They have the liberty to do that.

## *ESPINO*

You were talking about the program you started later on that was focused on women.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, but it was a shoot-off of the Youth Training Employment Project, and then the things that I started with the Youth Training Employment Project were things that I learned as a nun, things that I did as a nun, things that I promoted, things that I worked for. It's all a continuance of my beliefs, what I saw as important and the value, valuing human beings and their talents, and opening the doors for them to be able to excel in what they wanted to do. I really believe that. I enjoy it when I see people just finding the niche that they want and growing it, because a job is just natural, it's part of what you enjoy doing, and I think that's when your talents are growing and you're manifesting yourself, you see the fruit of your labor, you're very happy.

*ESPINO*

How would you rate the success of that program? You were only there for about a year.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, it was very successful. It was very successful, and that led me to the Teen Post [phonetic] Program and that led me to other things. As a matter of fact, Phil Toya was my supervisor, and I think he's in New York City now making a bundle of money. [laughs] Phil Toya. About five years ago, he reached me and he says, "Lupe, you're still there?"

I said, "Yes, and you are up there in New York making money." [laughs] He says, "Yeah, that's the way to live." So I said, "More power to you."

*ESPINO*

So we'll leave it here. Then next time we'll talk about your next job with the Federation of Settlements and Neighbors.

*ANGUIANO*

The People's Program. [End of May 11, 2011 interview]

### **1.5. Session 5 (May 17, 2011)**

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is May 17, 2011. I'm interviewing Lupe Anguiano in the library in Oxnard, California, a beautiful library here.

*ANGUIANO*

It is.

*ESPINO*

It's a wonderful place. Let's start now with a really important event that occurred in 1965 and that had widespread impact, I think not only locally in Los Angeles, but nationally, and that is the Watts disturbances or riots, some people call it rebellion. Can you talk to me a little bit how if that impacted you and how it impacted you?

*ANGUIANO*

It made a tremendous impact. It was a very loud and clear statement of the racial discrimination that existed in Los Angeles. At that time, I was working as a counselor at the Youth Training Employment Program [YTEP] in East Los Angeles, working with students who were dropping out of school. They dropped out in droves, really, major droves. So my position, along with other counselors, was to help the youth, number one, get their GED, and, number two, get a job and just move forward, and to try, if it was possible, to get some of them back into school. There were very few, really, that we were able to really get back to school because at that time the State of California had a law that was passed called the Mental Retardation Law, Program. It was a program, and it passed the California legislature on the premise that Latino children were really illiterate. They could not speak very well and they had problems learning, and so there was some deficiency in their learning capacity. There was a lot of money that the California legislature provided for that program.

What happened as a result of that, many of the schools would have, for mentally retarded, they would have children doing baking or doing exercises and things like that, on the premise they could not learn. I was just appalled at that. I knew about that when I was a sister because I worked in Fetterly Street, which is very close to the Roybal Clinic now. I was very familiar with that because I taught children, youth, from Garfield High School and from some of the elementary schools, and so I knew that the problem was a very serious one, and I could see that some of them were relegated to mentally retarded programs. It was really a source of really strong opposition on the part of our community, and I remember really challenging some of those programs. The underlying factor was specifically that the teachers could not speak Spanish, and the children spoke Spanish. So the teachers, English speakers, could not understand the Spanish-speaking children. So they, according to them, could not learn, and so they relegated them into mentally retarded programs. It was perhaps one of the greatest source of discrimination I think that existed in the State of California, and it was passed by the legislature, promoted by the school administrators, and, of course, they were receiving a lot of money. So they were moving the children into baking, doing exercises, learning one thing or another, learning shop, learning how to deal with wood, etc., because, according to them, they could not learn. So I'm going to jump a little bit ahead of this story, because what happened when I was in the Office of Education, that was one of the first things that I did was really request that we examine those policies. But we'll get back to that later.

So this was going on in East Los Angeles in the Watts area. The black youth were also dropping out of school, but for a different reason. Well, it was also an issue of illiteracy, but the teachers were not really appreciating the culture of the black community, as they were not appreciating the culture, the language of the Latino community. The whole turmoil of housing,

separating communities was also happening at that time. So for very good reasons, people, communities were separated, they were segregated, and teachers were being prepared to teach English and they were English speakers, and very few black and Latino teachers even got into the teaching profession. I remember at that time also that there were rumblings of friction between the white community and the black community and also the Latino community and the white community. It was during that time also that Dr. Deluvina Hernández wrote [Mexican American Challenge to a] Sacred Cow. She was a sociologist from UCLA. She was studying for her doctorate, and she wrote [Mexican American Challenge to a] Sacred Cow, and in it she described the rejection of the Latino students' culture and language on the part of the teachers. One of these studies that she pinpointed was a study done by a sociologist at UCLA that—I'm not sure if this was the correct word, but it inferred that the children of Mexican American mothers, that the childrearing practices of Latina women caused mental retardation in their children, meaning that they adhered to a culture and a language that was really foreign and not up to par with the English language and culture of the United States. Deluvina Hernández really challenged that and called it a sacred cow. I remember that Deluvina became very, very popular in our community because she really challenged the mental retardation, the notion of rejecting the language and culture of Latino people. I'm not sure if in that study she also mentioned the rejection of the language and the culture of the black community, meaning that, at least what I read into that was that the childrearing practices in the ghettos and in the barrios were very deficient, and that the mothers really were not raising their children adequately, and therefore they were non-learners, and therefore this mental retardation program was used to enable the students to at least get a profession and get a job. So the academia was for the white, but the mental retardation program was really focused on—and there were some Latinos and some blacks who knew enough English, who really did not get trapped on that, but the larger population, over 50, 70 percent, 75 percent of Latinos and black students were [unclear]. So this friction existed. During that time when I was in the Youth Training Employment Project as a counselor, I took classes at Cal State L.A. dealing with juvenile delinquency and sociology, because you will recall I was a missionary sister and I dealt more in evangelizing and doing missionary work dealing with people, enabling them to survive in their community and developing leadership skills, the "observe, judge, and act." So I became familiar with UCLA because one of my teachers in juvenile delinquency was from UCLA. It was through that process that I also met a psychologist, a black psychologist at UCLA, who were trying to remedy the problem. UCLA had Ralph Guzman, who was the first Latino who did a study on the Latino population. I don't know. I hope his studies and his research has not been lost because that's very important. Is it still there?

*ESPINO*

It might be at UC Santa Cruz, where he taught and where he became an important administrator provost. He might have donated his papers there, but I'm going to find out.

*ANGUIANO*

No, he was a professor at UCLA.

*ESPINO*

Well, at the end of his life, he worked at UC Santa Cruz, Ralph Guzman.

*ANGUIANO*

In the beginning of his life he was at UCLA, and I know that he did the study also. Anyway, that's where I met Marcia Berman. She is a Jewish woman. She belongs to the American Jewish Committee. She was a very creative woman and very tuned into the social dynamics of the community, the racial discrimination. She also knew about the open housing, the Rumford Act. So she invited me to a program where Jewish women, Latina women, black women, Catholics, Protestant came together to talk about we were all the same and there was no discrimination between us, and that what we really needed to do is understand each other's language and culture and our religion, and that all of us were really equal in so many ways. So I participated in some of those, should I say, panels. We went from Beverly Hills to South L.A., to East L.A., and that's where I met Yvonne Brathwaite [Burke], who ran for supervisor of Los Angeles County. We talked to her and she was very eloquent, and we encouraged her to run for the Assembly, for the California Assembly, and eventually she did. What did we call that? We got together in panels and we spoke together in different panels.

Well, during that time the Watts Riots occurred, and it was just horrific because there was the beating of white people. I don't know if you recall in Watts they pulled out a white truck driver and they beat him up, and there was the burning of buildings.

*ESPINO*

Before you continue, are we talking about Rodney King?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, that was Rodney King.

*ESPINO*

Yeah.

*ANGUIANO*

But even before Rodney King, there was also the beating of white people.

*ESPINO*

In '65?

*ANGUIANO*

In '65. During the Watts Riots, a white person, even a Latino person couldn't go into the Watts. And, of course, there was burning of buildings and the crashing of windows, and some of that hostility started to come to East Los Angeles. Being involved in the Youth Training and Employment Project and

also with the UCLA psychology counselors and with Marcia Berman and this panel of women who were really trying to bring together unity, we came together at UCLA in workshops to see about how we were going to deal with this problem. We got together as whites, as blacks, as Latinos and all, and the ones who were leading some of the discussion were UCLA psychologists. I can't remember his name. But that's where I met Bill Williams, who was a USC [University of Southern California] professor of administration. He taught administration at USC, and he was also an assistant to Congressman [Augustus F.] Hawkins, and coming together to try to deal with disparity. I'll tell you, it was a very difficult situation because even though there were whites, Latinos, and blacks, just coming together and communicating with each other was hard also because we were experiencing discrimination ourselves. Everything was being thrown at the white, and the blacks were very resistant, rightfully, of the hostility and the discrimination against blacks and the separation in housing and in education and all. Then in the Latino also experiencing the same, but not as hostile as the black was or the white. As the Latino, I remember even being challenged by the black psychologist that I wasn't altogether also in racial equality, and I became very upset about that.

I remember Bill Williams, we came together in East Los Angeles because the Watts Riots and the friction was coming to East L.A. and inciting some of the gangs. Gangs were accustomed to come together and fighting, and with the gangs of South Los Angeles, that would have been just horrific. So I suggested in one of the meetings that we get some buses and that we bus the kids, both blacks, white, and Latino kids, get them away into camps, into recreation camps. I don't remember if that was Frazier Park had some recreation camps, and coming together and getting some sociology people to really assist the youth in dealing with their blackness, their Latinoness, the white, and helping them to come together. That's where I met Bill, and Bill was attracted to me and I didn't even know. I somewhat admired him because he used to come in with a bunch of books and really gave direction and really supported the idea that I had about it. What happened was that Cleland House received—National Council of Churches received some money, used some of their money to get some buses, and then bused the kids just out so that the Watts Riots just would not spread into Los Angeles.

But then it's very funny because he says that he saw me and he said, "I'm going to ask her out." He came to me and invited me to go out, and, of course, I said, "Yeah, of course." He says he was surprised that I acknowledged that, but I was very attracted to him from the standpoint of his leadership skills and the fact that he was a professor at USC, and just the way he conducted himself and spoke. Then he accepted a lot of my ideas, recommendations and all, and then we worked together with the white community also. So it was not easy, but out of the ashes of that turmoil we started some very serious communications as to what we needed to do.

During that time, Congressman [George] Brown and Congressman Hawkins—Congressman George Brown, not the father of the governor—communicated very well and they understood the divisions between the black and the Latino and the white. Congressman George Brown appreciated a lot of my leadership in terms of assisting the youth to get their GED and help them get into jobs, and diffuse a lot of the gang—I call it infestation, that was in the community and the gang violence that was in the community. So many times it was gang against gang, and it was horrible because confronting South Los Angeles was an even worse situation. So, anyway, it was during that time that President [Lyndon B.] Johnson, who was from Texas, called a White House conference to deal with the problems of Mexican Americans. Being from Texas, he saw the discrimination and he saw the problem. He also included delegates from Texas and also from California, from New Mexico, from Colorado. Johnson was a great spokesman. He really knew how to bring people together. He knew how to lobby and just make deals that would bring people together. So it was Congressman Brown that nominated me to be a delegate to that White House conference, and Ralph Guzman from UCLA was also invited. Phil Montez was also invited. Who else? There were about fifteen of us, maybe twenty, from California. From Texas, that's when I met Mr. Garcia from LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens], and then the G.I. Forum. Texas was better organized, I think, than we were in California because they had LULAC and they had already been fighting discrimination in education. They had already been combating discrimination against the Latino. So we came together. From New Mexico, I remember, sort of the airs of them being that they were Spaniards, they weren't Mexicans. I remember laughing at that. At that time I think [Joseph] Montoya was senator, Montoya from New Mexico, and from Colorado—I can't remember some of the delegates from Colorado. But to make a long story short, one of the first things that we presented to President Johnson was the issue of the mentally retarded issue, and that we needed the Office for Civil Rights. That was the first time the Office for Civil Rights was born, and we requested that an examination be made by Washington, by the Office of Civil Rights. Phil Montez was hired as the first Latino to head the region's Office for Civil Rights, and he was the one that really tackled the—and with the Office of Civil Rights really brought a lawsuit, and Chicanos in Los Angeles—I can't remember the law firm that Phil Montez worked with, but they were part of the group that went with us to Washington that fought the issue of the mental retardation.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember if you all met and decided to push that issue first? Who made that decision? When you think about how many issues you were facing, Mexican Americans at that time, how did you decide?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, as a caucus from California, we came together, and all of us knew the issue and we decided to tackle that issue. I'm not sure where the walkouts were, because I remember Phil Montez and the attorney and, I think, Ralph Guzman was also when we picketed Lincoln Heights School. Because we were really talking that we really needed Latino counselors and we really needed to do away with the mental retardation program. I remember Moctezuma Esparza was the president of the student body at Lincoln High School. I remember us picketing and then the teachers, the principal of the school, they didn't want us to picket the high school. I remember we requested that we speak to the student body. Why shouldn't the students speak? So Moctezuma was the president and he came in to speak with us, and he joined us in the picket line. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

Were you part, at that time, of the Mexican American Education Commission?

*ANGUIANO*

What I recall, because I would have to go back, what I recall was that we were very disappointed with the Mexican American Education Commission because that's when we elected the first board member to the Board of Education.

*ESPINO*

Dr. Julian Nava.

*ANGUIANO*

Right. We elected him. You reminded me about something that I left out, because there was the involvement of the open housing, there was the panel, there was the working against discrimination and there was also, as a result of the open housing issue, the Rumford Act, "No on 14," we came together and we also decided to put together a political arm. I was elected as the president of the Mexican American Women's Council. The guys came together and also put together a political army. We worked together. I don't know why we did a separate thing, but it was the Women's Council. The one who participated in that was the wife of the UAW—

*ESPINO*

Arce Torres?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. His [Esteban Torres] wife was involved. I'm not sure if she was elected as the vice president, but I know I was elected as the president of the Mexican American Women's Council. We were working to deal with the problem of the mental retardation program and the discrimination, the dropout rate, which was horrendous. Already some of us knew each other, because as a nun I had worked on the "No on 14" at Cleland House, and some of us had been working on that campaign and then it grew into a community action program. Fernando Peña, I remember, was a great spokesman. We used to get together when I was a nun and after I left East

Los Angeles. We came together and we elected [Julian] Nava. The Los Angeles Board of Education did something on us; they asked us to put together a caucus and for us to work together as a caucus, and then provide all of our grievances to Julian Nava. Then Nava would then take it to the board.

What happened was that then Julian got bombarded with all of the problems, and he was the only spokesman in the commission. It didn't turn out very well, and I became very disappointed. Many of us became very disappointed with Julian Nava because he really was not representing, he wasn't strong enough, but it was also our fault because we were talked into putting together this Mexican American Education Committee, and this Mexican American Education Committee never really resolved our problems. For me, I was disappointed because what happened, it was just a lot of complaints and nothing was done. Julian Nava was there and sometimes we could have just slapped him in the face because he really—but he was the only one in the Los Angeles Board of Education, who really didn't understand what we were saying anyway. They called us radicals, and it was an excuse not to listen to us. Julian did not—I was very disappointed because he should have known that we were caught in a bottleneck here, and that he should have integrated the whole issue and had us speak to the entire board, instead of just speaking to the Mexican American Education Committee, because the Mexican American Education Committee really got us nowhere. I mean, it was an organizing tool and people aired out their grievances, but it never really solved the problem. It is just like the issue of housing. We really need to integrate housing into Beverly Hills, into Hollywood, into North Hollywood, into the Valley everywhere, because the Valley then was really high, prestigious communities.

*ESPINO*

When you picketed then Lincoln High School, was it with the Mexican or was it with a different organization?

*ANGUIANO*

It was just those of us who came together as part of the East Los Angeles group that was fighting housing and was fighting the whole issue of discrimination and was fighting the whole issue of segregation. So we were coming together as that group. The "No on 14" nucleus of leaders, I started out as a nun and I ended up just being a community activist involved in all of these issues, the Youth Training and Employment Project and working against the mentally retarded program, against police brutality, against all this, and the caucus that we developed to put together a political arm. I don't know, have you interviewed [Esteban] Torres?

*ESPINO*

I'm currently interviewing the congressman, and I'm considering—I think it would be very valuable to interview Mrs. Arce Torres as well, because she was involved in this important organization. But I'm not sure if you're

conflating two organizations, the Congress of Mexican American Unity and the Mexican American Education Commission.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the Congress of Mexican American Unity came afterwards. The “No on 14” was like the beginning, the fighting against the mental retardation program.

And in Texas, what was happening in Texas was that Dr. [George] Sanchez was starting to develop bilingual education. He was in the University of Texas, and he was starting to develop the whole notion of bilingual education. Senator Ralph Yarborough was supporting that bill, but Henry B. Gonzalez from San Antonio didn’t get along with Senator Ralph Yarborough, because President Johnson wasn’t favorable to Ralph Yarborough. Ralph was a very—I don’t want to say liberal because I don’t consider—I hate those labels. I would consider him a very caring senator, a Democrat from Texas, and espousing bilingual education came from Dr. Sanchez from the University of Texas. That was going on, but what was going on in California was our battle against the mental retardation program and law that was forcing our kids, just in droves, to come out of school. It was an avenue of getting money and it was an avenue to discriminate and took kids out of the academic learning. To tell you the truth, very little has changed. In Oxnard, we’re still fighting that, because the teachers speak English. They don’t appreciate the culture, the language of the kids. So when there is not that understanding, there isn’t that comprehension of the person’s language and culture. So when we went to the White House, that’s when we learned. You know, we came with the mental retardation program and then we had heard about bilingual education, and we were starting to promote that also in California. When we came together at the White House, Vice President [Hubert H.] Humphrey [Jr.] chaired a lot of our meetings. I remember Hector Garcia, from LULAC [League of Latin American Cities] from Texas, and the gentleman from G.I. Forum speaking against the discrimination in education and the discrimination in housing, the discrimination by the Texas Rangers, who, in order for them to be installed, they had to have blood of a Mexican in their boot. So, that blatant discrimination.

Phil Montez spoke about the issue of the mental retardation. Ralph Guzman spoke of the study that he was doing at UCLA and the findings that he found in terms of discrimination and all. I think it was really the first study that was done of the Mexican American. I hope UCLA hasn’t thrown that away because, really, we used that at the White House Conference.

*ESPINO*

If you can tell me a little bit about the White House Conference and how long you were there and how they broke up the sessions, and, if you can recall, some of the categories that you talked about.

*ANGUIANO*

I believe there were probably—were there about sixty of us from the five—you know, there was a delegation from California; a delegation from Texas; a delegation from Colorado; a delegation from New Mexico; and a delegation from Colorado, the Southwest states. I don't remember us breaking up into groups. I think we addressed Vice President Humphrey. Vice President Humphrey chaired most of the meetings, most of the sessions. When I spoke, I spoke about the need for bilingual education, and I told them my experience as a nun and the discrimination that I experienced in Los Angeles, and the separation in education, the dropping-out. I suggested that we really look into bilingual education. But there were so many other topics, you know, in housing which—I can't remember who spoke. I know Ralph Guzman spoke of the study that he was doing at UCLA, and Phil Montez really recommended looking into this mentally retarded program as being discriminatory.

I was invited, it was when Vice President Humphrey, at the end of the session, came over to me and he said—no, he said it in public—he said, "You know so much about education. You need to come and work with us in Washington." I know Phil Montez was also invited to work in the Office for Civil Rights, and I was invited to work in the Department—at the time, the Department of Education was not a department; it worked with Health, Education and Welfare. It was the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. So I was invited to head the Mexican American unit in the Office of Education.

*ESPINO*

How did you feel about that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, I was a missionary sister and I was very accustomed to assuming responsibility, and the challenges were not anything that I considered as insurmountable. Then having the experience of really dealing with the problems in Los Angeles, the energy of trying to solve the problem, I could hardly wait to get my hands into really dealing with this problem, with this issue.

I don't know if the hearings that happened at that White House Conference are still archived. I'm sure they are in the [U.S.] Library of Congress. They have to be, or even in Lyndon B. Johnson's archives. They have to be someplace, what we said and what we did. But there were a lot of appointments that came of that. That's what I was appointed by, President Johnson.

*ESPINO*

Did you ever imagine yourself working in the White House? Growing up in Oxnard, did you ever see yourself—

*ANGUIANO*

You know, that's a very good question, because I never really felt inferior. I never felt like that it was beyond my capacity. I felt like this was a cup of

tea, I was able to deal with that problem, and I was ready to tackle the problem. I'll tell you, the one thing that is very important is the inner indignation that you have of a problem, and then when you're called to solve it, it's a great relief because you have an opportunity to deal with the problem. So, in my head, all I had was I seen the droves of kids dropping out of school, seeing them at the Youth Training and Employment Project, looking at them in gangs, my trying to get them into jobs, my working with employers to get the aerospace industry and a lot of the cars, because all of that was in the United States. Huntington Park, Alameda Street, you just go there and you see the buildings, and those were just bustling with jobs and employment, and that's where we really moved the young people, helped them get their GED and helped them to—and then, the employers did a lot of training themselves.

I think there was a lot of mobility, and my big concern was, I focused on two things and I'm expert in two things, in education and in employment. I know how to work with employers very well, and my goal is to get them a job, help them become self-sufficient. Get a job, make some money and buy a house and just get a good education, buy a house and get with your life. The one criticism that I have about our social policies in the United States is that they're very controlling. They have so many regulations and all, and they don't ever allow the freedom of a person to really—they don't provide the things that people need in order to get a job and get out.

*ESPINO*

Can you be more specific?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, for example, women. What women need is, if they're a single parent, they need a job. They need childcare. They need healthcare. They need transportation until they can get on their feet and move on with their lives. Their lives—we just need to get away from not trying to get them to do this, do that or follow this rule. I mean, in welfare, you spend your whole life being on line to get a handout, to get food stamps, to go to the clinic, to go to transportation. So they end up being a victim, being trapped in a cycle of poverty. That's the only criticism that I had about welfare rights. Welfare rights is good because women need social services, but it doesn't stop there. The core problem is the fact that you trap them. When the woman is a young, intelligent, healthy woman who would take a job anytime over having to stand in line to get food stamps, to get healthcare, to get whatever, and then to be a victim of the social welfare system that really impoverishes them, the cycle of poverty not only for them but for their kids also.

So, for me, education, get a good education, you get a good job and leave me alone. [laughs] I am going to do with my life what I want to, and the systems that we need to have functioning well is the education system that teaches you how to read, how to write, how to expand my talents, how to do

what it is I love to do, and just be creative in what I want to do. Then get a good job where I will grow, and within five years get into mainstream, buy a home, and then just be like everyone else. Just live my life as I see fit with me, my children, my culture, my language, my music, my art, whatever.

*ESPINO*

Did you notice that occurring with War on Poverty funds? Because War on Poverty funds, that was a social service program that you were involved in. Did you see problems with how that money was used?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the only problem that I found with the War on Poverty was that there were certain things that you could do and certain things that you couldn't do. For example, when I came back from Washington and resumed working in the Youth Training and Employment Project and at the same time was part of this coalition of people, Latinos who were moving to really deal with—and out of that a lot of other organizations were started, but I was tapped by the National Council of Churches to head a recreation program, which was the Teen Post Program. Being very familiar with Cleland House, being very familiar with George Brown with Hawkins. What was her name? IFCO (Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization) was the name of the National Council of Churches, Federation of Settlements Center, which was part of Cleland House. IFCO and Cleland House and the Settlement Center were the ones who applied for this grant. It was a recreation grant. I was hired as the executive director of the East Los Angeles program. The name of the poverty program was the Teen Post Program. The Teen Post Program was supposed to be an area of recreation and cultural enrichment, and we could organize Teen Post Programs throughout. I think I organized maybe about twenty-three or so in East Los Angeles. I, myself, developed a booklet that was called the Teen Post Program, and in it I advocated leadership development on the part of the youth. I hired David Lizarraga to be one of the Teen Post Program director, to head a Teen Post Program. I hired Bob Bulla, who is a psychiatrist right now or social psychology, he's still in practice, who was an expert from Cleland House who dealt with gangs. He and David were an excellent team, and they dealt with the gang, the Hoyo gang, the Lopez gang, and all that, and brought the youth into it.

*ESPINO*

Is that from the Maravilla Projects?

*ANGUIANO*

Part of that was—well, see here, you're getting into the Maravilla Projects, and I'm not sure the Maravilla Projects were built yet. But it was a result. David Lizarraga and Bob Bulla, who really started to get involved, that really got—maybe it was the Maravilla, because we really worked with the housing projects, and so maybe that's [unclear].

I hired Richard Alatorre to be a counselor, to be one of my counselors also, to work with me in the Administration Office to really train the Teen Post

Program directors. There's beautiful pictures in my archives of the Teen Post Program. There were others. What's his name who's in housing right now, was in housing? He went to Cal State L.A., who also was one of the directors. Anyway, I had twenty-three Teen Post Programs.

*ESPINO*

Twenty-three directors?

*ANGUIANO*

Twenty-three. I think it was twenty-three or more in East Los Angeles. Maravilla, [unclear], there were a lot of other—

*ESPINO*

Gloria Molina?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, Gloria Molina was not yet politically involved. She came after. She wasn't involved in any of this at all. Gloria Molina came from the Comisión Femenil, and that wasn't organized during this time.

*ESPINO*

I understood from Esteban Torres that she worked with youth in the Maravilla Projects before she went on. So this was before 1970 when Comisión was formed. So I'm just wondering if you crossed paths with her during that time.

*ANGUIANO*

No. You know, I don't recall. You know, you have to remember that it was a long time ago. But I would encourage you to look at my archives.

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

Because I created what they call a—having gone to Washington and having dealt with the White House Conference, I came and I started to talk to the directors, Teen Post directors, and also talked to the youth about learning to govern themselves, learning to govern their community. So in each Teen Post Program we organized a governor, two senators, we organized City Council members, and then I taught the kids to learn—well, I developed this. You will see it in this [unclear], and I was inspired doing this because of my experience going to Washington and seeing how government really works. So I started to develop that and train the youth, and had them elect their own City Council people, their own Assembly people, and had them organize their Teen Post Program and had them organize what they wanted to do. The governors were to look after the well-being of their Teen Post Program. Out of that, [Richard] Polanco was one of the Teen Post youth in East Los Angeles, and look at him. He went on to become an assemblyperson. Then Richard Alatorre became, I don't know, Assembly and all. When you look at that, you see Polanco and he still has the face, the smile. He really is a winner. He was a charmer. Everybody loved him. It was during that time that then one of the governors, Teen Post governor, they competed for this,

when Georg Brown, Congressman George Brown, asked Sargent Shriver to provide some opportunity for some of the Teen Post Program directors to go to Washington to be pages. So one of the governors went to Washington to be a page.

*ESPINO*

Do you remember the name?

*ANGUIANO*

It's in the archives. I can't remember his name, but he's pictured with Sargent Shriver, and Sargent Shriver welcomed him and all. So that was really very exciting because the youth learned a lot. Well, as a nun, I also taught them to observe, judge, and act, and to really study their situation and to really look into how others lived and to see the difference between what was happening in East Los Angeles, what was happening in Hollywood and what was happening in Beverly Hills and what was happening in North Hollywood. They just really needed to control their own lives. They needed to get a good education, they needed to get a good job, and then they needed to be leaders in their communities. This Teen Post Program, I used it as an education for government, to teach them to learn to become involved politically in there, because no one's going to do anything for you. I always told them, "Hey, no one's going to do anything for you. Don't expect to go to a meeting and cry about the problems, because you have to do it yourself. If you want something done, you need to roll up your sleeves and you need to do it yourself, and that's what you need to do. So that is my advice to you, that you, number one, get a good education, you be serious about getting a good job, and that you become a leader in your community, and that you start governing what happens to you. Nobody is going to give you—it doesn't come in a dish. It doesn't come out all organized for you. If somebody organizes for you, you're not going to like it because everybody organizes things according to their palate, their desires, their view. Hey, look at history. Look at where we are right now. Over 50 percent of us drop out of school." One of the things that happened that is very memorable of that time was that there was the gangs, the White House Fence gang and the Hoyo gang. You know, the Hoyo gang is really in Boyle Heights, and the White House Fence was more in the other east part of Los Angeles. There was a big gang of L.A., and I did not know it at that time, but I later found out that it was drug-related. They were fighting for turf. Bob Bulla and David Lizarraga came to me and they said, "You know, these kids are killing themselves. We have a suggestion if you will approve it. Why don't we have a boxing match between the two gangs, and have them come together." I said, "Wow." I said, "Well, you really better have that well organized, and not turn it into a—," because it's a very dangerous undertaking with the knives, with the pistols, with the guns and all. I said, "Well, I would feel better if we let the police know what we were doing", and we ask them to respect what we were doing, and that this was an effort that we had to

really—and, of course, the police sort of agreed. David and Bob Bulla were ready, because we went together to deal with this. Then the day happened, and, boy, I'm telling you, I was nervous as heck.

*ESPINO*

Were the kids into it? Were the gang kids into it?

*ANGUIANO*

They trusted David and they trusted Bob Bulla, and so, yeah, David Lizarraga. They agreed to have a boxing match. But the police broke their promise and they came in and they started to—and I interfered, and I almost got with the batons and all of that.

*ESPINO*

I don't understand. Did you make arrangements with them beforehand?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I told them about it and I told them that this was what was going to happen, and I did not want any interference. But I just don't know what triggered it. I'm really not sure. I think David Lizarraga and Bob Bulla would be better able to tell you about that. But I almost got killed at that, not by the youth, but by the police, who really were swinging batons, and I was trying to protect the kids. I just stood before them to protect the youth. So that was quite a deal.

*ESPINO*

Did anybody get hurt besides yourself?

*ANGUIANO*

I didn't exactly get brutalized, but it was a very unpleasant thing, really. It was very, very unpleasant situation.

*ESPINO*

When the kids were boxing, was that a calm—

*ANGUIANO*

It's at Cleland House, and Cleland House is a recreation center. In Cleland House, you have gang members that come. Bob Bulla and David Lizarraga, who worked with the gangs, knew those kids very well. So I wasn't the one that arranged it. I just gave permission, and then I did the—together because we didn't want it to get out of order, and we notified the police because we wanted to make sure, number one, that they knew and that they would respect our program, because we were in the Settlement Centers in our recreation project, we took the kids to a lot of cultural events and all. We were in touch with several departments, and the police were just one of them. The police, many times, would come to the Teen Post Program and play with the kids, play ball with the kids, and joked around with the kids. So it was not a standoffish, but why they decided—you know, when drugs are involved, you really never know.

*ESPINO*

Did it get out of control?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it got out of control. The police were—yeah. It got out of control because the police, I guess, suspected something. They came in and—  
*ESPINO*

It was in control before the police arrived, is that—  
*ANGUIANO*

Oh, it was controlled, yeah. David Lizarraga and Bob Bulla had it very well organized, and the boxing was going on very well. I don't know what triggered the police. But I became very furious and I complained left and right, and, boy, the police who were involved in that really got a good scolding. But we intended to work with the police, primarily because you need law enforcement with drugs. I would never try to resolve a drug situation, never. Those guys have guns and those guys have knives, and I don't know how to handle a gun and I don't know how to deal with law enforcement, the breaking of the law.

*ESPINO*

It sounds like a very innovative idea. Since it almost sounds like an experiment, trying something new, see how this works. Do you remember how David and—I forget the name of the other person.

*ANGUIANO*

Bob.

*ESPINO*

Bob. How did they respond to the police raid?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, for them it was the same response that I had because they worked also with the police and they invited the police to the Teen Post. All of us did. That was something that I encouraged, and we took the teens to a lot of different cultural events. So David Lizarraga and Bob Bulla would be the ones to tell you how that turned out.

*ESPINO*

Afterwards, did you have a campaign about—because you mentioned that you were also an advocate in opposition to police brutality. Did this become part of that?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yeah. Our complaints against police brutality were very well known, the community's efforts to work against police brutality. You had some of these policeman coming in, and if your face was brown and you were out in the park and seemed like you were just roaming around doing nothing, they were just very watchful. I think Father G. [Greg], Father Boyle, is still having that experience. He's still talking to the police. I was talking to the police. David Lizarraga spoke to the police. Bob Bulla spoke to the police. I think the chief of police that came from New York did a lot in Los Angeles because he taught them to be in communication with the community.

Then, later on, I don't know, you've heard of some of the corruption on the part of some of the police, taking the drugs and selling the drugs and all of

that. That was also, you know—and it's just like the little boys' network, the upper echelon to the police can't believe that some of the police are involved in criminal activity. Just like the pope and the cardinal sometimes can't believe that the priests are doing a lot of these sexual criminal activities. So it works the bureaucracy is—look at Wall Street. The White House hasn't put law enforcement on the casino type of dealing in Wall Street. The hedge funds are still ripping off our money. So we live in a simple world, and some are attracted to exploit.

*ESPINO*

Did you have any friends on the police force that you recall?

*ANGUIANO*

Grace, the only one that I—no. Because when I was working with César Chávez, I remember—after I left the convent, I also worked with César Chávez. I remember when I was picketing, I had agreed to civil disobedience and I would not let them unload the grapes in the Los Angeles produce, and then the police yanked me out. Then I think the police called, I think it was [Samuel W.] Yorty, who was the chief of police, and I think—

*ESPINO*

The mayor? Yorty was the chief of police at that time?

*ANGUIANO*

He was the chief of police. He was both chief of police and later on he—

*ESPINO*

Okay.

*ANGUIANO*

Evidently, they got orders not to arrest me because I had been a former nun and so this would cause a lot of scandal, and they didn't arrest me. I was very disappointed because I was ready to go to jail. I can't have Helen Chávez go to jail and me not go to jail. [laughs] But they wouldn't arrest me. How about that?

*ESPINO*

Did they arrest Helen Chávez?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, they arrested her in Delano. They didn't arrest César Chávez. All hell would have been loose, but they arrested Helen, was one of the—and I think Dolores White was also arrested.

*ESPINO*

How did you get involved in it? That was part of the grape boycott.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yeah, that was before, you know.

*ESPINO*

All your other activities.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah, when I left the convent. I used to help César. I used to support César before I left, and after I left I continued.

*ESPINO*

We still have about ten minutes. It's 11:37.

*ANGUIANO*

Eleven thirty-seven?

*ESPINO*

Do you want to stop then, now? Thank you.

*ANGUIANO*

You're very welcome.

*ESPINO*

We'll end it here. [End of May 17, 2011 interview]

### **1.6. Session 6 (June 21, 2011)**

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is June 21st [2011]. I'm interviewing Lupe Anguiano at the home of her sister in Oxnard, California.

*ANGUIANO*

That's right. Very good.

*ESPINO*

So you're just coming off a very important struggle here in Oxnard, and we're going to talk about that today. When we do the oral histories, it doesn't have to be exactly the chronology of your life, but what's important to you, what you're thinking about when I come to talk with you. So can you tell me a little bit about the struggle that you've been involved in?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, Virginia, it really is something because I have those scars, the wounds I'm still feeling, I still feel that in my stomach, and the scars of this eight-year battle that I have been involved in. I agreed to serve in the Advisory Committee of a housing project in South Oxnard. It is being built, was being built, by Hearthside Corporation. The name of the project is SouthShore, the SouthShore Development Project. The reason why I became involved is that South Oxnard is segregated from the rest of the community, from North Oxnard. I grew up, as you know, in Cabrillo, which was Limoneira, and then we moved to Saticoy. Then I lived with my sister and her husband in South Oxnard on M Street close to Channel Islands, and that is like the area we have a lot of relatives, a lot of friends who still live there. It has been the most neglected part of the community. You could call it a barrio; I call it a segregated community. Some people get offended because I call it, South Oxnard, is segregated from the rest of the community. You know, Virginia, I have been fighting integration all my life, and the whole issue is to build community, you have to integrate people, the low-income community, the people who can afford to buy a small house, and the middle-class community.

Pepperdine University did a study of Latinos in Ventura County, and we are the largest middle-class community. Latinos in this area are the large majority. There are many. I don't know if it's the majority, but a large number are middle-class Latinos, children of farm workers like I am. Well, my dad worked in the railroad and we also worked in the fields here in Oxnard, in Moorpark, in Piru, and here and also in San Jose. So it has always been a big, should I say, vision of mine that we needed to integrate South Oxnard. Because we lived there and now we live in North Oxnard, and I think I've made it to the top of the world. [laughs] Because I live close to River Ridge, I live about a mile and a half from the ocean. So it's a middle-class community, and so I feel like we've made it. But we have a lot of relatives and a lot of friends who still live in South Oxnard. So building that community has been a challenge. We have been to City Council many, many times, and many people have gone to the City Council and said, "You're ignoring South Oxnard." We've had beautiful development housing in RiverPark, River Ridge, the housing, the California Cove that is close to us. In what was La Colonia, we have Camino del Sol really developing. My nephew and my niece have a home now in what used to be La Colonia. It isn't fully integrated but it's getting there. Beautiful homes are being built there. What has not happened is South Oxnard, and what has happened—I really wanted to take you to visit the area because I wanted you to see how industrialized it is becoming. What the City of Oxnard does is they do infields, and infields to me is like creating a small barrio or if you have only affordable or low-income housing, you squash people in. You have I call it bird-cage housing, where you have a lot of people sort of impacted but there's no parks. You go there and you see the children watching television because there isn't a park. I think we've done a good job in building farm worker housing. Cabrillo has done a great job in building farm worker housing and that is good.

What I'm arguing is that we have a lot of Latino middle class who, when they get their master's or they get their Ph.D., they move out of Oxnard because the only place they have to have is to come to North Oxnard, and a lot of that is impacted, and so they move elsewhere. So my thought eight years ago when I started working with the SouthShore Project—and I want to give you a copy of the South Project—is that it be an integrated project. We started eight years ago, and the idea that I, as an Advisory Committee—I wasn't the only Advisory Committee member there. Dr. Lydia Ledesma, who used to be the former president of Oxnard College, belongs to that Advisory Committee. What I was advocating was to have a diversified community so that we have rental housing, we have affordable housing, and then we have middle-class housing, so that we create a neighborhood where people in rental can see that they could save their money and then save money to buy an affordable housing. Then the affordable housing, then they can buy a middle-class housing, a beautiful housing, and that it be available

to them. It is a big project. It would be 1,500 homes. It would have about seventeen parks. It would have like a river, where it would have for aesthetic purposes a water along that. It would have housing for elderly and all. In other words, my view of this and what I was working for would be to build a community, to build an integrated community, and to build it in a beautiful place.

So where is it being built? I want to take you to see that. It's being built in Ocean View School District community, and I call it La Vista del Mar. That's what I call it. I call it La Vista del Mar because it is a mile and a half from Ormond Beach, which we are trying to preserve to restore the wetlands and be a protective area for the snowy plover, the terns, and the birds, and the ocean, to have that and then the dunes, the sand dunes. The snowy plover and the tern are birds that nest on the sand. That's where they nest. So you need to protect them because they come and they lay their little eggs on the sand, and then you have people or dogs that would trample them. So you have to have that protected during the nesting area, and also the terns. So they nest in the sand and they feed out of the ocean. You see the little snowy plovers and all there. They're always in the ocean. They wait for the wave, and then they run after because they get the little crabs, the tiny little crabs and all. So they feed from the ocean. SouthShore is a mile and a half, and it doesn't have any sand. It's a housing, and it is part of the Ocean View School District. Well, people argue, and the city made the mistake of the EIR [Environmental Impact Report] placing that with the Ormond Beach. I argued against that because I knew that that would confuse the people. It would confuse the people from—Ormond Beach is here, the ocean and all, and a mile and a half away you have Hueneme Road, and north of Hueneme Road you have SouthShore, that then would be an integrated community. So the argument that the Sierra Club had was that the people living in SouthShore would go and trample on the eggs and all, but SouthShore in the plan is for a ranger to protect, to be there twenty-four hours. A park ranger to protect the land and then the people living in SouthShore would be assessed tax-wise a total of 190,000, the homeowners, 190,000 a year to pay for the ranger and the protection of the wetlands. So, number one, I belong to the Ormond Beach Task Force that's working to restore the wetlands, and I'm also a member of SouthShore. So that's where the controversy came. We've been doing this for eight years.

*ESPINO*

Can you back up just a teeny bit, and tell me how you got involved in it eight years ago? What brought you to that group? Because when you show me this plan, it's incredibly developed. This is the last stages, isn't it?

*ANGUIANO*

It is. Eight years.

*ESPINO*

So what were the beginning stages?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the beginning, the beginning stages was I saw in the city, because I was very much involved with the city, the development of RiverPark, which is north of here, large development community. So I said, "Why are you building a huge development there? Why don't you do that in South Oxnard?" That was the big question. Then there was a major development across the street from here, from our vineyard, across the street of California Gold. I saw that and I said, "When are you going to do something about South Oxnard?" Then I saw the very beautiful development of Seabridge, which is west of Victoria, which is a beautiful development. "When are you going to do something about South Oxnard?" Meanwhile, they were allowing industrial projects that came to the city, and guess where they put them? In South Oxnard.

*ESPINO*

Some people would consider that environmental racism.

*ANGUIANO*

That's it. Thank you, Virginia. You get an A. [laughs] You get an A. You get an A. You get an A, Virginia. You got it! You got it! You have to come and talk to the Sierra Club and call it environmental racism. That's a beautiful term.

*ESPINO*

Well, it reminds me of when they tried to put a prison in East Los Angeles, and the Mothers of East L.A. and Gloria Molina managed to keep it out.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah. Absolutely. Exactly. I wanted to show you, because there's a lot of industrialization of South Oxnard. So we finally, people in South Oxnard, in the Sierra Club said, "Oh, well, well. It's going to be okay. It's going to be okay." No, it's not going to be okay. They didn't fight it, but when it came to being approved in the Planning Commission, they started to attack. The worst part of that was that CAUSE [Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy] that's supposed to be a Latino-run organization, they put an organizer to work against me and against the project. So they would tell lies. They said it was going to be—what do they call it? Rich housing and housing for this, and they were going to trample the birds, and it was going to do this and that, and here they weren't even in existence. When they started their organizing, they weren't even here when we were working on this. I was very much supporting CAUSE because they helped us with LNG [Liquefied Natural Gas], fighting the liquefied natural gas project. But then they started to turn on me, and some of the lies that they said were, number one, they said that the reason why I was in this was because I was being paid by the developers, and that's a lie. Then when publically I wrote a letter to the editor and I said I am not getting paid—

*ESPINO*

You were a volunteer?

*ANGUIANO*

I'm a volunteer, unpaid volunteer for eight years, been working on this. So then some people in the Sierra Club and the Democratic Party came together and they did a resolution against, and guess what they said.

*ESPINO*

Do you want to read it to me?

*ANGUIANO*

"Miss Lupe A has been one of the most active and forceful lobbyists of the SouthShore Project. Why? There is numerous claims that's by the Sierra Club, the Democratic Party, and CAUSE, the Latino group, that she and/or her Stewards of the Earth, a nonprofit group, are being funded directly or indirectly by those close to the developers. Recently, Miss Anguiano claimed in the [Ventura County] Star she wasn't receiving any money from the developer. If this is true, we challenge her to swear, sign, and notarize oath under the penalties of perjury that she and her Stewards of the Earth organization has not and are not receiving any compensation in any form, manner from the developer or any association within the investors or the developers. Question. (A), are you a registered California lobbyist?" And then they threatened me. This is what a lobbyist should do. You know what? Stewards of the Earth hasn't received any money for four years. I live on Social Security. My sister claims me as a dependent first. Now, what do you think of that?

*ESPINO*

That must have been so painful for you.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it still is. This morning before this interview I prayed that I wouldn't break down, but look at me. Because when people lie, when you're really in the—the last week of every month I have a hard time even having enough to go buy some food, and somebody's claiming that I am being paid. I mean, what an injustice. The worst thing that you could do to a reputation of anyone is to destroy their dignity or say lies about them. The City Council—we got it through, and then the thing that I did was I really organized a big thing against this group. What I did—let me show you what I did. David Cruz used to be an NBC anchor and he's here now, and he works with—he has a program with Radio Lazer. So I invited him and I invited David Rodriguez, the head of LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens], and I invited Irma Lopez, who is the wife of former Mayor Manny Lopez, who knows our family from many years, and I took them on a tour of SouthShore. I showed them, and David Cruz was so upset and he saw what was happening. So he did a video and he took the video to show the mile and a half. Then he went and he interviewed the neighbors of SouthShore, and they said—I'm going to send you a copy of that video.

*ESPINO*

I'd like to see it, yes.

*ANGUIANO*

Because the people said, "South Oxnard is forgotten. The City Council just doesn't care about us. We are a people just forgotten. They haven't done anything for South Oxnard." And some of the businesses came forward and they said, "Here we have our little restaurants. No one comes here to eat, and we need people, we need customers."

So we said, "Well, we need a bank. We need a store." Some of the people who live there, "We need a store." I said, "Snowy plovers don't go and shop for food in the store. Snowy plovers don't open bank accounts. You need people. You need people who are an integrated community. Who's going to take care of [unclear]? And don't tell me that people who live close, going to be a mile and a half, are not going to take care of Ormond Beach, because they're going to be paying for it. They're going to be paying for a ranger to take care of that." So we won. Carmen Ramirez, who's a Latina, and everybody thinks of her as a—she is very good, but she's with the Sierra Club. She's against the project also because she doesn't understand integration. She's never fought for integration. She's been an attorney and fought for low-income families, but she doesn't have the experience of working in the sixties, really struggling to build integrated communities. So she voted against it, and so did Tim Flynn. But the mayor, who has seen us work for eight years on this project, supported it. I visited Dr.—who is the black woman, the black City Council woman? Dr. Pinkard, Dr. Irene Pinkard, who has experienced racism and who has experienced the lack of integration and living in a segregated community. I met with her, and she just—I didn't have to talk to her very much. She understood right away. She has been living in South Oxnard. That's where the blacks live also. So they've been fighting for integration also. So she understood. And then Councilman Bryan MacDonald also. So the three of them voted for it and the two. But now the Sierra Club wants to take a referendum, go around and do a referendum to defeat the project.

*ESPINO*

They have a lot of money, don't they, the Sierra Club?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the Sierra Club is—I don't know. They have a large membership and they have members that really see the housing. But I talked to their counsel and I said, "Look." I told them what you said. "Are you working against integration? You want to segregate Latinos? Is that what you want? Is that what you're working for? Is that what the Environmental Law Center stands for? Carmen Ramirez, is that what you stand for? You say you're a champion of the Latino community, and you're working against integration, the improvement of South Oxnard?" Then they said, "Well, we could have infields," and I'm totally against infields.

*ESPINO*

Explain to me what that is. I don't know.

*ANGUIANO*

For example, if you have a piece of land and you don't know what to do with it or maybe it's between an industrial business, you go in and you build housing there, but what you do is you build either what I call bird-cage housing, or you build it without any parks because there's no room for parks, and you build it where it's segregated. So, for me, in ten years that's going to be a ghetto because you have people who are going to live there and they're going to move. As soon as their kids get ready, they're going to buy a house elsewhere. But who wants to live in between two industrial parks or two industrial centers? So that is the battle.

But now the good news is that now this was approved, and my Advisory Committee responsibility has ended, and I'm just moving on. I'm moving on.

*ESPINO*

Do you feel defeated?

*ANGUIANO*

No. I feel that we won a victory because the City Council approved it, and I feel that the project is going to go through. But I'm leaving it to David Cruz, who wants to take it on.

*ESPINO*

He does? Had he been involved before?

*ANGUIANO*

No. He just got involved when I showed him.

*ESPINO*

Two weeks ago?

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah. So he's great and I admire him, because I worked with him in San Antonio. His plan is to organize the people, the business community, the little businesses in South Oxnard, and then to work with the community to continue their voices, "We want a better Oxnard," and to start developing with the small businesses. He's going to get paid. Now, he is going to get paid. I wasn't paid.

*ESPINO*

From who?

*ANGUIANO*

From the SouthShore. He's going to get paid.

*ESPINO*

So all the meetings that you attended, the Advisory Committee—

*ANGUIANO*

Eight years.

*ESPINO*

—not one cent?

*ANGUIANO*

Not a cent. Not a cent. If you want to call giving me lunch when we had Advisory Committee meetings, we had lunch, do you call that lobbying? Dinner? Do you want to call that? None of us were paid.

*ESPINO*

How many of you were on this committee?

*ANGUIANO*

There was about twelve, fifteen of us. There was a black minister, Bishop Higgins.

*ESPINO*

So when you challenged the Sierra Club about their unwillingness to see this diversified housing project being built because it's essentially anti-Latino, what did they respond to you?

*ANGUIANO*

That it would ruin the Ormond Beach. It would destroy Ormond Beach. They didn't budge from that. There was no way they would budge.

*ESPINO*

Do you think that if there were white folks moving in there, it would have played out differently?

*ANGUIANO*

I really—I don't know. Maybe the white folks would have talked the Sierra Club into seeing that they were not going to trample on the thing. But that's no different from Latinos. Latinos love the environment, and the homeowners are going to be paying for this. There's no way that they're going to allow that. It's just like telling me, who am an environmentalist, that I was not going to take care of SouthShore. So let me tell you what I did. I resigned from the Ormond Beach Task Force. I resigned from the Ormond Beach Task Force.

*ESPINO*

And that's the first group that you got involved in back eight years ago? Was it this Ormond Beach Task Force or did you help form that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I didn't help form it. I became involved with them probably eight years ago because I'm very interested in the restoration of the wetlands. You know why I'm interested? Because when I was a kid, we used to go and sleep there in the beaches, beautiful beaches, clean water. There were no oil rigs out there. We used to go grunion hunting, and those times we were able to build little fires, and have hot dogs and have marshmallows, and wait for the grunions to come and we would sleep there, our whole family, and so I love the ocean. I love the beach, and that's why I joined, because I wanted the restoration of the wetlands. I wanted the restoration of Ormond Beach, that's why. But when they started to attack me, then I said I don't—let me read you the note. This is Peter Brand, who is the head of the Coastal Conservancy. "Peter, a brief note to notify you that I am withdrawing from the Ormond Beach Task Force effective May 20th, 2011. I see that my

comments and points of view are not respected, as expressed by your comments and lack of respect for what I have to say and my activities in support of Ormond Beach. Your negative remarks and lack of respect for Oxnard is a sign that I will not be helpful to you in your work as a state employee of the Coastal Conservancy and the restoration of Ormond Beach. Please remove my name from the list and from future notices and communications.”

I’m still going to help the city and Kathy Long and Supervisor Zaragoza, but I’m not going to go to those meetings. Because I presented the arguments about a mile and a half and all the things that I mentioned here in my [unclear], and he was very disrespectful to me.

*ESPINO*

Who is he?

*ANGUIANO*

He is the head of the Coastal Conservancy. It’s a state agency, California State Coastal Conservancy.

*ESPINO*

So he works—

*ANGUIANO*

He’s a paid employee.

*ESPINO*

He’s a paid employee for the Coastal Conservancy.

*ANGUIANO*

Ormond Beach is one of their projects, of many. But he spends more time in other projects, I think. We have been asking him for a plan for Ormond Beach. For years, I’ve been asking for that plan, and he hasn’t produced it. But I think he just wants—I don’t know what he wants. But anyway, I’m not going to take any insults from him or anyone else. So I removed myself from that, and I left. My term in the Advisory Committee was victorious. We got the approval of the City Council, and now I’m moving to other things. I think David Cruz is going to do a phenomenal job. He’s organizing the business people, he’s going to continue. You’ll see it. I’m going to send you a copy of the hearing of the City Council.

*ESPINO*

He filmed the whole thing?

*ANGUIANO*

He just did three minutes, showing how far SouthShore was from Ormond Beach, and then he interviewed community people from South Oxnard, who said, “The City of Oxnard has neglected our community.”

*ESPINO*

Can you tell me a little bit more about the group CAUSE [Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy]? What does it stand for, and why did they align themselves with the environmental group? Not that you weren’t an environmental group, because you are an environmental group.

## ANGUIANO

Yes, Stewards of the Earth. I spent 80 percent of my time working on environment, clean air. If you see all of my postings in Facebook, 80 percent is really dealing with protecting. Right now we're really battling the Congress for the Clean Air Act. The Clean Air Act is very important to us because that law helped us win, was key to winning the battle against BHP Billiton, the LNG, the liquefied natural gas project that was going to be installed close to Oxnard. But the Congress wants to dismantle it because Republicans want to drill, and they want to bring liquefied natural gas, which methane is the most explosive. So you saw in Saint Bruno [California] how that exploded. So they wanted to put thirty-two-inch pipes coming from close to Anacapa, San Miguel Island, coming through, and then moving it through some of our housing under the freeway and over to additional housing. Methane would just be accidents who happen. They say, "Oh, it wouldn't happen, it wouldn't happen." Well, look at Saint Bruno. There's been a lot of explosions since we won that battle. CAUSE is an organization that started by working to improve the wages of people who were working in the homecare industry, to improve their wages. They started by that, and they did a very good job because they really improved the wages of the homecare providers, which many are Latino, black minorities, mostly Latino. The next project that they did was they fought against the building of Wal-Mart in Ventura, and they didn't win that battle. Then the other project that they did was starting to deal with healthcare, and they started to work with small healthcare providers. Then when LNG came, a couple of months before the last hearing that we had with the State Lands Commission, Pedro Nava's wife, Susan Jordan, gave them some money to organize, to bring people in to really persuade the State Commission from approving the LNG. Well, the Sierra Club worked on that, I worked on that, CAUSE worked on that, and they really did a good job in bringing—the problem was that they took all the credit and they publicized it and all. I was working with them and I really appreciated them and I really supported them, because even though they came in at the last minute, they really helped to really win, to bring a lot of people. But then CAUSE used the Saul Alinsky method. The Saul Alinsky method is you really organize people to really be confrontational. So they had a training program here in Oxnard, where one of their trainers from Chicago came in to train them. I knew some of their organizers. But anyway, so in the training program they asked me to invite the mayor of Oxnard and Lois Capps to come to a meeting to really challenge them about cleaning up Halaco. Well, I had been involved in Halaco with the Ormond Beach Task Force before CAUSE, and we had already gotten the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] to approve. EPA already approved the cleaning of the Halaco. But they decided to use that as a training tool. So me, dumb me, I had EPA meet with them because I was going to a meeting in Moorpark College. So a person from EPA, who hired a

Latino from Oxnard—and I made the mistake of having CAUSE meet with them—they chewed him out as though he was responsible for Halaco, and he was just beginning in his job. We had already won approval by EPA that they were going to clean that up. Poor kid. They chewed him out as though he was—Gloria Roman and Bill Terry, they took him on as though he was the bad guy and chewed him out. And here I asked them to sort of represent me and work with him to organize the community for the cleanup. So they destroyed that. A young Latino from Oxnard, they destroyed his career. So EPA moved him to another position, and then they had a Puerto Rican take over his position. It was horrible. I was devastated, because here this young Chicano from Oxnard, lived in the projects, Colonia. It was horrible. Then, worse than that, I talked Kathy Long, Lois Capps, the congresswoman, the mayor to go and be part of this training where they could discuss what they were going to do. The mayor had already told me that he was going to put the Oxnard lobbyists to work in Washington to make sure that EPA would clean up Halaco. Well, when the mayor got up to speak, they wouldn't let him speak. Gloria Roman, the vice president of CAUSE, she didn't want Mayor Holden to be elected, so she would not let him speak. She shut him down. Very horrible. Then John Zaragoza was running for supervisor, and he was trying to defeat John Flynn. I was working against John Flynn. I wanted John Zaragoza to be the supervisor, because we haven't had a Latino supervisor for a hundred years. She wouldn't let John Zaragoza speak. She had John Flynn, who doesn't even have anything to do with that part of Oxnard. She would not. I was fit to be tied. I felt like I was used, like I was used.

The mayor called me, and I said, "Ah." I heard about it. It was in the newspaper, all over. So I went so see the president of CAUSE, Vargas, Marcos Vargas, and Marisela Morales, who's the vice president. I said, "How could you do this to me?" They said, as though it was nothing, "Well, you know how grassroots people are." I said, "But you set me up. I was designated to invite the mayor. Why did you do that to me? I support the mayor. I support John Zaragoza. Why?" Then Das Williams was at that meeting, and he didn't do anything about it. Neither did—I think Marisela was there. I'm not sure. They said, "Well, we support our employees." I said, "I want you to eliminate my name from your CAUSE Advisory Committee. I don't want to hear from you anymore." I worked with César Chávez in the Saul Alinsky, but everything we did was honest and truthful. César always respected elected officials, and he would try to win them over in a respectful way. "But you just dishonored both yourself and you drag me into this, you embarrass me, and I don't know what I'm going to do to recuperate. I was used by you." They said, "Well, we stand by the employees." I almost had a heart attack, you know, and I felt this huge pain, and I walked out and I said, "I never want to have anything to do with CAUSE. I don't want to have anything to do with you."

*ESPINO*

Are they union? Are they [unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, no. They're nonprofits.

*ESPINO*

They're nonprofit? So grants or—

*ANGUIANO*

I helped them. I talked to some of those grant makers to fund them, even some of my friends.

*ESPINO*

What is their purpose? What's their goal?

*ANGUIANO*

Organizing. But you see what they did to me in the SouthShore? You call that ethical? You call that honest? You call that integrity? I mean, working against a project that's going to serve an integrated housing for a segregated community, working against that, what do you think of that? You be the judge. What do you think of that organization that does that? When I was at UCLA, Devra [Weber] was there, and she says, "Oh, I know Carmen." I said, "Oh, my God." [laughs] "Oh, my God." "I know Das Williams." "¡Dios mío!" Das Williams lied against Susan Jordan. Susan Jordan was the lady who helped us win the LNG battle, and he lied. Das Williams, who won the assemblyman, he lied that he had her with a cup of wine with BHP Billiton from LNG.

*ESPINO*

In his propaganda?

*ANGUIANO*

That is a horrible lie. I'm so sick of it. I mean, do you think CAUSE is—I call them the lost cause. They were at a breakfast meeting in BJ's [phonetic] and Marisela [Morales] was there and so was [unclear] Garcia, the organizer for CAUSE, and I went and I said, "Oh, CAUSE, the lost cause." So they brought that up at the board meeting when they talked about this, the SouthShore, because their board of directors were, "What are you guys doing?"

They said, "Well, she called us the lost cause." Then they came back and said, "Did you really call—?" I said, "Yeah. You know, they are a lost cause. I don't know who's funding them." Well, I do know what company was funding them. But it is difficult, it is very hard to work in Oxnard. To improve the quality of life of people in Oxnard is very hard because you have a lot of negativity. When an organization like CAUSE, who is supposed to be supporting all people, does stupid things like this, it is unforgivable. I don't know what you call it. But I'm recuperating from my wounds, psychologically, physically. This morning I didn't think I was going to make it to have the interview with you. I went to Mass at 6:30 in the morning, and asked our lord, "Give me strength, lord," because I really need it. But I left the Ormond Beach Task Force. I did my job with SouthShore, and I'm

leaving it in very good hands, and I think David Cruz is going to do a good job. He's going to do a good job with Ormond Beach, and he is going to be paid. He's going to get paid. [laughs] But it was a choice that I made.

*ESPINO*

Did they offer you money? Did they offer to pay you?

*ANGUIANO*

No.

*ESPINO*

They never did?

*ANGUIANO*

They never did, and I didn't ask for it. Should I have asked for it? No. This is what Sierra Club—

*ESPINO*

Right. Divisive, sounds divisive. Do you have a sense of why—

*ANGUIANO*

And LULAC came to my support. Vista del Mar. I call SouthShore La Vista del Mar. LULAC came to my support, and this is Maria Elena Gatian is David Cruz's wife, and she's got her doctorate from UCSB [University of California, Santa Barbara]. They're going to tackle her? Good luck, guys. I'm out of it, out of it, out of it, out of it.

*ESPINO*

It's a continual debate when you're talking about how to provide equitable living conditions for the working class, and some people think that you need to keep—the same issue is happening with this housing complex in East Los Angeles called Wyvernwood. It's hard for me to pronounce it. Because the people who are living there want to keep it as it is, and there's somebody who wants to come in and redevelop. They're saying, "If you redevelop, we're not going to be able to live here, won't be able to afford to live here." Is that what it causes?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, no. Well, my position on that, if I were an advisor, I would have that developer really develop like SouthShore: rental, affordable, and middle class. It's the middle class that's being hurt. The ones who are being served, is really affordable, the very low income and the higher income. Those are the people. The ones who are not is the working class and the middle class. They are the ones that are being squeezed out. It's like all of government programs. When I was working on the welfare reform, that was the battle. I've always had that in my life. Trying to keep the women in welfare and to call that welfare rights. They have a right to get welfare. We have a right to live on poverty? Come on. When the young, healthy, intelligent women that could go to work. I don't know where people's minds are, but I have always worked. I've always believed in the integrity of a human being, their ability to really—everyone has talents. Everyone has an ability to go and express

those talents in what they work, and to raise a family in a dignified—so that they don't have to be in poverty.

Welfare gives 90 percent of the poverty. They don't even give them poverty, 90 percent of the poverty. So what do they do? They give you food stamps, so you spend most of your time in the soup line. You spend all of your time getting food stamps. You spend all of your time going to the doctor and going in dilapidated—and then you live in housing projects. I've lived in housing projects in San Antonio. When I worked for the bishops, I specifically went and lived in the housing projects, because welfare reform was my priority and I wanted to show the women. The women were living in housing deterioration. Right now those housing projects are ready to be demolished because they're housing for the poor. So what happens when you're poor? It's just like in Oxnard, if you have a developer, you work with him to turn that community into rental, low income, affordable, middle class, and have people build community so it doesn't become a barrio, so it doesn't become a ghetto. I mean, that's all you have to do. I did it with SouthShore. It can be done. Developers are always looking for—and if the City of Los Angeles really wanted to build integrated communities, that's what they should do. I think all housing projects need to be built on that. Those should be the specifications. Because to build integrated communities, you have to have people living together. One will get after the other. Because in Oxnard we have Neighborhood Councils. And then the middle class, they have to take care of their property in the affordable housing, even though it's not as nice as the 30,000 acres, whatever. They're going to take care of their housing because they want to have value added to their home when they sell it. The rentals, well, they want to move into affordable. I don't agree that you should build ghettos. They'll continue.

*ESPINO*

Well, they're showing today that they've been destroying some of those housing projects that were created, some in the thirties, but some later, those long tall—but they don't work [unclear].

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah.

*ESPINO*

I'm just curious about the position of the Sierra Club. Did they use any racist comments to [unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

Alan Sanders [phonetic] says, "Lupe, you're going to go to hell," but I don't know what he meant by that. Their whole argument has been that people who live in wealth, people don't know how to take care of—that the Sierra Club is the only one who knows how to take—well, and really when you look at it, if you have the snowy plover and the terns in an isolated community, you have predators, birds who come in. So if you really want to build a beautiful restoration of those wetlands and all, you really need a ranger. You

really need protection. You need to protect those. For the protection, you have to pay for it, and the people who are going to pay for it are the affordable, middle-class people.

But I think, you know, here we are in 2011, and we still don't know how to integrate communities, and we're still talking about racism, but we don't know how to integrate. We don't talk about solutions. We're not bringing people together, and in California we're doing that. I don't know. What would you call that?

*ESPINO*

You must be completely baffled by what you've been through the past couple of weeks.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah. Then at night I say, "Lord, I want to go back to the convent. I can't take this any longer, these people." But he takes care of me. He give me his love. I know he loves me. He consoles me and he moves me forward. So I'm going to start working for supervisor. I have been working for one year with Supervisor Zaragoza to build a green economy, and I think that's where the solution is. We need to build businesses that take care of green jobs. So I'm going to dedicate myself. I'm going to leave this to David Cruz, who's going to really deal and then his wife. It's going to be okay. They're going to do the job. I'm very tired. I need to move on. But let me tell you in the—

*ESPINO*

What about the—go ahead, tell me what you were going to tell me. I'm sorry.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the work on the districting, redistricting.

*ESPINO*

Oh, that's what I was going to just ask you. Is that going to influence all these other issues, as far as the environment and housing?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, we won. We won a huge—and actually it wasn't very difficult to win because of John Zaragoza. We won a major victory in the redistricting of Ventura County. They wanted to cut Oxnard in four points.

*ESPINO*

Small little Oxnard? [laughs]

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, you should study the history of Oxnard. It's really a case of racism and segregation. Segregation, segregation, segregation. What they wanted to do is to divide is into four and really separate us. Another plan was to cut in half and to have Ventura Road, all of the beach areas to go to one side and the other to go to John Zaragoza. We fought that and we said, "We want all of the ocean under John Zaragoza. We want all of Oxnard," and we got it. It was beautiful. It was a beautiful plan. You know what? All of the supervisors agreed. It was incredible. I sat there and I said, "Is this really happening?"

Then when I went up to the podium I said, "I want to congratulate you for bringing unity and really working together and listen to what everyone had to say." Because Somis wanted this and Simi Valley wanted this part. So the supervisors worked together. They gave John Zaragoza all we wanted. They gave [Peter] Foy from Simi all he wanted. Kathy Long and Linda Parks were very good about trading, and Supervisor [Steve] Bennett, who is my supervisor, agreed. You know why? Because I helped for the election. I was in John Zaragoza's campaign. I helped him get elected, and Steve Bennett really appreciated that because he was having trouble with John Flynn, our past supervisor. You know, John Flynn is old, and he was always getting in a fight with all of the supervisors. So they were having a headache trying to deal with him.

So John Zaragoza came. He's very calm, he's very easy, he's smart, and he pushes for the Latino agenda, but he does it in a way that is very—he gets his facts together and he communicates in a very able way. He helps them to see reason, and then he gives and takes. So our Board of Supervisors in Ventura County is heaven on Earth. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

Sounds like a complete opposite experience.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, it is. It is. But when John Zaragoza was running and when we had this run-in with CAUSE, CAUSE was causing all this turmoil trying to get John Flynn reelected. We were trying to get reason and amiability and integration, and work with everybody, and we finally got it.

*ESPINO*

What does this mean to have this redistricting in your favor? What does it mean for the overall—

*ANGUIANO*

The overall redistricting? Okay. Well, that's a very good question, because this is our next headache. We had a meeting on Saturday, we had a workshop, and I think we came to a consensus. Jason Hodge, who's a fireman, really developed a map that really would keep all of Oxnard whole, Camarillo whole, and we would get part of Thousand Oaks. So it's like for the first time we're going to have an Assembly district that's all Oxnard. It's a miracle.

But, you know, the one that we were fighting, not fighting, but had to was CAUSE. Because Marisela Morales was trying to get Das Williams to stay. She was still trying to—I don't know what she was doing. I shouldn't say that. Erase that. I'm sorry I said that. I think that CAUSE was moving in the direction that would have split Oxnard and placed us with Fillmore, Santa Paula, and Piru. Well, what we would have to give up is the ocean, and I was not about to give up the ocean. So Hodge, who belongs to the—LULAC supported him, I supported him—he drew a map, and this is the map.

Tuesday we're testifying before the Redistricting Commission. See, all of

Oxnard, we get all the ocean, we get all of Camarillo, and part of Thousand Oaks. It would make it a strong Latino vote and it would make 44 percent Latino, but the value would be that we would have an integrated community. If we were with Oxnard, we're with Piru in toto, we would be fighting CAUSE.

*ESPINO*

What would that look like with Piru?

*ANGUIANO*

Piru is up here.

*ESPINO*

Okay. So it would have been cut like up this way versus—

*ANGUIANO*

See, we have the ocean here.

*ESPINO*

I didn't realize that you could challenge the—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, we haven't finished yet. See, this is another map.

*ESPINO*

Do you have lawyers working with you on this issue?

*ANGUIANO*

We have Dr. Gabino Aguirre from Santa Paula, who is in the commission. He's the only one, and then CAUSE has been working on this. Marisela, from CAUSE, on Saturday was pretty respectful and received our comments very well. Anyway, when we testify, I still need to get together with LULAC, because I think this is the best map. This would keep all of Oxnard whole, it would keep all of Camarillo whole, and we would be sharing some with Thousand Oaks. But then we would have 44 percent of the population, and it would start moving us in the direction of integration. If we were to be with Piru, Fillmore, Santa Paula, we would be segregated as a Latino people, just like affordable housing.

*ESPINO*

Because you don't have the votes to elect your officials, is that why?

*ANGUIANO*

The real reason is that the white population in this area is very conservative, and so we don't have like the—what do you call it? I don't want to use the word "progressive," but a white population that you can work with, and they're very, very conservative. Like, in this area, Whitman beat Barack Obama. So you can tell it's a very conservative community. But Oxnard, the Latino vote, is middle of the road. Like I'm a Decline to State voter, because Democrats, look at them. They signed this thing to fight me. I don't think they have the sense of really of the well-being of the Latino. Look what they did to Hillary Clinton. Look what they did to Susan Jordan. They lied about her.

My feeling is—and that's not because John Zaragoza's a Democrat. A lot of my friends are Democrats. I usually vote with Democrats, but I don't vote

for a racist and I don't vote for segregationist. I just don't. I really am always looking for the likes of John Zaragoza, who can work with everyone, Pedro Nava, who really works with everyone.

*ESPINO*

He's a Democrat or Republican?

*ANGUIANO*

Democrat. Oh, strong.

*ESPINO*

Are there any Republicans that you support?

*ANGUIANO*

None.

*ESPINO*

So it's hard to find a Republican that shares your values.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah. Dan Lungren, when he was running for governor, I supported him because he's a strong Latino supporter. But he lost. I don't support [Abel] Maldonado. He's going to run against Lois Capps, but I don't support him because he has been terrible to farm workers. He's a rancher, and he's been terrible to Latino.

*ESPINO*

But you have mentioned, and today there are some examples where you say, "Well, I really wanted a Latino in that office and I voted for him, and I liked him because he was the only Latino." Do you—

*ANGUIANO*

I don't necessarily go—you know, I really look at a candidate and I don't support a person because he's Latino. Like Jason Hodge, I'm going to support him. He's really great. He communicates very well with our people. He's a fireman. I supported him for the harbor, and I think he wants to run either for the Assembly or for the Senate, and he's got my vote. I'm going to support him.

If Marisela Morales from CAUSE runs, I wouldn't support her. I didn't support Carmen Ramirez because I knew. I didn't support Das Williams because he lied against—so I strongly support Pedro Nava.

*ESPINO*

I'm going to pause just for a second. That noise is very loud. [interruption]

*ESPINO*

Okay, we're back.

*ANGUIANO*

I think it's an issue of I don't believe in supporting a Latino just because he's a Latino, nor a friend because it's a friend, or somebody who's an associate of mine just because they're an associate of mine or because it's a woman. I really have made it a point to support people, whether they be woman, white, black, Latino, if they're really going to support the common good of everyone, because when you support the common good of everyone, you're

really supporting everybody, and in that, everybody is a Latino. I just don't believe in because it's a Latino I'm going to vote for him.

*ESPINO*

Well, that brings up something about your activism in the seventies, because unlike many other Latina, Chicana activists you developed a close relationship with the white Women's Movement and with the Equal Rights Amendment, trying to pass that. So can we move into that right now, and can you tell me how that started? Because you were definitely working for the improvement of Mexican American education. You mentioned welfare, getting them off welfare, jobs. But how did your involvement start with gender-specific, women-only issues, if you can remember that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, the most important thing about that is that I have always been for equality for everyone and have fought against racism for everyone. I have always seen the issue of economics as being the most important—family, religion, and economics is the well-being of a person, where a person can be free, can be free to make choices, to do whatever, not to be controlled by anyone, to be free to express your talents and grow. Then as a missionary sister, that's what I did. I never just wanted to work with migrants, because in the farm worker you have a lot of Filipinos who are farm workers in Delano. A large part of the agriculture worker was the Filipino population. In the welfare, if you look at the segment in 60 Minutes, CBS 60 Minutes did a segment, you will see that I was working with white, with black, with Latina women. In the housing, it was an issue of integration, integrating into the whole community. Then on the woman issue, the Equal Rights Amendment is about equality for everyone, for men and women. As a matter of fact, I don't know if I gave you a copy of the historical document that I worked on in the Equal Rights Amendment. The Equal Rights Amendment states that women will be treated equally like men. So that has always been my philosophy. I almost married a black man. He was a guy that I really loved and would have married. So that integration for me, bringing communities together, and now that we live in a world economy, California is the most diverse state in the union, and we're doing very well, I think. I see us doing very well.

We might be speaking different languages and all, but I think we appreciate. I think, generally speaking, the population, we're accustomed to that, to living and working in a diverse community. Yes, there are segregationists. There are white people who don't want to sit next to a Mexican. There are people who work against immigration. But I think if you really stop to look at it, it's all based on a global economy that has created imbalances between workers. The global economy, not all, but many corporations are looking for cheap labor, particularly in the United States. You can see it even now, reducing the wages of workers, not treating workers respectfully, wanting to work them ten, twelve hours, and that is a mistreatment of a worker, and I

think that is unjust and it's unfair, and I think it is really against democracy, what we want to build. Because destroying the middle class is really destroying the fiber of America, and that's what corporations are doing now. When you look at Germany, Germany has great respect for their workers. The worker who works gets a lot of benefits. So Germany is a high productive, they produce excellent products. I have a small clock that I've had for twenty-five years and it has never given me any trouble, and it comes from Germany. Japan, look at my Honda. It's the best car. I've had Hondas for many, many years because it's a good car. So when you treat your workers decently, you're going to have quality, produce quality products. In the United States, we're just—I don't know. But dealing with equality and racism and all of that, I have felt the pains of racism, I have felt the pain of segregation, but my whole philosophy, I've lived respecting all, because I really believe that my core values, I believe that I and everyone else was made in the image and likeness of God, and that God loves all of us equally, and that we all have different talents. We may be different colors, but we all have talents. Just like a father wants their kids to love each other and behave, so God, our father, wants us to love each other, to behave and to love one another, to be of service, to be of service. Father Jean [phonetic] at Mass, it seems like I can always tell his homilies, his sermons, because it's always we are called to be people of service. We serve God by serving one another. So I was taught that, we live that, and our family has always lived that. I don't know if that answers your question.

*ESPINO*

Well, I would like some just specific details. Like, for example, the first meetings that you went to, were you invited? Who was there? Those kinds of things, to give some context to that period. I have interviews with some women who were working against the sterilization [unclear], and they said they would attend meetings of NOW [National Organization of Women], they felt like they didn't have anything in common. So I'd like to hear a little bit more about your experience at some of those meetings and discussions, whatever you can remember.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, maybe a good example would be when I first attended the National Women's Political Caucus meeting. I was invited by Gloria Steinem. Gloria Steinem was a friend of my boss [Stan Pottinger], who was the head of the Office of Civil Rights in HEW [Department of Health, Education and Welfare]. He was a firm believer of the equal rights, and he supported Gloria. Gloria asked him who he would recommend, and he recommended that I attend, and so I attended. The difference that I found was that they had never met a Chicana, a Latina. They had never. So Gloria Steinem was there, Bella Abzug, Shirley Chisholm, Ladonna Harris, and Betty Friedan. I came in and Gloria Steinem introduced me, and she said I was a Chicana, I was a Mexican American. I liked to call myself a Chicana, and that I worked in the

Office for Civil Rights, and that I had experience working in education, and that Stan Pottinger had really brought me back to Washington, and so I was there. We were starting to talk about the Equal Rights Amendment, and then I felt very much at home because talking about equality was dear to my heart.

When it came to dealing with specific issues, I was very interested in welfare reform. I did not receive a warm embrace, because on that issue they were all convinced that welfare rights was the issue. When I started to say, "Well, no, I'm working in the Office for Civil Rights and Stan Pottinger. My boss, the director of the Office for Civil Rights in HEW, recommended that I work with a group of twenty women to build the blueprint for American women, and to see where in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, what reforms they needed to do make sure that women were being served equally and equitably. So I chose welfare because that was an issue that I knew was a problem in our community." Well, immediately, "Oh, great. You're going to work with welfare rights?" I said, "No." I've done research and I see that in the welfare, the policy calls for a caretaker. I said, "A woman taking care of her children, a single parent, she's a single parent. She's not a caretaker. She's the head of her family," and here we are talking about equality. That's why I call it equality. Gloria Steinem immediately caught that. So did Bella Abzug. Some of the others didn't. But I kept insisting, and primarily because I was working in the office of the secretary, Stan Pottinger was the head of the Office for Civil Rights. He was a Republican and so was the secretary of HEW was a Republican. I was doing research.

*ESPINO*

Was it Caspar Weinberger?

*ANGUIANO*

No, no, no. It was—oh, God. He was the great Republican that then really stood against [Richard M.] Nixon. It was during the Nixon administration.

*ESPINO*

I don't remember.

*ANGUIANO*

He was a great service. And I had the full support of the secretary of HEW, primarily because of Stan Pottinger. Gloria Steinem looked at me because I was recommended by Stan Pottinger. So I started to explain why the whole employment. I started out with the issue of she shouldn't be called a caretaker; she should be called the head of the family. She's the head of the family. She shouldn't be called a caretaker. She's taking care of her kids for whom? And then she's getting income maintenance, income maintenance. Not being trained to get a job, but income maintenance, which would relegate her to a poverty income for the rest of her life, not only for her, for her kids, putting her in a poverty hole that she wouldn't be able to get out of. So I argued that the changes of AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] should be changed to employment and education, that the woman

would receive education, employment, and be trained to be the head of her household to support her kids. Well, that was revolutionary. I didn't know it was revolutionary. To me, it was just—

*ESPINO*

Controversial too.

*ANGUIANO*

To me it made sense. But Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug supported me, and they understood exactly what I was saying. I had a hard time. I had a hard time with Chicanas, with Martha Cotera. She fought me on that. And Sandy Sewell from Comisión Femenil [Mexicana], and Alicia [Escalante], welfare rights. Well, Alicia, she admired what I was doing, but I don't think she really realized what the policy changes meant. So, yeah, I had a hard time, but I had a hard time with Chicanas. I had a hard time with black women. I had a hard time with welfare rights, the poor women, in dealing with this. But as soon as the program started, I helped develop the blueprint for HEW called the Women's Action Program. Then I said, "I'm out of here. I'm going to go."

*ESPINO*

Why?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, because I wanted to prove that this was what really women wanted, and so the bishops offered me a job to head the Office for the Spanish Speaking. But the office was in California, the office was in Texas. So that's where I ended up. I took a \$10,000 job pay cut, but went to San Antonio and headed the Office for the Spanish Speaking, and the bishops gave me permission that welfare reform would be my priority issue. So then I started to work with the women, and that's when I started to live in the housing projects.

*ESPINO*

Did you call it welfare reform at that time?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. I was working for changing welfare. I started living in the housing projects, living with the women on welfare, and we started to talk. "What would you like?" They would say, "Welfare is the dregs. I hate being on welfare. It keeps me trapped. It traps me." I said, "Well, what's the solution?" "Well, I would like to work." I said, "Well, why don't you get a job?" They said, "I have to go on food stamps. I have childcare." In about six months that I was living in the housing projects, we declared a "Let's get off of welfare" campaign. I had already worked with the Chamber of Commerce to develop jobs for the women. They started training and being cashiers and the telephone company.

*ESPINO*

Negotiating job training or education and then childcare, who would pay for all of that?

*ANGUIANO*

I was receiving money from the bishops, and then I started to work with the Chamber of Commerce, who provided the training. Then I started to receive money for childcare so that what we offered was childcare and then transportation. So when I started to develop the model, the priorities were childcare and transportation and training. Then I started to work with the community colleges to open doors for the women. David Cruz helped me because he was the director of news in the television program that he had in San Antonio. The president of the television really liked what I was doing, and so he told David to give me, any time I wanted, any time I had a press release, the reporters have to be there. So I had an opportunity. So, David Cruz, I've known him for thirty years, and he really helped me.

*ESPINO*

Are you in touch with any of the women that you worked with back then?

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah.

*ESPINO*

What happened to some of them, if you can remember?

*ANGUIANO*

Some of them are really doing very well. Rosemary started as a backhoe operator, and some of them got into construction. Then one of them was an electrician, and the electrical workers trained her to be an electrician. She's making a lot of good money. It's in my archives. Some of them are telephone operators, and they went on to work as supervisors. Some of them started at as health aides, and their companies, they did so well, that then they paid for their training, and they got into the health profession. It's all in my archives. It's there. That would be there.

*ESPINO*

I think we're going to stop here. You're looking a bit tired.

*ANGUIANO*

Yeah, I am.

*ESPINO*

It was an emotional morning.

*ANGUIANO*

It was.

*ESPINO*

I'd like to pick up on that because I want to ask you next time about—that must have been a struggle getting these women into a predominantly male job.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yeah.

*ESPINO*

So we'll leave that, and we'll talk about that next time.

*ANGUIANO*

Okay.

*ESPINO*

Thank you. [End of June 21, 2011 interview]

### **1.7. Session 7 (June 28, 2011)**

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is June 28, 2011. I'm interviewing Miss Lupe Anguiano in the Oxnard Library in Oxnard, California. Last time, we finished off with some discussion of your involvement in gender-specific women's-only issues with the work initiative and some of those projects that you initiated for the government. I'd like to start with your role in passing or in trying to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, and if you can recall the first time you heard of that amendment and how you got involved, and then we'll talk later about why.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. As you recall, I was working in the United States HEW, [Department of] Health, Education and Welfare, under Stan Pottinger, working in reviewing schools for educational equity. That was the year that the Equal Rights Amendment was being discussed in Congress. Well, the Equal Rights Amendment came into play. The Equal Rights Amendment has been proposed for years and years and years. To really get a very good background, when the [National] Woman's Party really worked on the women's right to vote, that's when winning the women's right to vote was a tremendous battle that women had in the United States. Ironically, the—I shouldn't say "ironically," but the people who were really behind that were Republicans, because the relatives of the promoters of the women's right to vote were Republicans. So after the women's right to vote passed, immediately the Woman's Party started to work on the Equal Rights Amendment, and it was introduced several times in Congress, but it never really took hold because there was a feeling, "Hey, you have the right to vote, so what more do you want?" So they felt that having women's right to vote really emancipated women and that there was nothing else to be done, but many of the women who worked on the women's right to vote saw that equality between men and women was critical to the emancipation of women. So it was introduced several times in the Congress. Well, the Equal Rights Amendment really became an issue when women started to really work in the equality, meaning in political action. So when the Women's Political Caucus was created, that's when really a very strong movement to really make equality of men and women become law.

Well, at that time I was in Washington [D.C.], working in the Office for Civil Rights under Stan Pottinger, and I remember that within the Office of Civil Rights, the issue of equality of women continually kept coming up. I was more interested in the whole issue of education, because I had been working

on bilingual education and saw the bill. I worked on the passage of bilingual education, and it wasn't doing very well. So Stan Pottinger called me back from—I was working in Los Angeles—and asked me to come back to Washington and review what was happening in the bilingual education area. Well, during that time the Equal Rights Amendment was being ratified. It passed the Congress and it was being ratified by each of the states. As you know, before the Constitution can be changed, each state needs to ratify that before it becomes a constitutional mandate. So many of the states were really ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment, and the Secretary of HEW really decided that it was important for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to develop a blueprint that would express and promote equality of women in the area of health, education and welfare, and so to do that, what he did was develop a women's task force, and Stan Pottinger nominated me to work with those thirty-five women. Twenty-eight. Was it twenty-eight? The Women's Action Program is in my archives. Anyway, I decided to choose the women on welfare, and that's where I did research on that. Well, Stan Pottinger was a very good friend of Gloria Steinem, and so Gloria Steinem asked him to have someone from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to come and work with the Women's Political Caucus that was just being created. So that's when I was, number one, working with these twenty-three women. My portion was welfare reform, and the other were dealing with health, with education, and other issues. So my first meeting at the Women's Political Caucus, that was the big issue, the Equal Rights Amendment, the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, so that was a big target area, a big issue that we were involved. So that's where I started to learn more about the legislation, the history of the Equal Rights Amendment and the importance of it being ratified. So that's when I started to work in that. I think one of the big issues with regard to the Equal Rights Amendment was the fear on the part of many that equality of women with men would open up the whole area of being drafted to the military. Some of us felt, well, if men are drafted, if women want to go and women want to participate in the military, why should they be deprived of that? Well, that became sort of a big scandal. Then the other, Phyllis Schlafly, she's a Catholic, and she started to really [unclear], having a woman be equal to man is really going to disrupt the family. A woman should be taking care of their children and all. So the big issue, particularly with me, was the issue of women working, because I was working on welfare reform and opening the doors for single women, single parents, to be able to support their children. So I saw that as a moral issue and I saw that as an issue that really not only did it trap the woman, but also her children into a cycle of poverty. The child was born, then she would be on welfare until the child was six years old, and being six years on welfare was a great detriment and really becoming a big barrier to the woman. So I started to really talk about the issue being not only a

constitutional right, but also a moral issue that really hindered the development of women's talents, but also deprived the children.

*ESPINO*

Did you see a difference in how that issue related to Mexicanas, Latinas, versus some of the other ethnic groups?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yes. Yes, particularly because Phyllis Schlafly was a Catholic, and then it was a promotional issue that really hit a lot of Catholic women, and they were fighting against the Equal Rights Amendment. When I started to communicate, I started to talk about denying women's equality in the workplace and then the right that a woman had, who was a single parent to support her children. Furthermore, that over 75 [percent], maybe even larger, of women who had children below the age of six were already working, but they were working in retail, they were working in jobs that really paid not equitable employment, and so I saw that also as a civil rights, which, you know, the Equal Rights Amendment was a civil rights issue and the equality of women is a civil rights issue.

Furthermore, in hindering the development of a woman to express her talent to get an education, to really move into a career that she wanted to move into was also a civil rights issue. The thought in the Women's Political Caucus was in order for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, we really had to become involved politically, and that was the way that we were really going to win equality. So the Women's Political Caucus became a catalyst for the passage of the Equal Rights, but also many of us who were working in the various government offices—I was working in Health, Education and Welfare—also the issue of education became a prominent issue. I remember Bernice Sanders, who was recruited from the Association of Education, not the government. She was recruited to work also with us in the Women's Action Program, and she was really dealing with the career and education preparing a woman if she wanted to be an attorney, if she wanted to be a doctor, if she wanted to be—and then we saw how women were relegated more to nursing and nursing careers instead of being a doctor, instead of being a psychiatrist, a psychologist. I was working in the area of welfare reform, and I was really working very much in the area of career and looking at low-income women, because the major welfare rolls were really of the black and the Latina women, who were seen as really not interested in going to work or not interested in a career. Particularly in Los Angeles, you had this notion that a Latina wanted to stay home and take care of her children. That was part of the cultural values of what they call the Mexican, the Mexican America, the Latino, that that was what the woman wanted. That's what the family—and if you pulled that woman and enabled her to get an education and to get a job, you would be disrupting cultural values.

Oh, Virginia, I had to fight tooth and nail against that because I was scandalized that some people would call that a value, you know, a cultural

value, to keep a woman at home, keep her domesticated. Her job was to rear her children, to cook and to prepare the food for her husband. Then the Catholic notion, particularly Phyllis Schlafly, continued to promote that. So I think it affected the Latino woman and the black woman more than the white women because a lot of white women would go out and she would get a job, even in low-paying jobs, because she worked in retail, as a waitress, working in a department store, working as a cashier, but for the Latina, it was staying at home that was a cultural value. So it was really a very ferocious battle working against what they called, quote, a "cultural value."  
*ESPINO*

Who was promoting that, do you remember?

*ANGUIANO*

Number one, it was being promoted really by the Catholic Church and the Christian churches.

*ESPINO*

How about men? How about Latino men, Chicano men? Did they come to argue that point?

*ANGUIANO*

You know, they didn't. A few of them came to me, and they would say, "Lupe, I'm very glad that you're doing this, because I have to assume the load of supporting the family, and I'm working in a job with very low earnings, and here I have to support the family. Having my wife work in a better job other than cashiers or doing laundry or sewing—," whatever. In those days they used to iron, the woman used to iron thins. "Instead of doing laundry and ironing and all, she could get an education and really be of help to me." So some of the guys saw that.

On a professional level, some of the Latinos would tell me, "Hey, you're competing with me, with my upward mobility," in that when I was working in the Office for Civil Rights, I'll never forget, some of the guys would tell me, "Hey, you're competing for my job. It's not only difficult to compete with a white male, but also compete with a white woman and then also with you? Come on." It was really tough. I remember Jimmy Carter, when he became president, wasn't very supportive of the equality of women, but President [Richard] Nixon did a really good job. Some of the Republican women in the Women's Political Caucus, we worked very well. The Democratic women, the Republican women worked very well for the Equal Rights Amendment.

During the Nixon administration, we had some very strong support from the White House for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. I think that I then started, because being a Catholic, being a former religious, really saw this as a moral issue, and so started to talk to the priests, started to talk to some of the bishops, that the equality of women and women's education was really critical and was healthy and very appropriate for her, for her family, and that welfare was just a trap to keep the mother, the child in poverty.

Then I used to say, just to try to find an edge that they would understand, I

would say, "Well, you know, a woman who is working has a better chance to meet a guy that is also working and that would provide for her and her family so she doesn't have to live on 90 percent of the—," because welfare only pays 90 percent of the poverty. I used that to argue that point. Finally I made some inroads, and the people that I made the most strongest inroads were of the Latino sisters, which were Las Hermanas. There were women religious who were coming together. Latinas from different orders were coming together to really see equality for the Mexican American, for the Latino people, equality for our people, and within that realm also see how, as women, we needed to open the doors of education, of career opportunities so that the woman's talents, the growth and development of her talents, would be very healthy for her children, for her husband, for the family, for the community. So the sisters started to work on it and then also working with the Latino priests. I remember working with Father Juan Romero and Father Virgil Elizondo, who's now at [University of] Notre Dame, teaching at Notre Dame. Father Juanito Romero, he's sort of semi-retired, but he's still a very good friend and we communicate. So he sees me, he says, "Hey, viva la Chicana Power!" [laughs] So I started to build those support systems, and then we started to talk to the women religious, and it was not difficult to deal with equality and with civil rights, because that was what was happening around the country. So I had left Washington and I was head of the Office for the Spanish Speaking. I was hired, and then I went to San Antonio, and then I took a \$10,000 job pay cut and agreed to be the southwest regional director for the Spanish Speaking. I was going to lose \$10,000 a year, but the bargaining chip that I made with the bishops was, "Okay, I'll do the church things, but I want to focus on welfare reform and on the Equal Rights Amendment."

So Bishop [Patrick Fernández] Flores, who recruited me, said, "The whole issue of equality, that's what the church is about," and so then I started to organize. I had responsibility of organizing Spanish-speaking councils in twenty-three dioceses throughout the Southwest, and so then I started to speak about the equality of women, welfare reform. Then pretty soon we had a major Call to Action, which was part of the civil rights mandate and equality for all people, and that's when I developed this, the—

*ESPINO*

The open letter?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Were you dealing with people through, you said, the Southwest, so that means California?

*ANGUIANO*

No, it meant New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Arizona. California belonged to Region Ten, but I worked closely with them. But Padres, the sisters and the

priests, Padres and Las Hermanas, worked nationwide. Because their office was in San Antonio, I had access and I worked very closely with the Mexican American Cultural Center, which was started by Bishop Flores, [Father] Virgil Elizondo and Father Juan Romero. So that's where I started. I started there and then we moved throughout the country, and when we had the Call to Action, it was the whole church, and that's when I developed the piece. As a matter of fact, I even testified because Texas was thinking of rescinding the Equal Right Amendment. They had passed it, but they wanted to rescind it. I remember that Phyllis Schlafly was testifying and so was the Catholic Women's Council. Well, I testified and spoke before the Texas legislature of the moral issue and the equal rights and the civil rights issue and the importance of equality, that the bishops, the Catholic Church, supported the equality of all women, of all people, who were born, made in the image and likeness of God, and all of us are equal. There's not difference between man, woman, Jew, Gentile, Protestant, whatever, that all of us were equal in the eyes of God, and so that the Equal Rights Amendment spoke to that issue of equality. So, therefore, it was a moral, and the Catholic Church supported that.

Well, Phyllis Schlafly and the Catholic Women's Council really became very upset about that, that I was speaking for the Catholic Church, I was speaking for the bishops that I worked with, and that they supported that. The Catholic Women got up and said, "That is not so." Then Las Hermanas, the religious, came and spoke, and they supported my position, and then the priests came up and they spoke, the Padres and Las Hermanas. So Phyllis Schlafly and the Catholic Women complained to the bishops, and it was very funny because Archbishop [James F.] Fury said, "Lupe's the Director of the Office for the Spanish Speaking, and she's working with the Hispanic, the Latino population, and so don't come to me and complain to me. Complain to them. Lupe, that's what she's supposed to do. That's her job. She is the spokesperson for Hispanic, for Latino Catholics, and she's just doing her job. So take it up with the sisters and with the priests." [laughs] So it was really great. Then when we went to the Call to Action in Detroit when we had the whole Call to Action for equality of all people, the sixties, in dealing with civil rights and equality and human rights, I started to develop this paper, but then Las Hermanas and the priests got in touch with all of the social justice departments and became involved with all of the priests. Particularly the women religious, they continued to be very strong in women's issues.

*ESPINO*

That's interesting that you found partnership with Catholic women, Catholic nuns, who married into a traditional role themselves. Did you find support with the women's groups like Comisión Femenil and some of the other Latina women's groups that were around at that time?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I tease Sandy Sewell right now, Comisión Femenil, because when we had the United States Women's Conference in Houston in 1977, they supported equality, but they hesitated to work with the white women. They saw me as a Chicana working with the white woman, the black woman, Ladonna Harris, the Native American, and Shirley Chisholm and Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug. So they were in support of the Equal Rights Amendment and in the equality of women, but from the standpoint of the Chicana effort, so was Comisión, you know. They really saw the Women's Political Caucus and the whole election of women being as the white woman being preferred and really the movement being controlled by and the issue of Chicanas and not so much the black women because they were really more integrated than we were. I, myself, as a missionary sister, I always saw equality of all people, and I saw the Women's Movement as equality for all women. I never separated white and Latino. I saw the fact that there were more white women than there were Chicano women, but the issue was the hesitancy on the part of Comisión. Martha Cotera was very, very vocal about this, because she being a member of La Raza Unida Party, but I was also a member of La Raza Unida Party. She criticized me for being too involved with the white Women's Movement.

*ESPINO*

Let me ask you before you go on with that, because I really want to hear about La Raza Unida Party, is it true? Did the women become leaders or did they evolve into leadership roles before women of color did in those organizations?

*ANGUIANO*

In La Raza Unida?

*ESPINO*

No, in the Women's Political Caucus. Was there racial equality as far as power, voice, leadership position?

*ANGUIANO*

That's a very good question, because as I look for it now, the opportunity was there, but the Chicana didn't embrace it. My view of it, when I look at it right from where I stand right now, as a missionary sister I was involved as a missionary sister with all people and I embraced La Raza Unida Party and I embraced the whole issue of the black wanting racial equality. I embraced that. During that time, there was not equality. It was just an issue. That's what we were fighting for. But if you were fighting for that, you don't stay in the outside and look in. You become part of that and you work with—Gloria Steinem always supported the equality of racial equality. She always supported the cultural racial equality of Latinas. As a matter of fact, when I was in the Women's Political Caucus, I saw that it was important to bring in, recruit the Chicana into the Women's Political Caucus. So I suggested organizing the Chicano Caucus, because at that time I was also a member of La Raza Unida Party, so I wanted the Chicano Caucus to really deal with the

political issues relating to the Chicana and the male, our community. So the Chicana Caucus was built.

But the Republican women felt the same way. There were a lot of issues that the Democratic Party would not support and so they became organized, and the majority were Democratic women. But the Republican women also became organized as a Republican Caucus and the Democratic Caucus, the Chicano Caucus, the Black Caucus and the Native American, Ladonna Harris with the Native American Caucus. So you have to think of the time. The sixties was really dealing with racial equality, and also at that same time dealing with civil rights for all people, there was a segment of women also working for equality, and that meant the Equal Rights Amendment. Then there was La Raza Unida fighting for equality of the Chicano and Chicana. It was all within this panorama, if you want to call it, of civil rights for everyone. So everyone was in their location fighting for equal rights and civil rights, and we were all, at least the way I saw it, all of us were working for the equality of everyone. Your question, was there equality? No. That's what the whole sixties was about. There was no equality. There was no open door for blacks. There was no open door for Chicanos, for Latinos. As a matter of fact, we were not even known in Washington. When I first went to Washington, it was like I was [Spanish phrase]. You had this drove of black and white, and here I came as a Chicana from California, and, "Hey, who are you?" "I'm a Chicana." "Oh, what is that?" Or I want a tortilla. Well, there's no tortillas in the restaurant, so what did I have to do? There was some in a can. Have you ever seen tortillas in a can?

*ESPINO*

Never.

*ANGUIANO*

That's what I had to put up with. When Chicanos came to visit me in Washington, because I was one of those first Chicanas in Washington and they wanted to come and visit me because I worked in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, I told, "In order to get into my front door, you have to bring tortillas, chorizo, and beans." [laughs] It was difficult.

*ESPINO*

That's what Edward Roybal's wife, Lucille Roybal, told me, that whenever he came to California she gave him a list of Mexican items to bring back to Washington because in those days. Did you ever socialize with them? Did you ever go to any of their parties or events?

*ANGUIANO*

Of what?

*ESPINO*

Of Edward Roybal and Lucille Roybal?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, because they were concerned with the California delegation. In Washington you have what they call the California society, Arkansas society,

the Texas society. Yes, they were partying almost every day. They had something going. Yes, I used to go, but it was all—Congressman Roybal was about the only one, and [Joseph M.] Montoya from New Mexico, and, of course, Congressman [George] Brown was always very, very—he was from California. He was from Los Angeles, so he was one of the best civil rights activists that we had in Congress. And then [Augustus] Hawkins, he was very sensitive to that because he wasn't black black, and so he was more accepted. He knew he came from California and he knew that Latinos and Chicanos were there, and he was struggling with the whole civil rights issue, but also had to deal with the whole issue of Chicanos also being part of that and women being part of that, blacks being part of that.

In Texas we didn't have—I don't remember. Did we have any? The La Raza Unida Party was really very prominent in Texas history because Texas was a southern state controlled by the Democrats, and the Democrats in the southern states were the ones that were oppressing the blacks, the Latinos, everyone who was not white. Texas is a southern state, and it was part of the South, but Johnson, President [Lyndon B.] Johnson, recognized the inequality of the Mexican American living in Texas and he saw the injustices. For you to become a Texas Ranger, you had to have blood of a Mexican on your boots to be accepted. I remember when I went to live in Texas, because I was working for all the bishops in Texas, and going from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, I stopped at a restaurant to have something to eat, and I sat there, but no one would wait on me, and others would come and they would wait on them, and they would just completely ignore you, pass by. The waitresses would pass by and they wouldn't even look at you. So finally I said to myself, "This is strange," because that didn't happen in California, where I came from, at least not that blatantly. So they would just pass by. So I saw that that was a racial problem. So I would just move on and I would get out and then get to Corpus Christi where I could get something to eat. But that was the reason why the La Raza Unida Party was born.

*ESPINO*

Tell me about that, then, because you're working in Washington, you're working with Democrats and Republicans. How did you see this third party as achieving some of those same goals that you wanted in the other organizations?

*ANGUIANO*

What I saw was that in order to develop a collective voice, you had to have an organization, and La Raza Unida Party was part of that. Also, LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens] was very strong in Texas. That's where LULAC was born. LULAC was born when I was born, 1929. I say I was born in the spirit of LULAC. [laughs] LULAC started to come together and really advocate for better education, and, as a matter of fact, they were, being ignored. So what LULAC did, they started their own schools and they

either got an education by starting their own schools or they went to Catholic school. Catholic school is where they got a good education. So you will see that a lot of the Latino, a lot of the Chicanos of my age, that era, were really educated by through the Catholic Church because they were welcome because they were Catholic. But LULAC really started those organizations. So it was a matter of coming together to really have a voice, and we saw the blacks coming together to battle for racial equality, and then the churches were very much involved in that, in social justice and the whole issue of equality. All of the churches were involved in that.

*ESPINO*

Was it a hard decision for you to join La Raza Unida?

*ANGUIANO*

No, because as a child I always learned the importance of equality and coming together and speaking and organizing. I was born within that whole issue, working. My brother worked in Luminara. He was involved in the first [unclear] strike in California.

*ESPINO*

Some of the people I've talked to in California didn't share that same ideal. They felt that it was a great idea, but that in actuality they had to go with the Democratic Party because that was where the force was and the numbers. It seems like in Texas it might have been a different thing. Did you ever weigh the two, La Raza Unida versus the Democratic Party?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, in Texas it was very easy, because in Texas the racial discrimination was really promoted or supported by the Democratic Party. That's the South. So that's a very clear distinction, you know. Let me complete that. It was when La Raza Unida started that then Senator Ralph Yarborough was in the Senate, and I can't remember who—[Lloyd] Benson, I think was in the Senate. I don't remember. I remember Senator Ralph Yarborough, and Johnson was in the White House, and so trying to deal with that equality. President Johnson was very diplomatic, and he really would negotiate ways that he would be able to win many of the civil rights activity that was really started by President [John F.] Kennedy, but it was President Johnson who really implemented any of them. President Johnson takes the credit of really implementing what President Kennedy started. So that was very clear. When La Raza Unida became involved, we were really fighting the Democratic Party, a racial divide and discrimination against the Democratic Party. La Raza Unida won 5 percent of the vote, but what happened was La Raza Unida, some of the leaders, they went their own way when Ramsey Muñiz was caught with drugs and he was put in jail. Then [unclear] always stayed on the issue, and he built Crystal City. It was a model of equality for Chicanos, and that's why I supported him. He worked through the system, not against. He worked through the system. What was born through that

was really the Republican Party. As a result of La Raza Unida, Tower was elected. So we were in La Raza Unida.

My background, doing background check of me, the White House, anytime you serve in the White House, you get a complete check and all, La Raza Unida always came up. When I was asked, I said, "Well, it was La Raza Unida that enabled the two-party system to be created in Texas." That's when the Republican Party started to really make some inroads into some of the civil rights issues, meaning you have to remember it was the Democratic Party in the South that was the one that was promoting racial prejudice against blacks, the Ku Klux Klan and whatever. In California, the Democratic Party was [Augustus] Hawkins and [George] Brown and [Edward] Roybal, and that was different, because the Democratic Party was—but I never really saw the—after the La Raza Unida got into a lot of trouble and really didn't follow its mandates, I joined the Democratic Party, because when I was in Washington, I was a Democrat. When La Raza Unida started, I became La Raza Unida, because that was a caucus that we could really fight for equality. When I was in California, I worked with the Democratic Party. But my problem with the Democratic Party was that verbally there was support for Chicanos and Latinos, but not in a significant manner that would change policy. For example, when I was battling for welfare reform, the women's right to work, the people who really fought me were the Democrats. I remember receiving a letter, a note from Senator Ted Kennedy saying, "Lupe, what are you doing? Are you forcing women with young children to go to work? Isn't that destructive of a family?" You know what my answer was.

*ESPINO*

No. Tell me.

*ANGUIANO*

My answer was, "Are you discriminating against women? Don't you want Chicanas to be educated, to get a job? Do you want to trap Chicanas in poverty? Is that what you want? I don't see that as a step forward. I see that as a step backward."

*ESPINO*

Did he respond back after that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, some of his staff just—as a matter of fact, there's an article in the Washington Post of me saying, doing that, and Kennedy. It was not Kennedy himself, it was his staff, but it was part of what Senator Ted Kennedy believed, and so it came back to the whole Catholic issue of women are not supposed to be out working; they're supposed to be taking care of their families. So my big issue was, do you want to keep women, trap them in a cycle of poverty and trap their kids? Is that what you want? Then, furthermore, the majority of women are working who have children below the age of six. They're in the workforce, who are single parents. They are

working as clerks. They're working in restaurants. They're working. So what are you arguing with me? Why are you saying this? Then in Santa Barbara we had a whole Chicanos Studies being born, and Dr. Jesus Chavarria and many of the professors really coming together with a lot of universities, Chicanos coming together in the Plan de Santa Barbara and really arguing that there was discrimination in the universities, and developing the Plan de Santa Barbara, which some of us called the manifesto, the Higher Education Manifesto, which really dealt with equality.

That was promoted by the Democratic Party, the whole. In other words, they never really came to support. We were Democrats, but they didn't support Jesus Chavarria when he was refused tenure. They didn't support Rudy Acuña. They were scandalized when he wrote his first book.

*ESPINO*

Occupied America?

*ANGUIANO*

Occupied America. Did the Democratic Party come to his rescue? Virginia, tell me.

*ESPINO*

When, in the nineties?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, no, I'm not talking the nineties. I'm talking about—

*ESPINO*

In Santa Barbara?

*ANGUIANO*

The Plan de Santa Barbara, Chicano Studies.

*ESPINO*

I know that Rudy Acuña's tenure in the nineties in Santa Barbara was a big scandal, or even I don't think it was tenure; it was just getting the position.

*ANGUIANO*

They refused Dr. Jesus Chavarria, historian, brilliant historian, they refused him tenure, and we all came together to fight that issue, but he was never given tenure. So what happened after that? Rudy Acuña applied. Rudy Acuña applied to the university, and they would not give him a position.

*ESPINO*

When did Jesus Chavarria become up for tenure? Do you remember the year?

*ANGUIANO*

It was right after the Plan de Santa Barbara.

*ESPINO*

Very early, then, in the early seventies or late sixties.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I don't remember the year. So, going back to your question, did I find it easy to work with the Democratic Party, I never have. Look what they did to Hillary Clinton. I'll never forgive them for that. Look what they did to

Susan Jordan in our district. The Democratic Party went for Das Williams, and she was the most qualified. Then Das Williams lied about her, about Susan Jordan, that she supported BHP Billiton, the largest mining company in the world, who wanted to bring LNG [liquefied natural gas] into Oxnard. It was Susan Jordan who organized the whole battle against LNG. The Democratic Party supported Das Williams against Susan Jordan, and Das Williams lied about Susan Jordan, because she was the one that helped us win the battle against LNG here in Oxnard, and it was an international victory. She was the one who did it. Now, with my position in building equality housing, integrated housing in South Oxnard, guess who voted against me? The Democratic Party. Yes.

*ESPINO*

So it's been an uncomfortable relationship for many years. It sounds like there are times when they work well with you and other times when they're your biggest nemesis.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I became a Republican. I was a Republican. Oh, didn't you know that? I became a Republican during the tenure of Jimmy Carter, because he did not really put the White House effort into completing what President Nixon did in the Equal Rights Amendment. You know, you have to remember that President Carter was from the South, and he really saw the Equal Rights Amendment as disrupting family values and having women go out to work and having them use the same toilet that men did, was ridiculous, and going to serve in the armed force. So as a matter of fact—

*ESPINO*

Did you ever have a direct conversation with him about it?

*ANGUIANO*

No, because some of his people were—Alexis Herman was the head of the Department of Labor, and she supported the work that I was doing in Texas, welfare reform, helping the women get training and moving to jobs. But as far as the whole passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, we never really got it. The Equal Rights Amendment hasn't been ratified. Part of the problem was that Jimmy Carter did not put in his organization of the women's—should I say after Mexico and after the Houston conference in 1977, Mexico meaning the United Nations Conference on Women, the first international women called by the United Nations, which was held in Mexico, and then we held in Houston, 1977, we held a conference for all American women. Which one came first? The Houston conference was in 1977. The Mexico United Nations Conference was held in—when was the Mexico Conference held?

*ESPINO*

The Mexico Conference, I believe was in the mid seventies, '75, 1975, '76?

*ANGUIANO*

1975, that's right. In Mexico, it was 1975, and then we had the Houston Conference in 1977. After the Houston Conference, the president was to elect like—not a task force but a women's—

*ESPINO*

Was it the Status, the Commission on the Status? Is that what it was called?

*ANGUIANO*

I can't remember what the name of it was. But, anyway, that's when I sort of checked out, because I really did not see that President Carter was really moving. So I supported Rhea Mojica Hammer to move in that, and I think Cecilia Burciaga from Stanford [University], we promoted them. I didn't want to become involved because I was really upset because the Carter administration really didn't provide the leadership for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

*ESPINO*

What do you think they could have done? What were you asking them to do?

*ANGUIANO*

The Equal Rights Amendment passed and that it had to be ratified by all of the different states, and we almost had all of them. I think it was only three or four states that did not ratify, and it was in the South. President Carter could have moved those southern states.

*ESPINO*

He never spoke on it?

*ANGUIANO*

He did token support. He had the commission organized of women, of which Rhea and Burciaga served. As a matter of fact, he didn't even select Gloria Steinem. He selected Bella Abzug, but because Bella Abzug was in the Congress, and, boy, if he had not selected her, we would have just—you know. [Frances T.] Sissy Farenthold from Texas was then running for Governor of Texas, and I supported Sissy Farenthold, but some of the Chicanos from La Raza Unida didn't support her.

*ESPINO*

Why is that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, because Martha Cotera felt that they didn't support her and they weren't very supportive of La Raza Unida Party, and Martha Cotera was not selected to be a delegate to the Houston Conference, but she went anyway and she took La Raza Unida delegation. I don't know the politics of Martha Cotera, but she really resented the fact that I was very strongly working with white women, and she felt that she was very nationalistic about it. For me, I saw this whole issue of equality as being very important to blacks, to the Latinos, to women and all, and I worked very well with Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug. Bella would go and defend black people. From New York City, she would go and defend them against the Ku Klux Klan. Gloria Steinem is one of the most fantastic equality persons that I have ever

known. She's done more for women than Martha Cotera or anybody else has ever done for women. I really saw myself as really working toward the goal of equality for everyone. The way I saw the Equal Rights Amendment, I really saw the Equal Rights Amendment as being equality for everyone, the emancipation of women, the emancipation of men, bringing the whole equality into par, the blacks integrated, La Raza Unida, the Native American. I saw the Equal Rights Amendment being the last piece of legislation that we had to go through to bring equality for everyone. It was very difficult, because the Chicanos were barely getting themselves organized, and I can understand Martha's situation, because the organization of the Latina woman, the Chicana, really had to take a lot of effort, but policy-wise we could have done a lot. By passing the Equal Rights Amendment, we had the law in our side, and we could have fought many of those battles.

*ESPINO*

Was Martha against the Equal Rights Amendment?

*ANGUIANO*

No, oh, no, she supported it, but she did not support that I was working with the white women to accomplish this. But the way I saw it, I saw it as equality for everyone. I was working for the equality for everyone, like I always have and like I am now. Equality for everyone, because you know what? When you deal with policy, the common good, you reach everybody. It is hard to work just piecemeal. Now I'm working for the civil rights for blacks and the equality of the black community. Here I am for Chicanos or for Native Americans or for Latinos. When you deal with equity in policy, you have the law on your side and then you battle. Once you have a law passed, you have the law on your side for equality of all men and women, everyone. Then how many years did it take us to get the right to vote? For me, I'm eighty-two right now and I remember battling for the right to vote and now the Equal Rights Amendment. For me, I really saw it, and I think Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug saw this. The Equal Rights Amendment was the law that we still need that, the Equal Rights Amendment, for the equality of everyone, white, black, whoever, particularly now where we have such a diverse population. I think it's time we get out of the pigeonhole.

*ESPINO*

It is true, and at the same time it is also true that those issues have been divisive by race, for example, the Suffrage Movement and having the African American win the vote before white women. That was a whole debate and discussion. So I think race does come into place and who's getting it first, are men, white men, black men, white women, versus Latino. It's very complicated.

*ANGUIANO*

But, Virginia, how do you rectify that? You rectify that by the Equal Rights Amendment, equality for all men and women. You have the law on your side, and there's equality. It doesn't matter if I'm black, if I'm white, if I'm

Chicano, if I'm whatever. I'm a citizen of this country. Equal access, equality for men and women and all this.

Then we had the passage of not only sex, race, culture, religious, so when you have all of those, you really have the law so we, all of us, can fight together to reach that equality. As a matter of fact, the real issue is really working together. Right now we have worker working against worker, and we should be working for equality for all workers. I mean, I think it's important to have associations and to have caucuses and to have groups like Chicano Studies, but then Chicano Studies has to integrate. All of the talks that I have given at UCLA are Chicano Studies is to really move into the health department, the education department. Jean has been doing a great job, you know, in just really educating everyone to the issue of equality, because all of us are human beings. All of us are made in the image and likeness of God. All of us have talents. We have different talents, and all of us working with our different talents are going to really bring equality to this country and then move forward.

*ESPINO*

That's so interesting, and that brings up something for me, and that is, equality is so central to a lot of the interviews that I'm doing because people have always worked for that, yet when I'm looking at some of the documents you gave me about the struggle for Equal Rights Amendment, I see that there are a couple of issues that people don't want to concede to, and that is reproductive choice. It seems like abortion and some of these other issues, when it comes to the body, the Catholics were worried that—can you talk about that? What was the Catholic position on sexuality and the Equal Rights Amendment?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, I'd like to talk about my whole—the way I see. Pardon me, but I see those as bedroom issues, sexuality and birth. I really—

*ESPINO*

Just a second. I'm going to stop it for a second. I'm going to pause this.

[interruption]

*ESPINO*

Okay. We're back. So you were saying that you're going to speak to your philosophy of sexuality as a bedroom issue.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. I really see that as a very personal, individual, very personal issue that is not really an issue that we don't go around talking about my sexual—at least for me. In the area of abortion, well, all my life I have fought for the respect for life and the respect for when one is conceived, when one is born and when one's lived. That's a very sacred—we're all made in the image and likeness of God. I don't believe in war and capital punishment and all. Christ said those who live by the sword shall perish by the sword. Having said that, I really think that on a policy and on a law, country and the law, I don't

think laws need to be—have no business regulating people’s sexuality, sexual preference. What do we know about—I think everyone in the world, every individual, has their own sexual preference. That’s something very private, so you don’t go around exposing your private parts or your sexual parts or your individual tastes or your sexual pleasures and all. I think those things are very sacred. Sexuality is very sexual. Sexuality is very sacred, and I think we have just distorted the sexual pleasure.

When a man and a woman come together and unite themselves in a sexual manner in a sexual relationship, I see that as—Christ calls the church his spouse, a spouse. He’s the bridegroom. The church is his spouse. What that says to me is that the coming together sexually is a gift, it’s sacred, and it’s like a little taste of becoming united with God, with Christ, in his life. You read the scriptures, and God always calls the Jewish people in Christ the Christian people as his bride, my bride. “I will die for my bride. I work for my bride.” When you read the Song of Songs, you see the love that Christ had. It’s an imagery of the love that God has for his people, that God has for each one of us, and wanting to love us, wanting to be united with us. I see the sexuality as that part of that union when a man and a woman come together and become one, and the fruit of that union is the child or the fruit of that union is the joy. It is that love relationship that you experience with another. That is very sacred. That is very sacred, but it’s also very personal. I mean, if you were to ask me to describe my love relationship, my love experience with God, I would never be able to explain it to you. It would be very difficult, because how do you explain that tenderness, that real mushy, mushy love, the experience of ecstasy, the experience of just having everything, everything become beautiful and perfect and that peace and that love and that excitement and that pleasure that you get? In a relationship with God, it is not a sexual, but it is a mystical and it is higher than a physical sexuality. That is the relationship that God looks for. He wants to be reunited with us. He wants to be part of us. Every time we go, we pray, and I think that God wants—that what he wants. That’s what he’s looking for. He’s looking for that quiet time when we are just in silence and in all when he can express himself to us. That expression is an expression of love, of joy, of mystical ecstasy that is beyond.

My first sexual experience with Bill Williams, that’s what I was looking for. I wanted to experience with him what I had experienced with God, that mystical ecstasy, but it fell short.

*ESPINO*

I’m sorry.

*ANGUIANO*

I’m sorry too. [laughter] But you know there are saints, husband and wife saints, who have experienced that union in their sexual activity, in their union, in their love relationship, and I think some of the saints have experienced that love relationship. I don’t know. My feeling is that probably

St. Frances of Assisi and St. Clare, I think that they had a very personal, but they never came together sexually. There is something in me that I see of that mystical experience being experiencing themselves, that they experienced that. Within themselves and within God they were united within that mystical love of Christ, because they both were experiencing that mystical union with Christ, and they experienced that within themselves and they shared that. So they were willing to go through anything to retain that, and that is what Christianity is all about. But I tell you, the Muslims have that same experience also. The Sufi saints have just the beautiful songs they sing to God, and that union with God is just so beautiful. And the Hindu, the Hindus have monks who spend their whole life in complete union with God. I participated in Sita yoga, which was a Hindu, and the fire of that love, it's really very purifying and it just makes you whole. It really makes you whole. We live in a body that has the soul. The body is going to deteriorate, but the soul isn't. To experience that on earth is an ecstasy. It is love. It is just perfect. It's what perfection is all about. It's God. You're united. So that's what I see. Sexuality is sacred, but we have distorted it. We have made it yuck.

*ESPINO*

Before we go on to that part of the issue, stepping back a little bit and looking at the reality of sexuality on a day-to-day basis, and that is, especially for women, pregnancy.

*ANGUIANO*

When you have a love relation with your husband or your partner, you produce fruit and that fruit is your child, just like God the father and God the holy spirit that produce Christ. God the father, God the son, and the God the holy—the trinity is a love experience of persons.

*ESPINO*

So where does choice come into play as far as deciding, well, I don't want to have five, I'd rather have two, I don't want to have any, that kind of thing?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, that is an area that if you do not want the fruit of that mystical union, of that union with your husband, I don't know about that. I don't know. What you do to someone would tie their tubes or women do this or do that?

*ESPINO*

I guess just as far as the church's position and the Catholic position and as far as being against equal rights. Does the woman have the equal right to decide? Is that part of that issue?

*ANGUIANO*

The Equal Rights Amendment is about equality for everyone. Now, you as an individual have the right to be—you're made and created in the image and likeness of God and everyone has a responsibility to respect you as an individual. I don't care who it is, everyone is made in the image and

likeness. There isn't a human being born in this world that isn't created in the image and likeness of God. Your relationship with God is your relationship. That's your relationship with God who created you, and who am I to judge you? It's your conscience. God lives within us, and he's there to guide us, and who am I to judge you? Even the transsexual, the women who have abortions, the ones who have same-sex marriage and abortion or want to change their sex or whatever, sexuality is sacred, and what people do with their individual conscience and the way they relate to God is—I belong to the Catholic Church, but I respect the Hindu, I respect the Muslim, I respect the Buddhas. I respect all religions. Their teachings is something personal. If somebody were to tell me that Christ is a fairytale, I would say it's a beautiful fairytale for me. I love it. I'm going to continue living that, because it's my choice and that's my ideal and that's the standard that I have chosen for myself.

*ESPINO*

Did you ever think about why the church takes the position of celibacy and anti—

*ANGUIANO*

Wait, wait. Let's just talk about celibacy. I'm a celibate. I'm a celibate by choice. Priests have a very special relationship with God, very, very special. What they do with it, I'm not to judge. I'm not a judge. But we have fantastic priests, Father John, Father Marco, he's going to be good. He's a Mexican from Mexico, worked in Monterrey, was a high-paying position, left to become a priest, and now he's served in our parish for four years and everybody was crying because he's leaving them. They've sent him to Rome to learn moral theology. Everybody, even he, but celibacy for a priest, for a nun and for a person who just wants to live a celibate life is a very sacred thing in relationship with God.

I see that as a mystical relationship, as a love relationship, that I can sit down and meditate and be very close to God and that's heaven on earth. So that's what celibacy is about. I've had relationships and I've been married, but I've chosen celibacy. I chose it before, and I went back to it. Well, I didn't really leave religious life because I wanted to get married, because that was never—you know, but I did. I never had that love relationship that I was really looking for that I want to live by. Now, is it different for you? Is it different for a transsexual? Is it different for a gay person or for a lesbian? Yes, it's different, but I'm not to judge. People say, "How can you put up with the church?" I say, "Well, I put up with the Catholic Church just like I put up with President [Barack] Obama and the Congress and the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, the Tea Party," who's lost in the woods. That's the only way that I can explain it from my personal point of view, what I see and what I believe in. Ministering to the transsexual, the gay person, the person with AIDS, I don't see that any different from ministering to everyone else. The church embraces everyone, and who are we to judge

them? But the church has a responsibility to speak on moral issues and speak about the designs that God has for our moral behavior. Do I agree with everything that the church, that the priests do? No, I don't. I don't agree with Pope Benedict and some of the things he does, but he's the pope. I put up with him just like I put up with President Obama, who's messing up our environment.

*ESPINO*

How do you feel about the notion that women should become priests or women should be allowed to become priests?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, for me, it would be a sad day for women to enter a hierarchy. I think they would suffer a lot, because the church is male-dominated, just like the Jewish is male-dominated, just like the Hindu, just like the Muslim, the O\_\_\_\_. Look at those poor Muslim women. So the equality of women is very important, but if a woman wants to be a priest, [unclear] to enter into a male governance, I don't wish that on anyone.

*ESPINO*

Do you see that it needs to change in the future?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I don't know. Women who want to be priests should have an opportunity to. The women religious are working toward that, they're working toward the ordination of women, but I'm not—you know.

*ESPINO*

What's your reservations?

*ANGUIANO*

I have a hard time dealing with the Democratic Party and the President Obama. Why would I want to take on—I leave that to God. It's going to take tearing down the Berlin Wall, thank you, President Reagan.

*ESPINO*

I see what you're saying. It's not that you're against the position?

*ANGUIANO*

No, I'm not.

*ESPINO*

You don't want to be in that struggle.

*ANGUIANO*

There's no way I'm going to enter that struggle. No way. Just like there's no way I'm going to try to straighten out the Democratic Party. I'm a Decline to State voter. I don't believe in any of those parties. I don't believe in any of those labels. I'm going to vote for the person that is really common sense and really dealing with the common good. Because if you vote for people who are working for the common good, you take care of everything, you know. You really are a sincere person. I'd like to see Hillary [Clinton] be President of the United States. I think she would be a good president. I would like Susan Jordan to be the head of our Assembly. I would like to see

her reelected. Pedro Nava was the best assemblyman Oxnard has ever had. I testified last week for the redistricting, and so I work very hard to have the city of Oxnard be kept whole. We're always being divided. At one time we had four representatives, and I would like to see Oxnard being able to elect its own representative. So I'm in the struggle, but I choose my struggles. I choose a struggle. If I think it's a hopeless case, I just leave it, but if it's an issue that I can make an impact, I get into it and I work very hard for it. So, straighten out the Democratic Party is not my priority, nor the Republican Party. They're lost in the woods. I don't know. But I'm living in Oxnard and I'm certainly participating. I'm working for the reelection of Supervisor John Zaragoza. For the first time in a hundred years, he has made District Five Oxnard really be respected, given us a voice in the Ventura County, been able to win major victories for us.

*ESPINO*

Was he elected from an all-Latino coalition or was it a diverse coalition?

*ANGUIANO*

It was a diverse coalition.

*ESPINO*

Oh, that's interesting.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

So when we get to that point, I'd like to hear about that, because it's almost like this is happening later, whereas in Los Angeles it happened a little bit earlier where someone like [Congressman] Edward Roybal made it into this position. But you're here, we're 2011, and you're talking about almost the same things are happening.

*ANGUIANO*

We had Pedro Nava when we were elected him to the Assembly, and he was a Democrat. He is a Democrat, strong one. Well, he works across the line. He's very practical. He works for the common good and he's a strong environmentalist. Susan Jordan is a strong feminist, but also very strong. In other words, she gets her facts and she doesn't alienate people. She works to bring people together, and that's what I like. I like when people are going to work together and find common ground and really improve. Our priorities are improving education. Fifty percent of our kids don't graduate. 2011, and 50 percent of our Latino kids drop out of school. It's a scandal.

*ESPINO*

Do you feel like when you were with the La Raza Unida Party that you were working in coalition, that you were working across the board? Did you learn anything from that experience?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yes and no. Yes from the standpoint that [unclear] and La Raza Unida was working to be a build a city that was a model city of equality and racial

equality for Latinos, the betterment of Latinos, and Crystal City was really great getting into improving education, housing, employment and all. So that was what all of us were working for, and then moving that as a model to other cities. Did we have the support? Well, I think in Crystal City, maybe 90 percent were Latino and Chicanos.

*ESPINO*

You didn't need the support of the Anglo population or the African American? That's interesting.

*ANGUIANO*

There was no African American.

*ESPINO*

How about when you were passing the bilingual bill? I'm assuming you needed to work across.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. Well, I'll tell you, the people who were the strongest supporters, who really built the coalition, was really Congressman Hawkins from the Watts area, South Central Los Angeles, and Congressman—what was his name—from the Hollywood area.

*ESPINO*

We could look that up. I don't know his name.

*ANGUIANO*

What was his name? Congressman—

*ESPINO*

Edward Roybal wasn't—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, Congressman Roybal was supportive, but he was not in the committee. Congressman [Henry B.] González, it was funny, because he had a big battle with Senator Ralph Yarborough, and so he wasn't very supportive. He wasn't supportive, but we got it passed anyway.

*ESPINO*

Can you tell me the steps that you took from the beginning?

*ANGUIANO*

From the bilingual, from bilingual education?

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, that's a whole—

*ESPINO*

Do you want to take on that topic next time?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, shall we do that, because it is a very—well, we've covered some of that. Remember when I told you when Ralph Guzman, myself were selected as delegates to go the White House?

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

That's when the bilingual issue started. Ralph Yarborough had been working with Professor [Patricia] Sánchez from the University of Texas, and they developed what they called the Bilingual Education Bill. The problem was that Elizabeth Ott in the University of Texas, she called it bilingual education, but it was ESL [English as a Second Language], really. Professor Sanchez spoke about bilingual education, and I was not sure if—but when he came to—I advocated bilingual education when I came from California. The Latinos, Chicanos from Texas were talking about bilingual education, and their whole introduction to bilingual education was coming from Professor Sanchez, but he was influenced by Elizabeth Ott. But the thing that moved bilingual education was Florida, because the Cubans were coming from Cuba in droves, and they brought their teachers, they brought their lawyers. It was [Fulgencio] Batista really getting rid of all of the professional people, and they came to Florida, Miami, and you had teachers. You know, the kids who came couldn't speak English, and so you had teachers who spoke Spanish and so they used Spanish in the classroom in Miami. They had attorneys, and the kids of the attorneys and kids of the teachers were not about to let them just lose their Spanish. So in Florida, the retention of Spanish became real. But in Texas, Elizabeth Ott was in the University of Texas and she called it bilingual education, but when it came to where I was, it really wasn't.

When we came from California in President Johnson's White House meeting that he had, I argued for bilingual education because Senator Ralph Yarborough had spoken nationally about bilingual education. So we had not established a definition for bilingual education. So when I was an appointee of President Johnson, recruited by Vice President [Hubert H.] Humphrey [Jr.], who invited me to come to really develop bilingual education in the Office of Education, I worked with probably the nation's best authority on bilingual education, and that was Dr. Bruce Gaarder in the Office of Education, and he had already real experience in working with bilingual education. His whole dream was introducing our country into a foreign language and retaining the foreign languages that we had in San Francisco in speaking Chinese, in Louisiana speaking French, in the Southwest speaking Spanish, and so it really was bilingual education. His whole experience when I came in and started to work with him and started to formulate the bill, we visited some of the schools in Washington, D.C., where the foreign diplomats had their kids, and there were children from Africa, from Asia, and the children of the diplomats and coming from different parts of the world, their children had no trouble learning English, but then they also retained their language, you know. So we saw it work very, very well, very effective.

So when I started to work with him, started to develop that bill, well, the ideas had already been put forth by Senator Ralph Yarborough, and we started to really put it together how it was going to work. So I had the opportunity of working with Dr. Bruce Gaarder, and then I brought in the California Spanish-speaking experience into the bill. I worked very closely with Congressman Hawkins and with Ralph Yarborough and with George Brown, the congressman from California, because he really was a very strong supporter of mine. He had seen me involved in Los Angeles from the open housing to the work that I did with the training and employment project in East Los Angeles and also with the teenage program. So he was a great admirer of mine. When I went to Washington, I was just ready to go.

*ESPINO*

How did your bill differ from Professor Ott's?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it wasn't any different; it was in the implementation. And that was a great learning experience for me, because if you read the bill, the bilingual bill, the bilingual bill spells out very well how the teaching of Spanish, the teaching of different languages with English. It was Elizabeth Ott who came out with ESL, English as a Second Language, and that's where we lost bilingual education.

*ESPINO*

How so?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, ESL is about taking the syntax of the English language and the Spanish language and, through a process of repetition, teaching enunciation and pronunciation of English. ESL is really on English. ESL is really a remedial to the English language. It's not bilingual education. I wouldn't call the syntax of a language bilingual.

I think many of the people in the Office of Education were not educated, and then when we brought a lot of people in, I made the mistake of promoting Armando Rodriguez to head the office, which I should have headed. I should have stayed in that position, because then he started to work with the congressman from Texas, Congressman Gonzalez, who then supported Elizabeth Ott.

*ESPINO*

What was your view of bilingual education?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, teaching Spanish as a language, Spanish is a language. It's a developed language. Spanish is comparable to English, comparable to Chinese, the Chinese language. It's a language. It's not a remedial. Bilingual education isn't a remedial, but it has been used throughout the country as the remedial step to learning English. It's not really teaching the Spanish language. Then when it comes to Spanish, to look at the language of Texas, of Colorado, of California, which is basically Mexican, it isn't Spanish.

*ESPINO*

From Spain.

*ANGUIANO*

From Spain, you know, which is completely different. Nor is it Spanish from like is spoken in El Salvador. It was a Mexican American unit, so we were focusing on the Mexican American population because those were the people that were dropping out of school. Those were the predominant population in the schools in Los Angeles.

*ESPINO*

Was that considered avant-garde, was that considered cutting-edge, the idea that you would teach Spanish as a language versus teach English as a second language? That's what you're saying the two differences are, that one program teaches Spanish as a native language or as a language, and the other, Professor Ott's program, was teaching English as a second language. There was no Spanish instruction in her bilingual education?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, what they called Spanish instruction was using the syntax of the language, the pronunciation. There's similarity in syntax when you compare the English and the Spanish language, and the syntax of the language is what you use in enunciation and pronunciation and the vowels. ESL [English as a Second Language] is really in English. It takes the Spanish as the syntax and matches it with the enunciation and the pronunciation. ESL is not a bilingual program.

*ESPINO*

Where did English fit into your program, the one that you were hoping to establish?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, from my experience as a teacher, when I taught, I saw that the children came with some knowledge of English, either because they heard it on the radio, because they heard it when the mother went to the grocery store, and also they had some experience in English, but the predominate language spoken in the home was Spanish, which was true in my case. We only spoke Spanish. My parents spoke it. But when I went to school, the teacher didn't speak Spanish, so that was my introduction into learning English. Then during recreation and all, and the kids who were in the classroom, who were in the second, third grade, knew English, and so I learned to understand what the teacher was saying through learning some of the English words, and I started to learn English.

The problem was that I became educated in English but never in Spanish. What would have been the ideal would have been to have English in the language part of your curriculum to teach Spanish, and I would be very familiar with that because I already spoke it at home, and to have the teacher in the language. You have history, you have math, you have language, to have Spanish being taught like my mother spoke Spanish, and

then you have the English and the Spanish and you have a bilingual child who speaks both English and Spanish.

*ESPINO*

The principal difference was fluency. You were promoting fluency in both languages and education in both languages, versus losing fluency in one language to be fluent in English.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it was more than that, because ESL really doesn't—I guess ESL is really a big mess, because in some schools they use Spanish, in some schools they use English and Spanish, and in some schools they only use Spanish. It has never been properly organized language. The Spanish, the English has not been properly organized. It is a total mess. That's why it's a failure. That's why so many of the kids don't learn either English or Spanish. That's why they're dropping out of school. That's why education is such a mess.

*ESPINO*

What happened to the bill?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, when it came to the writing stages, Elizabeth Ott was called in, and then we had a gentleman who worked with her in Texas who also came in and he really—then we only had \$5 million, and so the money was spread out to different—and most of the schools used the money for different things. They didn't use them for bilingual education. Then some schools, because we had Latinos there, they tried to use it, but then the instruction, the curriculum was either you used Elizabeth Ott's model or you developed your own. When you develop your own by people who don't know what they're doing, it becomes very ineffective. You have different styles, and you only have \$5 million, and so it never—you know. Then I decided to leave. I was so disheartened by the issue. Then I decided to leave, and I went to work with Cesar Chavez.

*ESPINO*

Oh, I see. So you didn't get the chance to see it through to the end. That's interesting. I think that's going to be a good place to stop here, and we'll pick up on some of those issues. We talked about your work with Cesar Chavez. I'm going to go back and review and see if that's something we might need to revisit.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, because if you want to stick to the issue of education that would be—but, you know, before closing, when I was very disappointed and was leaving, Ernesto Galarza had a press conference, and I agreed with him. Bilingual education is not going to become a reality because it's been just really not implemented correctly. Then we had Armando Rodriguez, who he was from California, and part of it was my fault because I promoted him to be the head of the Mexican American unit in the Office of Education. Then he

brought Albar Peña from the University Texas, and neither of them—well, Albar Peña was really taught by Elizabeth Ott, and so between him and Armando Rodriguez, he didn't—it's too bad he really didn't go and work with Bruce Gaarder, because they might have been able to salvage it, but Armando Rodriguez was very politically motivated, and what he did was turn to Gonzalez from Texas, the congressman from Texas, and then, of course, he was fighting against, Gonzalez was—I don't know, there was problem between him and Senator Ralph Yarborough. So Armando from California, he was a political guy and he wasn't really an educator. He worked in education, but I don't know what happened to him. I was just disgusted, and when I can't do something about something, I just move on.

*ESPINO*

When looking back, do you think that it was more than a simple pedagogical dispute? Was there more involved in why people were supporting the ESL version versus your version?

*ANGUIANO*

It was a political issue, and Gonzalez was not really working well with Senator Yarborough. Armando Rodriguez was more interested in the political arena. He came from California. California hadn't developed the bilingual education. He hadn't been involved that much in it. So the real mover of bilingual education, the expert was really Dr. Bruce Gaarder and myself, who worked with him, and I understood it because I worked with him. Then I also spoke to Hawkins and to—what was the Republican congressman from Hollywood, who really were the ones in the Education Committee who really were the instruments of getting the bill passed, working with Senator Ralph Yarborough to get it passed through the Congress. It passed the Senate. It went to the House. I think that's the way it happened. Then it was Hawkins and—my gosh, I can't remember his name.

I had a signed thing up at the luncheon we had, and they both signed it. They agreed to work on it, on its passage, and then it went to the Appropriations [Committee] and it passed. So, yes. Then after it was turned into the written, that's where we lose a lot of legislation. It's in the written guidelines. The ones who were called in to help with the written guidelines were Ott and Albar Peña, who really— [End of June 28, 2011 interview]

### ***1.8. Session 8 (July 14, 2011)***

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino. Today is July 14 [2011]. I'm interviewing Miss Lupe Anguiano in the library in Oxnard, California. You were recalling an event that you went to with LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens] and a discussion that you had with Dr. Julian Nava. Do you want to start over again? Because we weren't recording earlier.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, yes. It was the state LULAC [League of Latin American Citizens] convention that was held in Oxnard, and David Rodriguez worked very hard, and other members of LULAC, to get the state convention to be held in Oxnard. The main, the core issue of the convention was education, and we invited Rudy Acuña to talk about ethnic studies, particularly because of the issue in Arizona. They wanted to eliminate ethnic studies. So Rudy Acuña came in. He organized really a wonderful workshop, inviting the leaders of the Arizona Ethnic Studies Program to Oxnard. Anyway, it was very, very successful. The other workshop dealt with some of the issues that we're having here in Oxnard, rectifying some of the problems we're having with the Oxnard High School District and the Oxnard Elementary School District. The Oxnard High School District, we had trustees who were using lunch money. I think it was about \$5 million. They were using that money for self-promotion. They were using that to bring together, use it for various projects that they had in mind. Some of it went to organize a Performing Arts Center, but put their names on the billboards as them being dedicated to them, their memory.

LULAC and various organizations came together, particularly LULAC, and challenged the school board. They treated us very badly, and so what LULAC did, along with other organizations, was to target the trustees who were up for reelection. One of them was a Latino, so we unseated them, unseated them, and so we elected two other trustees. Socorro [Lopez] Henson was then elected to be the chair of the Oxnard High School District. The first thing that the newly elected trustees did was challenge the superintendent, because the superintendent had been responsible for Valenzuelos [phonetic], a very good high school teacher in Port Hueneme High School, for him to be dismissed. So the trustees challenged him, and he resigned, the superintendent resigned, which was great, and so now Socorro Henson and the new board are in the process of selecting a new superintendent. In the elementary school district, we had a problem of them demoting Debra Cordes and then firing Dr. Anna Becerra and Norma Del Rio, who were highly qualified people. So we challenged them, and we had an opportunity to elect one very good member. So we're still having problems in rectifying that, and Dr. Anna Becerra is in the process right now of trying to challenge the decision, because what they did, they said she was "too ethnic." What I did, I called that a racist statement, and they were alarmed that I would call that a racist statement. What else is it, if you say, "You're being fired because you're too ethnic"? Then Debra Cordes was demoted from principal to go back to the classroom, and the reason was that she was not a good fit to be a principal. Here she's been a principal for thirty years, and they were telling her that she was not fit. She had never had a bad write-up, she'd never been reprimanded for anything, and her scores were higher than some of the scores of schools who were in the at-risk students. Her scores were

higher than any of the others, yet they singled her out and told her that she was being demoted because she was not a good fit.

Norma Del Rio had seventeen years in San Diego and had worked with language-deficiency students, or should I say really Spanish-speaking children. That isn't a deficiency, but, anyway, that's what they called it. Yet she was dismissed without being told why. So we're still in that battle right now. We're fighting that situation, because some of them want to place as vice president of curriculum a teacher who had only a few years as principal. She'd never really handled a curriculum really, yet they want to promote her because she is the daughter of a former superintendent of Camarillo, Mrs. Yamachuri. Then the head of resources is Mr. Brown, who has never had experiences in human resources. So when I went before the board, I told them that I had done school reviews when I was in the Office for Civil Rights in Washington [D.C.], and I had told them that they were not following human resources standards. Then in one meeting that was not really recorded, I challenged them that there was the problem of racism in their practices, and, of course, they were just alarmed. So we're still working on that. In El Rio, we had a superintendent, and David Rodriguez is the one who, vice president of LULAC, who is really very heavily involved in that. In El Rio we had a superintendent who was caught stealing some shoes, and then one trustee who had sexually abused a minority young woman who had been under his care. I know his wife and she's a cancer survivor, and it was very sad to see that the child, their adopted child, was being abused by this trustee. So the El Rio school, some of them were really defending him and didn't want to see him.

So LULAC came together, with the help of a lot of other people, and we elected new trustees, and one of them is my nephew. Well, he's my niece's husband, so I call him—you know how Mexicans are. He's my nephew Ramon, and he is really great. He's a teacher in Pacifica High School, and he came in with a clean state. He didn't want to accuse anyone and he didn't want to bring the old problems to bear. He just really wanted to get a new superintendent and to really get to the business of placing students first and parents. So we're in that battle right now, but I think we're in the cutting edge. The important thing is that LULAC has played a central role, and I have been a major player in supporting that. I took the lead in the Oxnard Elementary School District, really, as David took the lead in the El Rio. In the high school it was really David and a lot of others, with the help of CSUCI [California State University, Channel Islands]. Some of the professors at CSUCI really participated in that. So at that LULAC convention, we selected education as the main topic, so, of course, we invited Rudy Acuña, and then David really wanted Julian Nava to participate because we wanted to have like—well, I just remember in the sixties when we wrote like not a manifesto, but really a blueprint of how we saw education being critical to our community and that education has really failed and continues to fail our

students, and that we need to improve and we need to change the way of education is being utilized, being promoted.

Me, having experience in the Bilingual Education Bill and then my experience in working in the Office for Civil Rights reviewing education programs, I was a part of some of the discussions, not all of them, but I was part of some of the discussions. So when Rudy Acuña saw me, he sort of dragged me over, and he says, "Lupe, we need to discuss this, you know. We really need to deal with this education now." I said, "Well, Rudy, that would take weeks for us to really get down to the problems that we're facing in education, because 50 percent of the students in the Oxnard, Ventura County, the Oxnard area don't graduate from high school." I mean, that's still a problem. When I was working in bilingual education, it was 75 percent of the students dropped out of school, but now in Oxnard it's 50 percent. If you really calculate when the student starts in first grade and goes to eighth grade, middle school, eighth grade, and high school, 50 percent don't really graduate. Bill Terrazas from LULAC, he's a teacher at Channel Islands. He retired this year, a month ago. He calls it push-out. We have an issue in Oxnard in these schools, all of the schools, where we have a push-out situation. So, anyway, to make a long story short, we got together with Julian Nava and Rudy Acuña, and I asked Julian Nava, "Julian, you've written so many books, and why is it that you have never mentioned the role of women, particularly the Mexican American Women's Council of which I was the president? Why have you never mentioned women?"

He says, "Oh, yeah, that's right. I mean, I remember 1969. You know I'm writing a new book." [laughs] I just left it at that. And a little thing that upset me was when Linda Merchant [phonetic] from Chicago, when I said that, she wrote back in my Facebook, "Keep it real, Lupe," sort of like I was making it up. I became very upset and I said, "This is very real. It's very true." Even though the Mexican American Women's Council, who was part of an overall community coalition of various organizations, even though that name, their name and us have been lost doesn't mean that we were not there, because we were. Dionne [Espinoza] mentioned, she says, "Keep that information coming, Lupe." And somebody else wrote to encourage me. So I said, "Yeah, you know that's what happens when mujeres are left out of many of the movements." When Latinos write about us, sometimes even Latinas write, because it's their experience, they start as though history started with them, with their involvement, instead of looking back and doing research about who started this, who was involved in that ten years ago, twenty years ago. The issue of Teen Post Program didn't start when Dionne had a meeting of—you remember, you were president then, where we were talking about, at Cal State L.A., she invited women to come and talk about their experiences. One of those spoke about the Teen Post Program. Then I said she doesn't really bring up the fact that the Teen Post Program came way before she was involved in it.

Also the Católicos Por la Raza, because Católicos Por la Raza really started because the Catholic Church wanted to close a school that was primarily serving Latinos, and they were trying to close that. So we were very upset, because the Catholic schools were the one place where Latinos really received a good education and assisted and all. So, anyway, many of those stories, I'm beginning to wonder about the historical perspective of before the school walkouts, before the—what do you call it when Ruben Salazar was assassinated? The moratorium. Before that, what led to the school walkouts, what led to the moratorium? So I think that a lot of that history is some of us old-timers, who it's a miracle I'm still alive at eighty-two going on eighty-three, that that has not been recorded.

*ESPINO*

You're absolutely right, and I think that's one of the objectives of what I'm trying to do is to look at people like yourself in the fifties and the sixties and what were you doing and what were your ideas. I think we went over some of that, because although you were in the order, your work was always social service and that's really important. I think people like yourself were the building blocks to what happened later on. That's very important. But I wanted to talk to you. You mentioned something about the plan in the sixties. Are you talking about El Plan de Santa Barbara or about the blueprint for an educational improvement?

*ANGUIANO*

I was not involved in El Plan de Santa Barbara, but I became acquainted with it because of Dr. Jesus Echeverria, who was not given tenure. Then all of us who were very active in the movement were contacted to try to deal with the issue, so that's when I learned.

Then I learned about El Plan de Santa Barbara, which he and Fernando Tenochea de Nechocha were very much involved in, and Gracia Molina de Pick was very much involved. So I became involved in defending giving tenure to Dr. Jesus Echeverria, and Santa Barbara refused to give him that. Then I started to read El Plan de Santa Barbara, and it was like a blueprint for higher education, and it's great. It really was adopted. It was really the foundation for ethnic studies and the foundation for really dealing with the issue of Mexican American Chicanos who have been in this country for years and years and years and years, even before the Gold Rush. So Dr. Echeverria, being a historian, was doing research in that area, and, of course, Rudy Acuña, also in his book, *Occupied America*, which is also another part of history that has been lost. I know when I was living in San Antonio, the Alamo, I was struck by the way that Texas dealt with the Alamo with David Crockett and all, and they never really mentioned the Mexican who really participated in that revolution, the independence of Texas, because they were being neglected by Mexican government, who was fighting their own battles with [unclear] and with friends and had really neglected the new territory which was really being occupied by the Mexican,

that whole area of agriculture and all. Then when the Spaniards came in, being Catholic, the Franciscans started to build on the missions, working with the Indian, with the Native American, and all of that history and all that panorama, that activity in history has never really been explored, written about, within the context of the Native people who really lived here, both the Native American and the Mexican, who is also Indian, but from an America that is part of all of the Americas.

I think it's a really very beautiful history because you have tribes, the Chumash, you have the Aztecs, you have the Maya, and this whole America is a Native land that is very rich culturally, historically, and particularly when you visit the archaeological centers in Mexico. So it was like an awakening but also an identifying of who I was as a Mexican, and my parents having moved, having lived in the United States yet being part of that Mexican tradition and ancestral tradition that historically has never really been written or really explored. So I saw this El Plan de Santa Barbara from a historical perspective as being very important, and I think it still is, because I don't think the issue is learning Spanish; I think the issue is appreciating the culture and the language. The language is very much part of the culture. When you understand the language and have an appreciation of the language and have an appreciation of the culture from which the language derives is the core, I think, of solving our education. And also leading us to that reality that the pilgrims came and the pilgrims were running away from a Europe that was predominantly Christian Catholic, but was really oppressing the people from a religious standpoint, and the Catholic Church was oppressing, had its burning at stake, you can't challenge the church, and Protestants rightfully being oppressed and persecuted. It's very interesting because Martin Luther was a priest, and so much of this is started. Benito Juarez, El [Spanish word], was a priest. So you have this dichotomy of this happening, which I think is very relevant to today's history.

And understanding also what Muslims are going through in terms of separation of church and state, which is really very critical. Our lord said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's," and so for me that's very important, the separation of church and state, because when you have religion electing senators and congressmen, you're really getting to the political arena that is not good.

*ESPINO*

Right, because your own personal beliefs could influence. You mentioned at the same time that you were in this Oxnard battle that you might develop a new plan. Did that ever happen at the LULAC convention? What's the next step?

*ANGUIANO*

We wanted to, but we did not have enough time. A state convention deals with the issues of the entire state, LULAC members in all of California.

LULAC members in all of California come with different issues and different problems, and so we didn't really get it together. I think what we really need to do, because education has been the core issue of LULAC, what we need to really do is come together just on an educational platform and deal with that. David tried, and that's why he invited Julian Nava and Rudy Acuña, and I believe David right now is working on a plan for us to really come together in August. I don't know if we're going to get it done, because we have the redistricting issue, which we won the Ventura County. We won that battle and it was very easy, the easiest battle we've ever had, because of Supervisor John Zaragoza. He really brought the supervisors together. And Kathy Long [phonetic] and Steve Bennet, who is my supervisor, and so we were able to really come together, and Linda Parks. It's really wonderful how LULAC has established a very good rapport and communication with the Board of Supervisors in Ventura County.

One of the priorities that we have now is really dealing with the Food Stamp Program is not really being administered correctly. It's being used for other things. Then the hiring practices of Ventura County, a lot of Latinos who are qualified have not been hired by them. So I think that those are priorities, but we're still pushing for education because that's a core issue. On Saturday we're having a meeting on the redistricting, because we were fighting very hard to keep Oxnard whole. Oxnard has been divided by—sometimes we have four representatives from Santa Barbara or from Santa Monica, and we haven't had a representative really from Oxnard. John Zaragoza, in the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, he's the first one in a hundred years that we elected to the Board of Supervisors. I think the last one was Mr. Camarillo [phonetic]. So we have a long ways to go, a lot of work to do, but the good news is that we're very active. We're very active and, really, David has done a good job to bring a coalition of a lot of groups, including some that we sometimes don't even agree with, like CAUSE [Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy]. We're bringing them in to try to really—and then Clinicas. We work very well with Clinicas, Ruben Juarez, who is helping me to make changes in the Stewards of the Earth, my organization. I want to close Stewards of the Earth, but some people don't want me to close it. I haven't receive any money for years, and so I think maybe it's time for me to close it, but we'll see.

*ESPINO*

It seems like you're busy right now with a lot of other projects. You don't have to worry about that yet.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, you're right. And the community, it's very delightful. We were 70 percent of the population in Oxnard, and we're really coming together, both labor and—of course, what's helping us is the Republican, the Tea Party, who want to do away with all of the programs, and so we're coming together

to really deal with those highly, highly angry, angry people who are just angry with everything.

*ESPINO*

Do you find you have Tea Partiers here in Oxnard?

*ANGUIANO*

We have them in Thousand Oaks and we have them in Ventura. I don't think they would survive in Oxnard. [laughs] I don't think they would come out. Well, there are some who talk against immigration, but they don't come out in open, openly, publicly. We have very good elected officials, really, and our police department is really very sensitive, and so are the firefighters. Many of them are Latinos. But we have a full agenda.

*ESPINO*

Yes, sounds like it. You had a lot of experience that would help to prepare you for what you're facing with today, and I wanted to go back to your time in Texas and talk a little bit about the National Women's Employment and Education Program that you developed, because it was groundbreaking in many ways. In particular, I was interested in your connection with [Office of] Health [Education] and Welfare, because that was a connection that was new to me. Do you remember what your philosophy was at the time and what you were arguing at the time when you were in Texas? Can you talk to me about that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, from the standpoint of health, I was then the Executive Director for the Office for the Spanish-Speaking for the United States Catholic Conference, and I was working for twenty-three bishops in the Southwest, meaning Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona—and what else? Anyway, those were the main, and the office was in San Antonio. The Catholic Conference was thinking that maybe we should close the Spanish-speaking office, and mainly because of lack of money. So I was in Washington working on the Equal Rights Amendment. I was working in the Office of Health, Education and Welfare [HEW], in the Office for Civil Rights, under Stan Pottinger. I just saw that I was really getting nowhere, and so I was selected by—recommended by Stan Pottinger to work with twenty-three women who were designated by Elliot Richardson, then the secretary, who's a Republican, to develop the blueprint for American women, and that's when the Equal Rights Amendment was being discussed. I selected welfare reform, primarily because I saw that that's where women, a lot of Latino women, were having a lot of problems, and so I decided to look at that. Well, my research in that area was very astounding, and one of the things that just sort of astounded me the most was reading the legislation, the policy, which called the woman the caretaker. I said, "A caretaker? Really she is the head of the family. She's a single parent, responsible for her children, and she's being called a caretaker? Who's she taking the care of? The children's care, like a babysitter?" I saw that in my mind, I saw that like a babysitter, and I said,

"This is wrong. She really is the head of her family. She really is the parent. She's a single parent who's responsible for her children, and her children are the most important part of her because she gave birth to them. And here they're calling her a caretaker?"

Then, furthermore, I continued to read the policy and I saw that what she was provided for to be the caretaker was not even the poverty level of income. Income maintenance, they called it, income maintenance meaning 90 percent of the poverty level was she to receive. That made me very angry. So I started to challenge that, and then I started to say the policy needs to be changed. It needs to be changed to address the single parent as the head of household. She's the head of a household. She's not the caretaker. She's the head of her household. And as the head of the household, what do you do to a head of a household? You provide them a self-sufficiency, employment, not income maintenance. Because if you are income maintenance, what do you do? In terms of the policy, you get food stamps, you get healthcare, you get a lot of social services. But what troubled me was that nothing was being done to provide her with a job and with self-sufficiency. So when I read further, I saw that if she worked, she was denied social services, and so for me that was trapping her and her children in a cycle of poverty. So that's when I started to really, really delve into that. My part of welfare never made it to the secretary's report, the Women's Action Program. Did you see the Women's Action Program when you looked at that?

*ESPINO*

No. That's something I can go back and look at, the Women's Action Program.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, which is the blueprint for it. It's under Elliot Richardson. So I became very interested in really developing and looking at providing, instead of income maintenance and AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] welfare, to demonstrate what would happen to a woman if she was given a job and given social services, all the social services she needs to enable her to stabilize in employment. So that was the idea that I developed. Well, what happened to that idea was that some became very alarmed with the idea that a woman who had children below the age of six, the policy would read that she would get employment and social services, and that was sort of like no one had ever thought of that. But I was determined to deal with that.

*ESPINO*

Did you have to debate with any of the welfare-rights activists like—oh, gosh, what's her name, the famous African American? [Johnnie] Tillmon, is it?

*ANGUIANO*

Tillmon, yes.

*ESPINO*

Then Alicia Escalante was the Chicano welfare rights, and some other women.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Can you—

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. Yes and no. What I said was they want more money instead of the income maintenance. Instead of 90 percent of the poverty level, they are asking for more money, and I did not want to go that route, but I didn't oppose it, primarily because it was true. It was ridiculous that here you have a—let me tell you the key issue in this, is that when you have a woman in welfare, she's a woman who has children who are below the age of six. So a child is born. You're talking about a childbearing woman who is still in childbearing age. So you're talking about a woman who is young, healthy, and intelligent.

Working in the issue of Equal Rights Amendment, we were all promoting equality in the workforce. That was a key issue for me, equality in the workforce. For me, the Equal Rights Amendment meant that a woman had an opportunity to choose a career and to succeed in that career, and because she was a woman, that the law should not hinder a woman, because she's a woman, from entering a career as a doctor, as a lawyer. So that, to me, was what the Equal Rights Amendment—we've talked about that. You and I have discussed that. So coming from that framework, and I saw the AFDC, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, welfare program was a hindering of a low-income woman from moving into employment. So, for me, the Equal Rights Amendment, I was applying the strategy of the Equal Rights Amendment to this policy, and I saw the policy as being very discriminatory. Because if a man who was a single male, single parent, was given a job, was expected to work, why not a woman? So it's an issue of equality. So that's from a framework of working to open the doors for all women to enter into career, politically, socially, in every manner of career, for me that was key. So I left Alicia Escalante and the welfare rights organizations alone, because I said, "That's what they're doing." But I think from a policy level, from a law, legal level, we need to change AFDC welfare from income maintenance to an employment plus a social service, childcare, health, whatever she needs to succeed in that.

From the health standpoint, the woman spends most of her time taking the kids to the doctor, and then she was neglecting herself, her body, because all day long what she did was know when the check came in. She lived for when the check came in. When her kids were sick, taking them to the doctor, going, standing in line for food stamps, going to the doctor but being there almost all day because of a crowded room and everyone on welfare

had to wait. I don't know how many. This is the first time. It took all day. So here you have a young, healthy, intelligent woman just being trapped policy-wise in a welfare program that was not enabling her to experience her talents, her abilities, her education. She was just spending her whole time on a welfare line, and that was very degrading. So, anyway, when I started to talk about that, it seemed like I was throwing the baby from the bathtub out to the street, and I didn't agree with that. What I was really fighting for was the liberation of a woman, her choice to have, support her children.

*ESPINO*

How about the idea of the choice to stay at home, and although you're a single mom and you want to stay at home and raise your kids? I know that was Alicia Escalante's argument.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, to be taken care of, from a policy level, to be taken care of by the government on a stay-at-home mom meant what I said before, you would, number one, just have to follow the policy rules of being supported by the public. And what does that mean when a person is being supported by the public? Just think about that. So I did not—number one, when we looked at these statistics of white women, over 80 percent of white women who had children below the age of six were working. They were either working part-time or they were working and having their children taken care of by their parents until they reached the level of economic self-sufficiency. So when I looked at that, you really saw the issue of a woman having an opportunity to experience being self-sufficient, being in control of her life, not being supported by public funds. That was the issue for me. The liberation, the opportunity for a woman to get a career, to move in the ladder, to support her family, to receive a quality education, that was, for me, what women really, really wanted, I thought, from a policy level. Then when I decided to leave—well, I took another step, and the other step was for me to work in the Research and Development Center in the Health, Education and Welfare, and in that capacity I only worked briefly, but my goal was to provide grants to experiment on this issue of having women really—the policy being do bottle programs where you would provide a woman with education and a job and provide her all the services that she needed to see what would happen. Well, the grants, it was like I was bucking the system, the policy, because the policy in health and human resources was really dealt with serving the underprivileged.

So what did that mean? What did that mean? You had to be poor in order to receive services. You could not receive services unless you were poor, unless you were in poverty. Do women want to be in poverty? That's a question that I would raise to Alicia Escalante and to Tillmon and to all of the women. I had a big confrontation in carrying this forward in the International Women's Year Conference because I wanted to deal with this issue, and some of the women just called it taking away the safety net.

*ESPINO*

Can you talk to me about that? That conference was in Mexico?

*ANGUIANO*

No. No, no, the conference in Mexico had to do with international, with Latin America and [Augusto] Pinochet and the military regimes.

*ESPINO*

This conference was then the Houston conference in 1977?

*ANGUIANO*

The Houston, yes. It was the Houston conference. Virginia, let me be very, very clear on this. When I suggested changing the policy from income maintenance to labeling the woman as the head of the household and providing her education and training and all, I was really faced with—even [Ted] Kennedy wrote me a note saying—

*ESPINO*

You told me that.

*ANGUIANO*

—“Lupe, what are you doing, having a woman who has a six-month child, one, two years old, going to work?” And my answer was, “The majority of women who have children below the age of six are working. Why are you trying to protect Latinas and black and minority women from doing what all other women are doing?” Then the Women’s Political Caucus, because I was one of the founding members and I had developed the Chicana Caucus, and the black women developed the Black Caucus, and LaDonna Harris the Native American Women Caucus. Well, I don’t think LaDonna Harris really wanted to do that, but, anyway. I was made the head of the National Women’s Political Caucus, I was made the head of the welfare reform, and so when I testified before Congress, I suggested that change in the policy.

*ESPINO*

What kind of reaction did you get?

*ANGUIANO*

Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm always supported me, but there were some who were alarmed. “You’re going to have the safety net cut off from women.”

*ESPINO*

You were going to tell me a little bit about that confrontation that you had. That would be really interesting to hear the other side, how you responded and maybe what some of the other women were saying.

*ANGUIANO*

Before we get into that, we have to—because in continuity when I was in the research and demonstration in HEW, I tried to get these grants to experiment on women, and that just was not possible because of the poverty. In order to get grants, you have to be in the poverty line. So, anyway, I decided to leave Washington, and Bishop [Patrick Fernández] Flores offered me a job to come to San Antonio and be the head of the Office

for the Spanish-Speaking, but I would have to take a \$10,000 job cut in pay, and I told him that I would, on condition that welfare reform be one of my priority issues and that the Equal Rights Amendment be something that I—because that’s what I believed in and that’s what really needed to be done. So he agreed, and so I left Washington, went to San Antonio. When I went to San Antonio, I continued working on the Equal Rights Amendment and worked with the women in Texas on the Equal Rights Amendment and women’s issues. Then with the Office for the Spanish-Speaking, I put a welfare reform together. As a matter of fact, Choco Meza, who is now the head of the Democratic Committee in Texas, was one of the persons I hired to work with me on that. So I started to work on that. And also Choco Meza and also Sister Maria Carolina, who’s now working in—she was [Spanish word], who’s now working at Our Lady of the Lake. So when I started to work with the welfare project, what I did was I decided to go and live in the housing projects. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

That’s very cutting-edge, I have to say.

*ANGUIANO*

Some people who criticized me said, “You’re the head of the United States Catholic Conference, Southwest Regional Office for the Spanish-Speaking, and you’re going to live in the housing projects? Come on, Lupe, are you crazy?” My response was, “Well, Christ always lived with the poor, and that’s where the bishop should be, living with the poor.” Bishop Flores just laughed, and so did the priests, and Sister Maria Carolina laughed at me because I was making over the wage of being able to live in the housing projects. So what I did was the women could have a guest for one month live with them, and so I paid them a rent and I lived with them. I had to move from—

*ESPINO*

That’s difficult.

*ANGUIANO*

It was very enlightening. Sister Maria Carolina, the nuns who’s receiving really less money, she was able to get an apartment in the housing projects, but I wasn’t.

*ESPINO*

Did you have to sleep on the couch? Where did you sleep?

*ANGUIANO*

On the floor. What we did was the women would put a mattress and I would sleep on the floor. Let me tell you, what was terrifying was the cockroaches on the ceiling, and I’m terrified of cucarachas, but I learned to live with cucarachas. And they fly, you know, and you never know where they’re going to fly to. So I would put a cover over my face.

But it was a very good learning experience because I had an opportunity to go with the women on their trips to the doctor, to food stamps, and,

Virginia, I'll tell you, you would become very angry at some of the treatment that you received. It was just horrifying. It took everything in my energy to put up with being on the food stamp line, being on the health. I remember one of the women, Irene, she was so beautiful. She always had a smile on her face. I said, "Irene, how can you take this?" She says, "Because of my kids, I have to. My kids are sick. I have to." Then I started to talk to some of them, "What do you really want? What do you really want? Do you want to continue living like this?" "No. We hate it. We hate welfare. We hate it." Then I said, "What would you do?" "Well, before I got married and before I had my child, I used to be a checker, worked in the grocery store, and I received an income." Someone would say, "I was working as a clerk." "I was working as a secretary." "I was working." I said, "Why?" Then we started to get together in the housing projects, we started to get together with some of the women, and they would say, "We would like to work, but if we go work, we are completely left off of welfare. We can't have health, we can't have food stamps or rent of these horrible housing projects, these ghetto projects. We can't afford to pay rent, and so what are we supposed to do?" I said, "What if I obtained private monies to pay for all of your childcare, to pay for the money that you get from food stamps, the money that you need for them and to pay for your transportation? Would that work?" They said, "Oh, we would love to try it. We'd love to try it."

*ESPINO*

Everyone? Was it unanimous?

*ANGUIANO*

All, with the exception of just very few, and the very few were the women who had been on welfare so many years, fourteen, fifteen years, that it was like a way of life. They didn't know anything else. But the younger women, they were ready to go. So we started to talk about this and ways that we could do this. I remember another very astounding thing that I have never spoken of before, and that is that when I was living with some of them, I would experience in the late night a knock at the door, and sometimes it was their caseworker, male caseworker, who would come and have sex with them.

*ESPINO*

While you were there?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I was in another room. I was in the other room, and in some of them I was upstairs. But I heard this knock, and then the next day I would say, "Who is that?" "Oh, my boyfriend." Some of them, the boyfriend was a guy who provided them money that they used for their selves, for whatever. Some of them were people that they knew in the community. It was horrible. It was very degrading. What was worse was seeing the children, you know, the children.

Then when their lights would not work, it was a housing project, and so having their lights being taken care of or having their sink being taken care of, you don't realize how horrible it is to live on welfare. It is the pits. What was worse was that the housing projects were public housing and they were subsidized, and when the water, rain came in, you had to wait I don't know how long to get the roof fixed. That was very infuriating to me and very degrading. What was happening to the children was even worse, because then you saw drugs and you saw some of the women taking drugs and you saw some of them participating in drugs and you saw some of the kids participating in drugs. So what do you do when you live in a ghetto? In New York City, when I took the model program to New York City—well, I'm jumping to—it was even worse, because the rules, the public housing was in high-rises where the elevator didn't work. Virginia, it's horrible, you know. I could not do anything. I would be completely responsible, having the education that I have, being a nun, and not doing something about this. I was ready to take on the welfare system, and I did. So what I did with this little project that I started, I started to talk to the business community and I said, "You know, we have women, young, healthy, intelligent women who need to be trained so they can get out of welfare. You complain about welfare, so put up, do something about it. I have women who would be interested in getting off of welfare."

*ESPINO*

Before we go on to getting them off, how do you think they even got on? What were some of the issues that you saw that—because it seems like a cycle now that welfare has been a part of the U.S. policy for so many years.

*ANGUIANO*

Forever.

*ESPINO*

Yes. So what do you think in that situation—because I'm sure every situation is different. California is probably different from Texas, is different from New Mexico, is different from Florida. In your experience in Texas, what was leading to the welfare dependency?

*ANGUIANO*

The policy. The problem is the policy. It's the law. It's the policy. That's what it is. You come with a woman, and her husband has either run off with another—a very good example of this is Rosemary. She had five children. Her husband was working as a construction worker, and one day her husband disappeared. He just didn't come back. He went to get some milk and he just never came back. She didn't know what happened to him. So what could she do? She had been being supported by her husband and had five children, and so what was her—well, first of all, she told me that she wanted to commit suicide. That was her first. She was so devastated that her husband would just leave her with five children. He had never complained to her, he had never said anything, but he just left. Well, yeah,

he said all these children and they always want this and that, and then one day he just disappeared. So she wanted to commit suicide. So they advised her to go to welfare. She had never been. She didn't even know about welfare. So she went, and the first thing that they said to her was, "Well, where is your husband?"

She told them, and she told them that she was devastated, so they offered to give her welfare. She applied for welfare. She had five kids, some of them were below the age of six, so they gave her welfare. So she went from having a husband to support her to them being on welfare. Then being on welfare for a mother and a child, you receive not 90 percent of the poverty, but 60 percent of the poverty level. So making ends meet for her five children, herself, she had to move into the housing projects and then she had to support herself. She was very devastated by the issue of her husband leaving her, and she was at a point of just doing away with everything when she came to me. So I asked her what she wanted to do, what she wanted to do. She wanted to be a construction worker like her husband that left her, because they make good money. So at that time the—what was it? There was a law.

*ESPINO*

Title IX?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, Title IX was in effect, and so employers had to provide women with jobs. So Houston Bridge was one of the construction organizations, and they were bidding for a contract with the government, a big contract. So I told the president that I had a woman who was interested in being a construction worker. He said, "Really?" So I said, "Yeah." So I introduced him to Rosemary, and they started to train her as a construction worker. He was so delighted, because Rosemary was great. She operated a backhoe, backhoe operator, and she was making even more than her husband was making. [laughs]

Another woman that you went to, she had been on welfare, like Irene that I told you that I lived with, one of the women that I lived with, she wants to be a cashier because that's what she had done before. So I went to the Chamber of Commerce, and the Chamber of Commerce put together a grant where they trained the women to be cashier. I think they got a grant from either Safeway or one of the big chain stores. A lot of the women wanted to be cashiers, and so the Chamber of Commerce put together this training program and they trained the women. Then what I did was I obtained a grant to provide childcare, to provide transportation, to provide anything that the women needed, but continuing them on the health program of the welfare because they weren't making enough so they could still receive healthcare. So, anyway, we did that. Then I had a woman and her daughter who were both on welfare, and the mother had been a nurse, had been a nurses' aide or something, and so they wanted to be nurses. So I

approached the hospitals to see if they would train them. Of course, the Chamber of Commerce had made this big "Lupe Anguiano is doing this and we're supporting her and we want people to come," and so I took my story around, and a lot of businesses wanted to participate. So she and her mother were trained to be health aides. The mother encouraged the daughter, the daughter encouraged the mother, and they both took care of—with their earnings, they provided childcare for the mother, for the child, for the daughter. That was a wonderful thing. Irene was a telephone operator. The telephone company opened their doors to train some of the women. It was a lot of fun because I had an opportunity to bring some of the women to some of the training. Not all of them were interested in that, but those who were interested got into it, and the woman who got hired, she did so well that they raised her salary and then they put her to train others. I think she's a supervisor now.

But I'll tell you another was really dealing with the unions. One of the women, she was an Anglo woman, she wanted to be an electrical operator, because I think her father or someone in her family was an electrician, so she wanted to do that. So I approached the unions, and the unions adopted her in their training program as a journeyman. She did well. I guess they had to go through about a year, and if they do well, they bring them in as a journeyman. If they do well in the journey, then they're able to join the union and become a—she did very, very well. So there's some very wonderful stories that I could mention to you. So one day we just declared a "Let's get off of welfare" campaign. So five hundred of them just went in, took their checks back, and said, "I don't want any more of this AFDC welfare." It was quite a news story. Even 60 Minutes, it reached the CBS 60 Minutes, and 60 Minutes came and they wanted to do a story. I said, "No, no, we don't want to do a story with you guys. You guys are too sensational. I don't want you to be messing around with our program." [laughs] They said, "Oh, come on, Lupe. We just want to do a profile of you." I said, "No, no, no, no, no." Another channel called me, that was doing another part that was competing with 60 Minutes, and then 60 Minutes called me and said, "Don't you do that with them, because if you do that, we're not going to—." So I decided. I said, "Okay, you talk the Chamber of Commerce into approving you coming into San Antonio, and we'll do it." So the Chamber of Commerce said, "Of course. Let's just do it." Harry Reasoner came in and we did the—have you seen the 60 Minutes story of the—

*ESPINO*

So you did end up doing it with 60 Minutes.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Not the other station.

*ANGUIANO*

Not the other station. But it was a big competitive, because it was like the news of the country, getting people off of welfare, women who wanted to get off of welfare. This is history.

*ESPINO*

You got a lot of great press. That's what I saw in your archives, a lot of articles about that program.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. What I did was I just asked the women if they wanted to, and some of them said, "Yeah, we hate welfare. We want to do it." So we did it. I did it. I consented because they agreed to do it.

*ESPINO*

Did you ever do any studies as far as the percentage or what was saved by the government when you got these women off welfare?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, there were a couple of big studies. One of them was done by Lupe Ochoa, who's high with the Latinas in Texas, in San Antonio. You might like to—Lupe Ochoa, I think she's the head of the—she works with the—I don't know what they call themselves, Hispanic or Latinas, in Texas. It's a major professional women's Latina business organization. She did a study. Lupe Ochoa was getting her master's from the University of Texas. She did a study.

Another was done in New York City, because the story in New York City was even greater than the story in San Antonio, and a video was done by Equitable Insurance. It's also in my archives. The New York story, there was a lady who did a study on that. I believe the savings were about 90, 80 percent. It's very astounding, the savings when you match, because what she did, she matched the salary of what the women were making and then looked at the savings, but then looked at the income that the women were making and what the children were saying. That's perhaps the best study. But Lupe Ochoa's was—because she came too. She couldn't believe that I would go to New York City and do the model. [laughs] Well, let me tell you why.

*ESPINO*

You couldn't do the what?

*ANGUIANO*

The model program. But let me tell you why I did it. It was because, number one, it took me a long, long time to develop an effective model, because I always had evaluation people from universities evaluate what was happening and to see how the women were reacting and how they were progressing and what they were thinking. Every three months we had an evaluation, and with that evaluation, I used to change, modify the program to better serve the women, because my whole agenda was to change welfare policy from income maintenance to employment and education. That was my goal. My goal was to change policy, to change the law. Couldn't get the Equal Rights

Amendment ratified, but I wanted to change welfare policy. That was my big, big thing, my big challenge, and it was tough. I'll tell you, it was really, really tough, but it was very gratifying because I saw the women's lives change and the children's lives change.

But, anyway, when I saw that the program was working well in San Antonio, then the Governor's Office in Texas said, "You know, this is wonderful that you're doing this. We should do it in Texas." So I started to work on a welfare law in the state of Texas. It's in my archives. The Department of Health and Welfare had a hard time receiving it. Why? Because the changes in departments. You had to have both the Department of Labor, who deals with employment, and the Department of Health and Social Services sort of work together. And so what would happen would be the woman would come. She was desperate in need. She would be offered a job from—no. She would come first to welfare. She would qualify because of her income and of her children and all according to the guidelines. But then she would then approve for her to receive those services, but she would then have to send her to the Department of Labor to then be qualified for employment or education services training. So that would mean that she would receive social services, but she would be accepted by the Department of Labor, by employment services to be trained to go to education, so that the subsidies for her to receive a job and education would be supported by employment services, but the social services, health, childcare, would be provided by the welfare. Well, we haven't been able to get that through. We haven't been able to, except Hillary Clinton—well, President [Ronald] Reagan support—I'm jumping into the conclusion of this. But, anyway, we decided in order to make the policy acceptable, that it had to work with private monies in these different places to demonstrate to the law that this can be done, and look at how many women we got off of welfare. Look how many women would choose employment and education instead of welfare. Look how this makes sense. It would be a saving to the taxpayers if we did this.

Well, I did that in San Antonio, and they said, "Well, San Antonio, of course, the women only receive 60 percent of the poverty, so it's no big deal." So we did it in Dallas, and it worked very well. Then we ventured out to go to another state, so we did it in Denver, Colorado, and that program is still running. Then we did it and it worked very well, so then we did it in other states. But the big issue was having it work in California.

*ESPINO*

Why was that such a big issue?

*ANGUIANO*

Because the highest income is provided by California, in terms of AFDC, AFDC, the women AFDC recipients in California receive more than any other state in terms of income. So it had to work in California in order to be receptive. So I started it in Ventura County, here in Ventura County, and

with the support of the Chamber of Commerce, it worked very, very well. But then the big stickler was New York City.

*ESPINO*

What years were you working in Ventura and New York, do you remember?

*ANGUIANO*

I really don't remember the exact years, but there's a lot of articles in the different—

*ESPINO*

It's like the late seventies, I believe, '77, '76.

*ANGUIANO*

I also went to Arizona, and I had a very good friend of mine who wanted the program in Arizona, and it worked very well in Arizona. But if it worked in New York, the policy would be established, so there I go to New York City.

[laughs]

*ESPINO*

Just really quick, was it before or after Mujeres Unidas?

*ANGUIANO*

Mujeres Unidas was in San Antonio.

*ESPINO*

Is it around the same time?

*ANGUIANO*

It was in the beginning of the program.

*ESPINO*

Okay. So that was '75. Then I'm thinking these other states were probably after '75 sometime.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, there's articles in every state that I was in.

*ESPINO*

I didn't jot down the dates from those articles.

*ANGUIANO*

What was very funny was after the 60 Minutes, Washington State wanted the program, and that's still operating. The governor of Washington State, it was very funny, because he adopted it and so it's still operating now.

*ESPINO*

Anyway, you were going to tell me about when you went to New York. I'm sorry.

*ANGUIANO*

I knew that in order to get the program through, I felt very confident because it had worked in all of these states and it was doing very well, so I went to New York City with the idea that we're going to push the policy through. We're going to get it through in New York. Wow, that was great, because the largest welfare enrollment is in New York, New York City. California has the highest AFDC income maintenance pay, but New York, because California receives 90 percent of the monies for AFDC recipient from

the government, but then they have another percentage that the state puts toward to improve the 90 percent. So I think in California it's about the poverty level. In New York City, the issue was enrollments in New York City was the highest in the nation. California was the highest rate and New York City was the highest enrollment. So I went to New York City to deal with that, and the program in New York City was great.

I received President Reagan's Volunteer Award, and when I received the volunteer award, President Reagan shook my hand, and I held onto it and I said, "Mr. President, I'd like for you to call Walter Wriston from CitiBank and ask him to support my welfare program." [laughs] The next day I had a meeting with Walter Wriston. I tell you, I was so—

*ESPINO*

He remembered. He must get requests like that all the time.

*ANGUIANO*

Who, President Reagan?

*ESPINO*

President Reagan.

*ANGUIANO*

He was great. I love President Reagan. I think he was one of the best presidents. I know Carlos Haro has some big problem with President Reagan, but I think he was great. He helped me with my welfare program. When he came to San Antonio, President Reagan, he came to visit Mr. [Bill] Clements, the governor, and he got off the plane and he said, "Everybody needs to be doing what Lupe Anguiano is doing." [laughs]

*ESPINO*

That was in the eighties.

*ANGUIANO*

1981.

*ESPINO*

Yes.

*ANGUIANO*

1981. That was when the 60 Minutes came.

*ESPINO*

Yes, and that was when Mrs. [Barbara] Bush was writing you all those lovely cards.

*ANGUIANO*

Let me tell you about Mrs. Bush.

*ESPINO*

Okay.

*ANGUIANO*

President Reagan invited me. He gave me the Volunteer Award. He also invited me about a year later or a few months later to belong to his advisory council on private-sector initiatives. So here I was, surrounded with all CEOs. [laughs] I agreed to that, but instead of being sworn in at the White

House, I asked if I could be sworn in Estee Lauder's corporate office. And they said, "Well, why?" I said, "Well, because I use her cosmetics." [laughs] Which I believe the White House organized that, so they contacted Estee Lauder.

*ESPINO*

Was that really the only reason, because you use that?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. Well, I wanted to get some money, you know, but I selected her corporate office because I wanted it in New York City. I wanted it to be a big splash. I wanted corporate America to support our program in New York City. It is so funny, because Estee Lauder had never heard of me, and here I was working in the Bronx and living here. I was living with the sisters at St. John's [unclear] School there. Dominican Sisters, I was living there, renting, just living there with them. And here this woman who was living in the Bronx, which is the Fort Apache area—have you ever heard of Fort Apache area?

*ESPINO*

No.

*ANGUIANO*

The Fort Apache area was a movie dealing with gangs, gang violence and the police and all in the Bronx. It's a movie. So I was in the Fort Apache area, the convent was, and so having somebody from the Bronx and I working with some of the women in Harlem was—

*ESPINO*

She didn't have an Estee Lauder person?

*ANGUIANO*

The president, Estee Lauder herself.

*ESPINO*

Herself. She didn't have a social conscience at that time or any—

*ANGUIANO*

I don't know. I don't know. But, you know, if you live in New York City, you're afraid of the Bronx and of Harlem, because that's where the gangs are, stuff goes on. So having someone that works in the Bronx and in Harlem come to your corporate office to be sworn in to President Reagan's private-sector initiative office was something. What happened was that Barbara Bush was accompanying Vice President [George H.W.] Bush on the Heisman Award. He was going to give the Heisman Award, and Barbara came, and she was the one that swore me in. She came, and it was very funny, because Estee Lauder did everything to keep me off of the pictures. She wanted to keep Barbara Bush would be pictured with everything, and then she did everything not to have—well, I don't know. You know, you have this idea. I sympathize with Estee Lauder, because I met with her. She wanted to meet with me to make sure that I was real and that I wasn't

going to destroy her corporate office. [laughs] I'm just kidding. I don't know what she thought, but anyway, she was—

*ESPINO*

You got the feeling she was suspicious?

*ANGUIANO*

She felt very uncomfortable. I think if you were an Estee Lauder, corporate owner, and you had somebody from Harlem and you had somebody that worked with Harlem and the Bronx and lived in the Fort Apache area, you would be concerned. So I understood that. Anyway, she gave us \$25,000 for the program. Anyway, to make a long story short—

*ESPINO*

How did she treat you in your first meeting?

*ANGUIANO*

She was very cordial. Of course, she had this from the White House and Barbara Bush was going to come.

*ESPINO*

You'd think she'd be kissing your feet.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I don't know. If you had somebody from—look, Father G., Father Boyle, was invited by Mrs. Bush, Laura Bush, to visit the White House. He has told you the story of what he went through—

*ESPINO*

No, I never heard the story.

*ANGUIANO*

—to get into the White House. You have to realize that corporate America is corporate America. But I didn't blame her, really. However, here are these men and women from Harlem and from the Bronx came, very dressed. They were black, they were white, they were Latinos, they were Puerto Ricans. And Barbara Bush noticed that Estee Lauder was a little bit nervous. So before I was sworn in, she read letters that she had received from the women on welfare, and that just completely broke the ice. She talked about the women and how heroic what they had done, and she read a few. That just warmed up the whole place. Someone from the White House swore me in, but Barbara Bush was there. The problem was that Estee Lauder wouldn't allow pictures. She allowed pictures of Estee Lauder welcoming her and Laura Bush being at the event, but she would not allow me be in the picture. I didn't feel bad at all, because, for me, it was like I got into the corporate office of Estee Lauder. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

You got what you wanted.

*ANGUIANO*

I got what I wanted. Then she gave us a gift, each a gift. It was close to Christmas. She has a hundred-dollar package that she provides and so she gave everyone. But that was really funny. It was very funny. Barbara Bush

was very interested in the program, but so was the Governor of Texas and so was a lot of the businesspeople. Particularly Walter Wriston, the head of CitiBank, was very impressed.

*ESPINO*

Did you find the Democrats weren't as welcoming of the program?

*ANGUIANO*

You're right. They weren't. Their reasoning is that what are you going to do when you take away the safety net. And that's a very good question. My response to that was a safety net is very important, and for some it is okay, but when you're trying to change policy for the population, it isn't okay, because the majority of the people would rather work than be on welfare or be on income maintenance. Furthermore, it's very patronizing to the poor. I hate that. I hate when people patronize, patronize the poor. They want to give them all kinds of services. They want to load them because they want to take care of them. For me, it's like a possessive mother who just doesn't want to let their children grow and leave the house. Some parents love to see their children grow, get a career, and move out. Some parents just want to hang onto their kids. For me, they're using their kids as security blankets or they're projecting their own insecurities to their children and they're hindering them from them growing, expressing their talents, and moving on in life.

Yes, I received a lot of negative from Democrats, but there were some who really supported me, and some of them were Gloria Steinem that I have said, President [Ronald] Reagan, Barbara Bush, some corporate people, and Common Cause. Is it Common Cause? Those who dealt with the deal with the whole issue of supporting—I guess it was Secretary [John W.] Gardner who started it.

*ESPINO*

No, not Gardner.

*ANGUIANO*

Aren't you familiar with Common Cause? They're trying to regulate finances in elections. I'm sure you've heard of Common Cause.

*ESPINO*

I've heard of the name. I'm not sure, but I'm thinking more of a progressive organization [commondreams.org]. Is it progressive and it's trying to—and did it have a website and a newspaper that they put out?

*ANGUIANO*

In my time, they were really trying to deal with election law, financing of elections, and they were greatly opposed to corporate America controlling the finances of elected officials and lobbying. They very much worked against lobbying, which is a serious problem right now. We're having problems that the corporates are controlling our elections. So they have fought against that. I received compliments from them, but still they were concerned about that safety net. But, you know, there is a way we need to

change. Just like we need the Equal Rights Amendment passed, for me, the Equal Rights Amendment would provide equality for everyone, men, women, and the Equal Rights Amendment being a change in the Constitution would really provide that in the law. It would be a legal document.

The other is this whole election and having corporate America, the wealthy, really control our elections. I think that it's a very serious problem we're facing right now, and Common Cause was one of the ones that really started that. Some of the Republicans supported that, like Secretary John Gardner, who I worked with during the [Lyndon B.] Johnson administration. He was one of the supporters of that. So I think that's what the whole Decline to State voter is about. We're trying to reach a level of being respectful for human dignity and equality and reaching a balance. One extreme is the whole welfare system. The other extreme is the corporate controls of this country. I'm very much a Decline to State voter, because I've experienced both sides, all of those sides, including Raza Unida.

*ESPINO*

That's right.

*ANGUIANO*

The isolation of Latinos as—that's ridiculous.

*ESPINO*

Can you tell me, before we end, what kind of relationship you wound up developing with Mrs. Bush, Barbara Bush? Did you have luncheon together? How familiar was it?

*ANGUIANO*

I really didn't. It wasn't like we had lunch every once in a while, no. It was that she was very supportive of the work that I was doing with the women on welfare. I think she every much supported the issue of the Equal Rights Amendment and she also supported women's right to choose. She was very respectful of her husband and of her children. She is what I would call just an all-around wonderful woman who cared for her family, who was loyal to her country, believed in the integrity of the human person, and really saw the work that I was doing as really being very important and one that she would be very proud to support. She still does. I think the people who were writing my biography, they received a note from her, "We're very proud of our support to Lupe, and we started this when we were really advocating quality education and the importance of quality education in our country," which was one of Barbara Bush's pet—that was her project, really dealing with quality education. She was great, though. Yes, I really loved her.

I admire President Reagan, not that I support everything that he did, but he was very much of a person who supported self-initiatives and the freedom for people to be what they are and the right for people to have a future and to become involved in the whole economic sector. I was born and I lived through the communistic era, and we saw the effects of dictatorships both in Cuba, that still exist, and in China. I was very much having Ho Chi Minh and

all that. But now that I see dictatorship and oppressive regime in China that is hindering the freedom of people and also in Cuba, Cuba is just bursting through the seams to be liberated, you know, and I don't believe in dictatorships, just like I don't believe in the Tea Party. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

But some would say that part of the crisis that we're living today, the economic crisis, the failure in the public schools is a direct result of some of Reagan's economic policies.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, maybe, but my experience in that is that it's more an issue of control by local officials in the school districts and also in the political arena, of not respecting other people's rights. I think if we had people in the school districts, in the Oxnard High School District, in the Oxnard Elementary School District, in the El Rio School District, where you had the higher level, the vice presidents and all, be respectful of a person's language, culture, and evaluated the learning of children and really took very serious the methods of learning by children, that we would have an excellent educational system. I challenge the school districts in our area to allow us to have the teachers be immersed in cultural diversity and in language diversity and not to think they have the answers to all, to effective education, but that they allow, like I did in the model program, had quarterly evaluations and then modify and focused our children in the classroom. I told the elementary school district that what they had to do was to really focus on considering the school sacred ground and supporting the children, the teachers, the parents, the principal, the staff in the school and them just be the support system that would enable them to be creative, open the doors for creativity and allowing evaluation, quarterly evaluations and then help facilitate changes that needed to be done. But they come from on top, like Yamaguchi and Mr. Brown, they bring an idea from the top and then they impose it on the bottom and then they have to do what they have to do, even if it doesn't fit. The teachers are made responsible. That's crazy. What I think should happen is that if they bring a policy, they need to evaluate it, and they're responsible for it. The vice presidents are responsible for the lack of implementation if they don't support. So it's a top-bottom kind of issue. You have to have give-and-take from both sides, and that's what we don't have, both in the education system and in the political system. That's why I'm a Decline to State voter, because I don't think it's an either/or. It's an and/and. I think just being common sense. When you respect human nature, when you respect human beings and know that everyone is born equal, we are all born, we are all born with the image and likeness of God and we have our talents, and we have a wonderful support system and that we are all good and we are given a chance to grow, and those that are criminal and all, we need to provide discipline and not waver with that. So that would be my response to that. It's true, some of the Republican ideas

are off base when they see corporate America as being the solution. I think the solution really rests on the consumer. It's the consumer who purchases, who works, who purchases a product, and who expects the product that they make to be quality. That's what the role of corporate America needs to be, and the ruling is really the consumer, the person, the people. My role, I've tried to deal with this on welfare, and I think if we let Washington—if we would have a somewhat sunset Congress and have them for one year not be in Washington, have them stay in their local districts and learn what people are saying and what people are doing, I think we would be much better off.

*ESPINO*

Or if they lived in the projects even for a week, I think it would be a huge lesson.

*ANGUIANO*

I used to challenge them to live on welfare. None of them accepted that challenge. None of them accepted that challenge.

Also, I think an A-plus would go to a country or a state that respects the poor. If you have respect for poor people, you have learned what life is all about, and then you saw, you really worked, like Father [Gregory] Boyle is doing in some ways to help that person grow. The respect of a human being is so important and then respecting diversity, which is what I think we need in the United States, living in a global economy and being the leader of a global economy. We need to have the worker catch up with the business sector, and we haven't done that. That's why we have immigration. The problem with immigration would be solved if we really had the global economy create a balance between economic growth and working the worker.

*ESPINO*

Wages.

*ANGUIANO*

The wages.

*ESPINO*

Things like that, that's a beautiful ideal, and I'm just curious why you have such an attachment or admiration for Reagan when he's been criticized for not loving the poor. I don't know about Bush Senior, but definitely [George W.] Bush Junior for advocating the interests of the rich.

*ANGUIANO*

I have no respect for George—

*ESPINO*

W.?

*ANGUIANO*

George W. As a matter of fact, that's when I changed from a Republican to a Decline to State, when he gave his energy policy and he just allowed the oil companies to control the White House. [Richard B.] Cheney, I don't blame Cheney. Cheney was the force behind that, but he didn't stop that and he

wouldn't put a stop to that. I think Barbara Bush was really very disappointed with her oldest son, you know. Then when you look at President [James E.] Carter, well, we could have had the Equal Rights Amendment passed, but he really did not really advocate the ratification— [End of July 14, 2011 interview]

### **1.9. Session 9 (July 21, 2011)**

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino. Today is July 21st, 2011. I'm interviewing Lupe Anguiano in the library, the beautiful library in Oxnard, California. Today we're going to start with your involvement and your role in forming Mujeres Unidas, which I'm assuming it was part of the National Women's Employment and Education Initiative while you were in Texas. Can you explain the genesis of that group?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, Mujeres Unidas was organized to give a name to the group of women that I was working who wanted to get off of welfare. They wanted to get off of welfare, and as I said before, they were doing different things. I was there working with the Southwest Regional Office for the Spanish Speaking for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops when I did that, and I didn't want them to become part of the Southwest Regional Office for the Spanish Speaking, because that was controlled by the bishops and by the churches. My role with the bishops was to start Spanish-speaking councils in the parishes, so that they can then advise their pastors and the bishop what should be done to improve the spiritual and also temporal services for the Spanish-speaking. But I didn't want the women to be part of that council. I really thought it would be best for them to be a unit within themselves. So in living in the housing projects and getting together with the women, and they were very excited about getting—we always talk about getting more money. How do you get more money? Well, you don't get it by being on welfare. [laughs] You get more money by going to work. So we started Mujeres Unidas as an organization of women on welfare who were very interested in getting off of welfare. That's how it started.

So one of the things that I did was talk to them, we discussed it as a group, and I always use the "observe, judge, and act." What is it that you would like to do? What career would you like to have? Because you start and then you grow in that particular career. Well, some of the women had been cashiers, for example, so we started to talk about cashiering. One of the women, she wanted to start a small restaurant, and so with the Office for Spanish Speaking and also working with the business community who was training, the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce was training the women to be cashiers, and so we talked to the Chamber about some of the women being very interested in starting a restaurant. So the Chamber saw the

airport, not the big airport in San Antonio, but a smaller airport where some flights took off from, private planes. So one of the women started a small restaurant. We helped with the money. The Office for the Spanish Speaking helped her to get plates and cups and saucers and whatever, and then the woman one day just opened her little restaurant and made eggs and just breakfasts. The San Antonio Chamber of Commerce was behind that. The pilots were delighted. This was a project of the women. So some of them would come in and they would ask the women what it was that they wanted for breakfast, and then the women then started—the owner, I decided it was best for the one person who wanted to own the restaurant, because she had had experience not only in cooking and serving and in managing the accounting, I wanted her to—then she hired other women on welfare, and they started to work. So it went really very well. I think in my archives there's a story of that, and the bishops, Bishop Flores became very interested in that. He became very excited because the business community was very excited about it and so became very [unclear].

Last time we spoke about the women not only learning to be cashiers but also going into the telephone operators and being receptionists. When I would sit with the women and talk about what would you like to do, the majority of them wanted to work for a bank. They wanted to work in an office and learning to type. That's what they really wanted to do. So we helped them in moving into some of those. Then some of the women wanted to move into nurses' aide because they wanted to be nurses. One of the things that I experienced with that is that the employers, after the women were really settled and they really liked what they were doing, the employers, they wanted them to go to school. They would give them time from their jobs to go take a course at the community college so that they could become better readers and learn math and all. That happened also with the telephone company. So that's where the growth of Mujeres Unidas became very, very popular. What happened when the organization became strong and there were a lot of—there was another group who decided that they wanted to also form a Mujeres Unidas, and I can't remember who the women were, but I know it was a group of women who were not welfare recipients. They were low-income but not welfare recipients. Then they took the organization, they added another word, Mujeres Unidas, and then they started chapters outside of San Antonio, and then that sort of diluted the focus of welfare recipients, and so we just sort of let it go. We let Mujeres Unidas—just let the other group take it over, because so many times in a community when you start something that becomes very popular, another group who's very interested in raising money and starting a program themselves sort of copy what you're trying to do and then use that to raise money and then start an organization themselves.

So this happened, and instead of me sort of saying, "Hey, this was our idea," I just told the women, "Let's just let it go." That's when I started the National Women in Employment and Education.

*ESPINO*

It was after the Mujeres Unidas.

*ANGUIANO*

It was after Mujeres Unidas, because when I came to work with the bishops, I came with the understanding that I would make welfare reform my priority. So I started the work on welfare reform as the Office for the Spanish Speaking. So many times in my archives you see pictures of the Office for the Spanish Speaking and you see us awarding the women. We had an annual award that we gave to employers who hired the women and where the women really stayed and they received upward mobility. We gave them an award. Then we gave a leadership award to the women for sustaining their job and moving up the ladder. So we awarded the employer and we awarded the women, and we gave them a leadership award. I had these big posters where I gave to the women and to the employers. You see that a lot in the [unclear], and it was a really great occasion. For example, Houston Bridge, who hired the first construction workers, women who worked in construction, that became really very popular. So that's how Mujeres Unidas was started and then evolved into something. I'll tell you, after that, then another organization started, who then started to compete with me. Instead of competing with me, I sort of let it go also, because then the bishop started to support her also, Bishop Flores. I said, "Well, my focus is really changing welfare, and the model that I'm organizing is to demonstrate how AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] welfare should work." I was not interested in organizing a National Women in Employment and Education that would compete with welfare. I wasn't interested in that. I was interested in changing the policy.

*ESPINO*

What was this other organization that you're talking about?

*ANGUIANO*

She became very mad. I don't remember what the name was or even if they adopted Mujeres Unidas. But, you know, it happens in our Latino community. You start something that really becomes very popular and then others want a piece of that, or maybe they want to join you because you're involved in—they want to start their own organization that they could handle, and they want to raise money. They want to raise money for themselves, and I wasn't interested in that at all.

*ESPINO*

In one of the articles about your project from 1972, you are quoted saying, "We're here to bring about a new world, to give leadership to a desperate dying society." Can you elaborate? Do you remember saying that and what

you meant by those words? What did a dying society look like to you back then?

*ANGUIANO*

I think I said that a lot, and what I meant by that was that government and society sees the poor as being served by programs instead of helping that poor person to become self-sufficient and not have to rely on you. In the sixties, there was a major battle. You had a growing society that rejected the poor and just wanted them to lift themselves up from their bootstraps. but then didn't give them the support that they needed to do that. The poor want to do that. They want to become self-sufficient, but then you don't give them the—when you're in dire need, they go for help and you trap them in a system of welfare that harms them and their children. It's like a poverty cycle.

On the other hand, you had social service programs that provided you meagerness and the result of that, that keeps you in welfare and it dominates you and it oppresses you and it stifles your creativity, your growth, your human development into becoming a human person where you could excel. Like the women who were running the restaurant, in that time welfare recipients were the pits. They were considered dregs in society, but I saw the fault being on the welfare system. On the other hand, you had people complaining about the welfare recipient, but then also not supporting projects that really enable people to become self-supporting. I saw that as a trend in the country, as being very—I don't want to use "benevolent," but it's within your heart wanting to be benevolent and wanting to be charitable and wanting to assist in really providing those services in a way that oppressed people. And I challenge that with all my might, because you see good people wanting to help the poor, but then in reality they were living off of the poverty of the people because they were dishing and they were perpetuating. In the other hand, you had people who were complaining and then just wanted to throw the baby out with the—so I called that a dying society where the polarization of these two dynamics really wasn't helping, really was not helping the poor. And you see this very clearly today. You see this with the Tea Party. You see this anger and wanting to take away every strip of the—I would respect the Tea Party if they would, say, challenge Wall Street and corporate America into being ethical, into being respectful of the consumer who purchases their products and then really condemning fraudulent consumerism.

On the other hand, you see the Democrats who want to continue the welfare projects without the changes. I think there's no question but that Social Security, people who were working paid into Social Security, and what is Congress trying to deny after—for example, myself, when I was working, I gave into Social Security. If I had put the \$500,000 that I put into Social Security and put it into a bank, I would be doing very well. But now they're trying to deny that. So the dying society, for me, was the fact that we don't

respect the poor, and then we provide them government programs that really it takes more to sustain that government program than it would if you gave that money directly to the poor. For example, when I was working with welfare, there were 32 million single parents on AFDC welfare. We were expending how many millions of dollars for that program? I would often say, "What if we gave each one of them a million dollars?" What if we took the \$32 million and said, "This is the only thing you're going to get for the rest of your life"? Well, obviously, that would not work because some people, when you're poor, you don't know how to manage your money. Just like me, when I was a nun, I didn't know how to manage my money because the Order took care of all mine. So when I left the Order, I didn't know how to manage money. I still don't. So the poor don't know how to manage their money, and so you have to educate that person, and the way you educate people is to provide them a job so that they can learn how to manage their money, how to pay rent, pay utilities. So you give a person a job and they're the ones who learn how to manage their money.

So this is what I always fought for. But when I would come across, when I would speak to people who were working for government, they would not understand that, and when I spoke to employers about that, unless I was involved with them and enabled the women to be trained or to get an education and to support them for five years, that was my—I figured out in my research that it took five years to assist a single parent to move from welfare into employment, and then there is a 10 percent who have been on welfare for so long that it has crippled themselves so that their health and their ingenuity has been lost. So you have to sustain that, but at least you could start with a young person, to help them get a job and then provide all the social services, childcare, transportation, healthcare and all that she needed. Furthermore, I found out that when they're working, they're going to take care of their body. They're not going to get pregnant, because, number one, they're supporting their children and they're taking them—some of the kids used to say, "Oh, wow, my mom is working, and I can go to the movies and we can have a vacation and we can do this and do that," and that's a big relief for the women. As a matter of fact, I did some television spots for that, and it's in my archives.

*ESPINO*

For?

*ANGUIANO*

Portraying a woman when she's on welfare. I took that from a learning. I learned from them that all they looked forward was to receiving that check the first of the month, and then they would either borrow money, but they're accustomed to look out, to get that check. Or else they spent all day taking the children to the health clinic or standing in line for food stamps—in those days, you had to go and pick up your food stamps—or whatever.

And here you are, a young, healthy, intelligent woman, being deprived of getting a good education, of utilizing your talents, of raising your family, providing for being a single parent, providing for your children. You were deprived of how normal women who are single parents, what they do. The majority of women who are single parents are working. They're taking care of their children. They maneuver for their childcare with their parents or others. So the dying society, that's what I saw as being very degrading. Sometimes I would be so frustrated, I'd say, "Government can never do things right." [laughs] They never use the money that government receives from taxpayers to really provide for the dignity and the well-being of women. This is really gross, but really brings home a message. Because you know black women and particularly the women in Harlem who are on welfare, they would call their welfare workers "welfare pimps," meaning they were living out of their poverty. I think government needs to provide services, particularly for those who are in desperate need. That's a humane society, which I think we are. American people are very generous people, but I think there's a big frustration of government not working, not working.

*ESPINO*

That segues into what I want to talk about next. We spoke a lot about the Women's Employment and Education Initiative last time, and I'm wondering if you want to reflect back a little bit on what were some of the gains of that initiative. What do you think were the positives? What came out of it?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I think the major success of the program was partnering the employer and the women. Number one, the employer needed certain skills, an interest in their industry and what they were doing. On the other hand, the woman had an opportunity to explore what she really wanted to do when she grew up, what she really wanted, what career she wanted, and what she was interested in and the skills that she wanted to develop. So it's partnering those two that really was the success of our program. What I did to accomplish that, I learned very early in the program that the woman, when she gets the first job, that doesn't necessarily mean that she's going to stay in that job, for various reasons. The primary one is that, number one, she's maybe not interested in that career, in that career path and maybe that's not really what she wanted to do. On the other hand, and employer sees that right away and the employer wants somebody who's really interested in what they do. They're going to give you an opportunity to move ahead. If you start from the bottom, they're interested in moving you up. That is the majority of employers, the employers who really are ethical. I consider employers really, particularly the small businesses, being very, very interested in having productive, interested people who are really going to contribute.

On the other hand, I found that the woman many times wanted to do something that maybe her cousin did. She had a pattern or she saw her

cousin being very successful or her mother being very successful or her dad working in a certain way, and that became of great interest to her. So she wanted to try that. Sometimes she would need to receive better training or greater education, and if the employer did not want to provide it, well, then we would work with the community college to provide that training or we would work with CETA, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, even though that had some drawbacks. Because if the government program, the CETA program, paid for the training, some of the employers, after the woman was trained, they would let them go because they wanted them to be subsidized, to be subsidized, and so they would move another person into that and not provide. I found that working with private employers, if they foot the bill for the training, it became much more beneficial for the women. Then also the woman, if she didn't like the job, I wasn't going to force her to stay in a job that she didn't like. So sometimes some of the women would stay in their job, but then the employer would pay for their upward mobility and then they would move ahead very well. Some of them that didn't, we'd move into the community college and get training and then go backward, try another company that was similar. One of the interesting things that I found was if a woman was interested in a health-related job, that there were very many jobs within the medical field that you could start from the bottom and then grow. Some of the women, the hospitals would pay for their training, then they would move into—one of them, I think, was trained as a radiologist.

In the program that I started, I saw that I would never argue either with the employer or with the women, because it's a partnership. You have to meet the two. So the success of the model program was really that. I found, after working in the program for I don't know how many—twelve years, more than that, and testing it in different programs, that it took about five years for the women to really stabilize in a program. That doesn't mean she went back on welfare. It meant that the national Women's Employment and Education offered her support, so she would move from this job to another. But that meant sometimes that she had to start from the very beginning, or if she went to school and got some training, that she could move into a job. All of that makes just a lot of sense, but do you think that the Department of Labor, the employment service would do that? And then with welfare, I found some good social workers that really supported the women and would really be there. If they needed childcare, they would maneuver so that she would be able to receive funding for her childcare and support. So I think the success of the program was that the model was established and it worked. It worked in Los Angeles, where the income level was the highest in California, and it worked in New York City, where the welfare rolls were the highest in the country. So, seeing that from a policy level, I concluded that what we needed to do is demonstrate a one-shop or one-stop program where a woman came, was eligible for welfare, but then she would go right to the

next desk and found a job or training or education and had the assurance of the social services she needed to assist her in moving into employment.

*ESPINO*

That would mean a whole shift in the way—

*ANGUIANO*

—government works.

*ESPINO*

I don't know how you'd make that happen. Pass legislation or—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, we tried. I tried to do that in Texas. As a matter of fact, I wrote a bill that was patterned after one. I introduced it. The governor was very supportive of it, and the welfare department was very supportive of it because it meant they could get money for the model program. But then didn't want to. The welfare department was sustaining the money, and they were the ones that were going to determine what the department, what the employment service was doing. So there was a conflict in that. So in the end, when I saw the battles between the welfare department and the employment service, I didn't—there was a woman, a Latina, who introduced it in the Texas legislature, but then I removed my support when I saw that the program was not really going to be—that the welfare department was going to control it and we could not move the employment service because the legislation in Congress would not allow that. So then what I did was I continued doing the program in New York, and it worked very well in New York City and it worked very well in Los Angeles also. I tried here and a program was passed, they called it the GAINS [Greater Avenues for Independence] program, welfare reform. They started a one-stop shop and they tried it but, you know, in one hand, the employment service wanted the woman just to go to work, and then when she went to work, then the welfare dropped her services. So I worked with President [Ronald] Reagan to really introduce this welfare reform in Washington, and he really wanted to do this and we started it, but President Reagan hired a person in his staff who really gave up on the idea because it was too difficult. We had a lot of testimony. So President Reagan started this move, because, remember, I was in his private-sector initiatives. He started it, but his staff did not follow through.

Then when President [William J.] Clinton came into office, he took it up again, and he was the one that passed the legislation, the welfare reform that everybody's complaining about right now, and he has a five-year. He had a lot of the elements that I had. But the Department of Labor, I was a consultant to the Department of Labor.

*ESPINO*

At that time under Clinton?

*ANGUIANO*

No, under [James Earl] Carter [Jr.]. I was a consultant. I was paid 100-and-some an hour, and I presented the model program to the Department of Labor, and Alexis Herman really wanted the program to move along. But on the welfare, we just could not get that to move. But President Clinton really put his neck out, and the people who opposed him were some of the [Edward M.] Kennedy staff, and also there was a woman—

*ESPINO*

What didn't they like about it?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, it's the same argument. You're cutting off the safety net.

*ESPINO*

The safety net.

*ANGUIANO*

You have this paternalistic, really oppressive paternalism attitude of the poor, and you want to be serving them in a soup line with food stamps. It's very hard to say, but it's true.

*ESPINO*

In your vision of the welfare reform, do you see choice in there as far as the woman with three children, five and under, as wanting to stay home and raise her kids until they were a little bit older before putting them into childcare? Is there room for that person?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, let's say, for example, you're young, you're healthy, you had a child. You had a choice. I'm going to give you welfare or I'm going to help you get a job. What would you do?

*ESPINO*

Me personally? Yes, probably. I don't know. I really don't know. Part of me thinks I would want to have a job, but I was a stay-at-home mom for twelve years. I liked raising my children. So that's why I ask. Is there room for that person who wants to be reading books to their children at home, taking them to the library, giving them their lunch? Is there room for that? How do you see that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I see that as a choice, that a woman would make a choice. However, you look at the policy, and the policy gives you 90 percent of poverty income. Would you be able to take your children to the library, be able to take them to see cultural things, would you be able to provide for them? That's the question. So is there room? Could you get through the legislation enough room for a woman to receive higher than poverty income to do that? Do you think it's possible for the government to pass a law like that? That's the question. Then if the government did do that, what would be the restrictions that government places on you? That's the issue. But better still, look at the women today and even in my time. What did American women choose? Particularly Latina women, what would they choose? If they had an

opportunity to work, would they choose welfare? The majority of Latina women chose to go to work and support their children. That's in all of the studies. Did I give you a copy of that, of the recent study done by an organization in New York City that follows the trend of women?

*ESPINO*

No. I'd be interested in seeing that. Do you recall the Talmadge Amendment?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Can you talk to me about your feelings?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, the Talmadge Amendment was very destructive. It was very punitive.

*ESPINO*

Can you explain that for those who might be listening?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. The Talmadge Amendment really took away a lot of the services and the income. I think the greatest problem with that was that it punished the woman for staying home and receiving welfare so that the income was just—in other words, if you went to work, your services would be cut off from the standpoint of you wouldn't have enough money to provide for your childcare. You wouldn't have enough money to provide for your services. So it was like a punishment. The Talmadge Amendment, I saw that as punishing women for being on AFDC [Aid to Families with Dependent Children] . And if she was going to live on AFDC, she was going to give them the very minimum. For example, in Texas, throughout the country most of the states provided—or should I say the law was that you would provide 90 percent of the poverty, not even the poverty level. You would just provide 90 percent of it. Some of the states would provide 60 percent of the poverty, not 90 percent but 60. That was in Texas. So if you had a child, you receive \$60 a month to support your child, you and your child. But then what they did, they calculated rent and they calculated that as money. They calculated food stamps as money. They calculated healthcare as money. That is miserable.

The Talmadge Amendment was more of a punishing measure, and this mean-spiritedness that you find, I don't want to discriminate, but you find that in the South, the southern states a lot. You find this "Pull yourself by your bootstraps." But then there's also the issue of racism, and the racism is that if you're Latino or black, you're just lazy and you don't want to do anything with your life. So then the other is that white people have a right to all of the services in this country, and so many times you find some of those services and the rulers of those services being white people who then whose objective is to infer that poor people are not able to take care of themselves. Not everyone, but the Talmadge Amendment was a very good demonstration of that. I think to some extent you see segments of that in

the Tea Party and the white supremacy. "I have every right to this nation." But not to get into consideration that before they came here, there was a thriving nation, thriving Mexican nation that was building agriculture. California particularly, the agricultural industry, the richness of California comes from the back, the working of the agricultural worker, which really worked the land and lived by it, and that's our Indian heritage, you know, the Mayan, Aztec, the Chumash. That's the Americas, you know. People coming in the Pinta and Niña came and assumed that they were the conquerors of this. Well, they did, you know. They conquered.

*ESPINO*

It's a very complex, complicated issue. When you mention someone like Clinton and the Kennedys being almost at opposing ends of the issue, because you have that question of racism and "They're just lazy, they don't want to work," versus "We need to help them," I think you called it paternalistic. That's just so interesting. What do you think then held back this program from really becoming a national initiative and changing the face of welfare in the entire U.S.?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, first of all, I saw President Reagan as being very interested in self-sufficiency and I saw it genuinely. He really was very interested in that. The fault, what I don't agree with President Reagan, was his listening to Wall Street and dealing with deregulation. Deregulation was the biggest mistake, I think, in the Reagan administration. President Clinton, his mother was on welfare, and so he knew. He knew what had kept him from—that he saw perhaps the abuse of his father toward his mother. So President Clinton loved his mother, and he saw that welfare reform, what I was doing, really made sense. Of course, Hillary Clinton, who really genuinely loves President Clinton, being a self-sufficient woman herself, understood the importance of women being able to grow and prosper and obtain a career. So it was very easy for them. They sort of agreed, and so they saw what I was doing and the work that I was doing as being, "Hey, this is a great idea." Then I was featured in 60 Minutes. I had a lot of national and international publicity. So doing the model was— [interruption]

*ESPINO*

Okay. This is part two of interview with Lupe Anguiano on Tuesday, July 21st, 2011. So that was for the video.

*ANGUIANO*

I guess we were talking about President Clinton, his situation. I think when President Clinton came into office, he followed pretty much a lot of the financial policies of President Reagan. Clinton was a really great president. He turned them into of great benefit to ordinary Americans, to middle class. I think that you will find in his policies and in a lot of programs that President Clinton supported were very really good model programs, both in

foreign policy. Maybe I'm deviating here, but he used foreign aid to really assist people to become self-sufficient and self-supporting.

*ESPINO*

In the U.S.?

*ANGUIANO*

In foreign—

*ESPINO*

International relations.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, international relations, in Indonesia, in Africa. I don't know if he did much in Latin America, but he was very interested in the growth and development of black people. As a matter of fact, I remember his saying if there's anything that he would do, that would give up his being on stage to someone else, who would it be? And he said it would be to rectify some of the racial problems in this country. So he was very devoted to eliminating racism, because in Arkansas he saw it and in Arkansas was where a lot of the civil rights battles took place. He and Hillary, that's why I supported her for president, I think she would have been a great president. But President Clinton, he understood, because of living with his mother on welfare, saw the importance of self-sufficiency and the importance of upholding the family and assisting a woman to become self-supporting. So that's why he supported it.

I saw that as a continuation of what President Reagan was doing, but when President Clinton did that, some of the people that were involved with President Kennedy resigned. There's a black woman who heads the children's program. She married a staff person of Kennedy. What was her name? But that was the dilemma and so many—

*ESPINO*

This woman you're talking about, she resigned?

*ANGUIANO*

No. He resigned, her husband. It's a black woman, married a staff person of the Kennedys, of President Kennedy. What was his name? But when Clinton [unclear], he resigned.

*ESPINO*

Do you recall why?

*ANGUIANO*

Because of this welfare reform.

*ESPINO*

Because of this safety net argument?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

But did the reform eliminate the safety net? I don't believe it did completely eliminate the safety net.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, see, that's the whole argument. The issue was not eliminating the safety net. The issue was very common sense, assisting the woman when she comes in, to provide—she's young, she's healthy, she's intelligent. Let's move her into a job that she would like that would enable her to support and be a single parent, support her children.

Then I saw where the women were working and self-supporting. They moved into marriages that were very healthy marriages, that did not become a burden. She didn't come as, "I'm coming with all my baggage." She entered a marriage as a partner, "I'm working and they're working." So that that's—I forgot the question.

*ESPINO*

We were talking about President Clinton and how it was divisive among the Democrats, and one of the issues that divided the Democrats was the issue of the safety net.

*ANGUIANO*

It's still now. You see that President [Barack] Obama's having problems with that. The problem that I see with a Congress, with Democratic Congress, is their inability to really come with some—it's a good opportunity to reform some of these projects and programs and to provide the training, the community college education, to assist people to become self-supporting. You see the Tea Party wanting to destroy the whole system, but they're not seeing, for example, in Social Security and Medicare, that people actually worked for that. They don't understand the Constitution, or do they understand natural law? [laughs]

*ESPINO*

It's interesting that you mention Reagan as wanting to reform welfare, but in my recollection—I haven't studied his position on the issue, but he strikes me as the original Tea Partier and somebody who wants to take money away from social services, not put it—because your program must have needed a huge amount of funding from the government. So you're not saying stop funding programs for the poor. You're just saying fund in a different way so that they get off welfare. And I thought he wanted just to eliminate money, period.

*ANGUIANO*

He wanted to eliminate waste in government. He did not want to eliminate welfare, at least not that I—because he supported the program that I was working on and he supported the model. He supported what it was doing, and he saw that as government working efficiently and effectively. The staff person that he had actually did not support—he supported the program verbally, but he didn't know how to change the policy nor have the department. I always wanted to get very close to—but, you know, a president has so many things in his mind, and most of the issues in President Reagan was the whole issue with Russia and the [Berlin] Wall.

Communism was a big issue, and I supported him in that, the elimination of that Wall in Germany. President Clinton adopted many of those makes-sense projects. To be very honest with you, when you study social services, and I'm not sure how you change that, because social services is providing services to the poor, but when it comes to policy, you have divisions. This is why I agreed with President Reagan that government isn't very efficient in doing what the—the letter of the law is very clear, and the letter of the law is very good, but it's in its implementation, so that you create a huge bureaucracy that out of every dollar you spend 75 cents in the bureaucracy and 25 cents in the services that you provide to the poor. That is very wrong, when you're sustaining a bureaucracy that then gives—and then you have an oversight committee and you have this and that, so you have a bureaucracy who's supposed to make sure that the law is adhered to, and so you're spending 75 cents of a dollar and you're providing only 25 cents in the actual services that you give, childcare, food stamps, rental. That's the wrong way of doing business. I mean, if you were in private business, you wouldn't survive if your product initiative only provided 25 cents of the purchase price of a person who you were selling it to.

It is a challenge, and it's getting worse, and what I think is getting worse is that the Democrats are not really changing policies that would really serve the poor, and then you have the Tea Party and the Republicans who want to destroy social services, but then give tax breaks to the rich. So you're destroying the middle class. You're destroying the worker, you're destroying worker initiative, and that doesn't work.

*ESPINO*

What made you leave, then, the program, and how did that come about?

*ANGUIANO*

When I saw the GAINS program here in California really not moving the way it was supposed to and when I saw Washington really not moving, I was exhausted. I was burned out. That's where Grace came in, Grace Montañez [Davis], because I turned the program over to our board of directors, and Grace helped me a lot in obtaining private support for the project and getting employers interested and also getting welfare departments and Department of Employment to open up to this idea. So the program in Los Angeles was very, very successful, but then I was really tired. I was exhausted. So one day I came home and I said, "I am so tired. I don't want to hear about welfare anymore. I just want to leave it," and so I left it to the board, the board of directors. There were some women that were working. One of them was working as a consultant to [Tom] Bradley, the mayor, who had an assistant who worked for that company, who was very interested in the project. So I turned over the project to them, and then I just came back to Oxnard and got a job at Ventura College.

*ESPINO*

Was there one or two things that just were the last straw for you that you recall?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, let me see. You know, yes, there was. I remember David Lizarraga really supported what we were doing, because I gave him his first job in the Teen Post Program. Then there was a lot of—what's her name, the one that graduated from UCLA and received the UCLA—she worked for the other mayor, the one that renovated the library that was the key person who brought—to give the money for the Chicano Studies Program.

*ESPINO*

I don't recall her name. I'm thinking Villa Martinez [phonetic] comes to mind, but I know it's not her.

*ANGUIANO*

No. No.

*ESPINO*

It's someone else.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. Well, she also helped.

*ESPINO*

Did you work with the Chicano Service Action Center?

*ANGUIANO*

No.

*ESPINO*

Comisión Femenil?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, Sandy [Serrano Sewell]—it was very interesting, too, because I know when I was on Facebook she wrote and she became my friend, and she said she's still in Los Angeles, thinks about me often. I'd like to have a conversation with her. But she was handling Centro de Niños. I think she's still—

*ESPINO*

Para Los Niños?

*ANGUIANO*

Para Los Niños and Comisión. Comisión Femenil did a wonderful job in terms of preparing women to run for public office. That was their cup of tea. I think that like the one supervisor, Gloria Molina was one, and [Grace] Montañez [Davis]. Also from San Fernando Valley there was a couple of women who were—so that the whole Comisión Femenil was really somewhat preparing women to run for public office, and they did a good job in getting really good women elected. I don't know if they're still in office. I don't think one of them is, but I'm glad Gloria Molina is.

But Comisión and I would say that the majority Latino organizations were more involved in the issue of confronting inequities and the lack of civil rights and confronting the establishment, and I don't think many of them

were involved in social services. My whole focus was changing welfare policy. That's how I differ from everyone. I mean, that was my cup of tea, because I had worked in Washington and I saw how government worked and I spent a lot of time dealing with education and reforming education, and I was just really trying to deal with the Equal Rights Amendment and trying to deal with changing welfare policy. But, obviously, it didn't work then and it hasn't reformed. It has changed things somewhat, but now I think that the Tea Party and some of the elements of the Talmadge Amendment, that mentality of the South, has taken place so that I think there's a lot of racism involved and there's a lot of punishment of poor. But the fault that I see with Democrats is they're not coming up with better solutions. I think my model program would be a great solution.

*ESPINO*

Even today.

*ANGUIANO*

Even today.

*ESPINO*

I agree. But you were going to tell me if there was like a last straw or something that happened that made you want to shift your focus and leave the—

*ANGUIANO*

The main issue was the GAINS program in California that I saw a lot of hope really didn't work out, and I was working in the model in Los Angeles and I tried to make it work. I had the support of Grace, some really top people. Grace and—what's her name? From UCLA who got the UCLA medal, women who really were—and Richard Alatorre also, but Richard was more of a politician than he was a reformer. He was politics, period. David Lizarraga, the value that I see in him was that he worked his model through, and he really built up an excellent economic development model. He was the one that I was working with, he and Bob Bulla to put together a helping people get back to school, graduate, and get into economics development and get into businesses, and David Lizarraga did that. So did Bob Bulla. I don't know if you noticed when you looked at the Teen Post Program, besides David Lizarraga, [Richard] Polanco, did you notice, did you see his picture? He was a rising star, and when he went into public office, he worked with David to really deal with the gang problem. But it's respecting the poor, providing social services and support to enable that poor person to really get a job and become self-sufficient, get a good education. We're still struggling with that, and in Oxnard 50 percent. But what I am encouraged is that, for example, we have a lot of Latinas who have their doctorates, and when they have their doctorates, I love to call them Dr. Virginia Espino, Dionne [Espinoza], Dr. Dionne. I insist on that, and even Chon, Dr. Chon Noriega, because I feel very proud of that because I see that happening.

Then also I'm encouraged a lot by Latinos who are moving into engineering and moving into technology. Grant Quiller, the son of Margaret Quiller, just graduated from Colorado State University, and he's an environmental engineer. He got a job as soon as he graduated, and he's working in bioengineering, environment bioengineering, and so he has a very good job. So that's where I see the hope. I guess the farm worker is working to get unions established, and I support the workers. The top priority is really supporting that worker, which is losing a lot of ground in our country. Where are the jobs? Here Wall Street is sitting on trillions of dollars that we gave them, gave them. And they're not providing any jobs, and here we are arguing about welfare? It's ridiculous. So the last straw for me was that I was burned out. I'd been working on this for so many years and then I saw the GAINS program in California really not moving, but I saw a lot of successes in the model program and I just turned it over. I was just tired, tired. I guess part of my tiredness also was seeing, in working with my staff in Los Angeles, them not really being very receptive to the idea of moving the jobs program and doing everything to move the women into a job and providing all the resources, and I was just too tired. So I remember one of my last awards that we gave to the women in Los Angeles who did very well, I just decided, "This is it. I'm just leaving this." Because changing Washington is—then I really didn't feel that I had the support. I didn't have the support of the Democratic Party, I didn't have the support of some of the social service delivery systems, because they wanted to continue what they were living under, and reform welfare meant they were afraid of losing their jobs.

So I saw it as I was tired and so I just wanted a change, and so I came to Ventura College and got a job working as a counselor, and then I started working with women to get training and assisting them. I continued that, but then I had the support of Ventura College.

*ESPINO*

So you really didn't leave. You just changed your surroundings, but you kept with that same issue.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. The value for me was coming home, coming back to Oxnard, where I lived and living with family, and then working at Ventura College. Jaime Casillas was the head of the support group. He was the dean of—I can't remember what his title was. I was a counselor, and he had a project which was a little bit like our model project, which was training the welfare recipients or training people who are very low income or young people who were gang members or who had dropped out of school and moving them into the college curriculums, providing the support. And I did that. Then I moved from there to Oxnard College and started to work on technology as being very important. What interested me in technology was the fact that Jaime had a technology program in his project where some of the dropout

students who had dropped out of high school were trying to get into the college. We were teaching them how to work on computers. Some of them would stay there. You had to chase them out of the classroom, get them to go home, and they were so interested in technology. I saw that as the future and where the jobs were. So that's when the Mac [Macintosh computer] was being very, very popular. Then I saw the growth of the PC [personal computer]. I started to attend the Microsoft gatherings and then I started to be involved with that and brought some of that to Ventura College and worked with a very, very intelligent woman professor. Her last name was Baca.

*ESPINO*

[unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

No, no, no, no. Baca who was—

*ESPINO*

Oh, you mean here in—

*ANGUIANO*

In Ventura. Her parents were friends of mine before I entered. So she was a teacher and she was training the kids, the school dropouts, how to handle the computer and dealing with it, dealing with a PC. There was a big ruckus in Ventura College because some of the professors insisted in getting the Mac, and then when we were introduced into the PC, which was what the businesspeople were using, it became sort of like a conflict. So my interest was getting people into jobs, and so I attended Microsoft, and then some of the teachers would consider me a traitor because the Mac was what they found. I didn't care, because here we were. In Ventura College there is a building where the auto, Toyota, supports, and then Jaime Casillas, and then there was like a counseling and a preparation, computer training program that we had to train some of the students. The objective was either you get a job and go to work or else you can move into a regular curriculum at the college and get your AA [Associate in Arts] degree.

So it was great, because I used to help some of the women. One of them moved into psychology, and, boy, that was a big deal. That was a big deal. But some of the guys moved, and they were interested in other—a lot of them, the guys were interested in cars. I've often wondered why we didn't start an auto factory, because the big interest—even my boyfriends when I was going to high school loved working on cars, so a great interest in cars and saw them moving to the auto. Toyota supported the auto program, the automobile program and training program at Ventura College. So the guys got into good jobs. You see them in their garages. But I often wonder, you know. We have these car shows. I go to the car shows and I talk to Latinos and I say, "Why didn't you ever start building a car?" Because they work on their cars and they're old from way, way back when, and they have completely redone the motor and the upholstery and the very creative ways

of having that motor working in the way it was built way back in the dinosaur age. They're old cars of the forties. Isn't it very interesting? My question is, why didn't we inspire the Latinos to start an auto industry?

*ESPINO*

Yes, it would be. Well, Latinos have, in a sense, built the U.S. and Mexican auto industry, because Ford and General Motors, many working-class Latinos worked for those companies. But as far as leadership and ownership, that's a whole different other story. That's all so interesting and really important to what we're talking about, but you move into Ventura College but you still stay with the same issue. Then when do you start to move into environmental issues?

*ANGUIANO*

Then I moved from Ventura College and became the resource development expert at Oxnard College, and I was very interested in Oxnard College because that's where a lot of the children of agricultural workers go. I continued the interest in technology. So I started to go to the COMDEX [Computer Dealer's Exhibition], the international computer conference that's held in Las Vegas [Nevada] every year, used to be held, and that's where I met—I used to stand on line for hours to see [William H.] Bill Gates [III] do his performance of the new trends of Microsoft, and it was great, because we had lines. You had to stand in line for hours to get to see him. It was really great, and then visiting the Microsoft office and there really getting a lot of technology, and then I would bring that to Oxnard College. I met at that time John Chambers from Cisco Systems, and he was developing an education training program to train high school students to build the infrastructure of the Internet, the routers, the switches and all. He had started this Cisco Network Academy, and I loved the whole idea. So, you know, I'm not very shy. I went over to him and said, "Why don't you come to Oxnard, Oxnard College, and start." He says, "Of course," and so he had one of his staff persons. I said, "Oxnard College would be very happy to start a Cisco Network Academy." That was very new, you know. So I came back and I talked to Steven Arvizu, who's the president of Oxnard College, and I said, "I met John Chambers. He's starting a Cisco Network Academy. Why don't we bring this to—" I asked him if we could bring it to Oxnard College, and he agreed that he would train the teachers, he would provide the first equipment, but then the college had to then provide some equipment also, buy the computers and all. So he agreed, and Carmen Guerrero from Oxnard College was the representative of the faculty, and so Dr. Arvizu called everyone.

Ed Lynch, an engineer in technology, loved the idea. We made a presentation, and then I did what I always do. I invited the private sector. I invited GTE [Corporation] to come, and I invited a couple of other new companies who were being developed in Ventura County. They came and they loved the idea. Ed Lynch signed right away, "I want to be a teacher. I

want to go through that training.” Then there was another teacher who worked part-time at Oxnard College and also had his technology business and he bought into it. Then GTE said, “We will hire the people. You train them and we’ll hire them.” We made news all over Ventura County, GTE and then hiring, Cisco Systems coming into Oxnard College, and Ed Lynch, an engineer, being the professor, and my bringing the program in. That became like an instant winner. Cisco then provided the training. The teachers went to be trained. It was really Ed Lynch and this other who went to be trained and came back and opened the Cisco Network Academy program. We had an enrollment filled immediately, and then we had to open another classroom and then we had to open another one. Moorpark College in Ventura called, “Why not us? We are better equipped.”

And I said, “Hey, we started this. This is an Oxnard College project.” And so they started to complain to Cisco Systems. I said, “We’ll help them also, but Oxnard College is going to be the mother, the major project, and then we’ll start training others from here.” So in about a year, the enrollment at Oxnard College produced a million dollars for the community college. Moorpark fought for the Cisco, it had to be in Moorpark, and so did Ventura, that they were better equipped than Oxnard College. Poor little Oxnard. I sustained that competition, and then they started to get after Dr. Arvizu, because, I don’t know, the politics of everything. Dr. Arvizu decided to hire some people from Bakersfield, because he was from Bakersfield, and he brought them and some of the faculty didn’t like it.

*ESPINO*

Nepotism? Were they arguing nepotism?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, not necessarily family, but that he wanted to bring his staff from—I don’t know what you would call that. They weren’t his family. And he had every right to do that, but his staff from Bakersfield didn’t understand the Cisco Network Academy.

*ESPINO*

Is that cronyism?

*ANGUIANO*

Cronyism. So they put it on the back burner. What I did next was I challenged Dr. Arvizu to bring in some welfare recipients and to train them to move off of welfare and work with the GAINS program. So, see, my welfare still hadn’t left me. He agreed, and so I called it the President’s Program. The college had to open a new enrollment, and so I said, “Well, it’s the President’s Program, so why can’t we open a new enrollment?” So we did. So we brought about twenty women who were on welfare, and we put them through remedial reading. Some of them women did so well. I still have pictures.

*ESPINO*

How did you find them, or did they find you?

*ANGUIANO*

I was working with the homeless program here in Oxnard. What do you call it? It's a homeless program that they have.

*ESPINO*

National?

*ANGUIANO*

It's sort of national, but they have offices. Anyway, it was a homeless program they had here, and it's still here in Oxnard. I was working with the staff there, helping to counsel some of the women to get into Oxnard College and to get a career and to get off of prostitution and get off of welfare and just move in. So I challenged the president, so we started with them, some of them, and then we opened it up and immediately the classes were filled. It was really great, because some of the teachers, we had some very good teachers who really knew how to work with the women on welfare. Carmen Guerrero really knows how to work with low income, with agriculture workers, in computers and training. So we got them through the literacy and we got them to pass the tests in qualifying to enter Oxnard College, and so they started a regular curriculum. I think quite a number of them graduated with AA degrees. One of them was surprising. She graduated and got a \$25-an-hour job. [laughs]

*ESPINO*

From homelessness. That's impressive.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. It was really very, very rewarding. But then when the competition started with Dr. Arvizu, then the chancellor started to crack down, and then they all sent a guy to be the vice president, and this guy really was—you know. Dr. Arvizu was in an accident, automobile accident, and he was trying to do too much and was too ambitious, and then he brought people from Bakersfield that really didn't understand Oxnard. So I was having problems with him. Everybody was having problems with him. So poor Dr. Arvizu, he had a relapse and then he had an accident and then he had to go on disability. I think he's living in Oxnard. But the program was a huge success, huge, huge success.

*ESPINO*

Then when he left, was the program disbanded?

*ANGUIANO*

Then they wanted to disband the program, and you're not going to believe this, but the main office, the Ventura County office for the Ventura community colleges, that administers the three colleges, the Administration Office wanted to change the Cisco program, change from the technology and all to go back into the copper line. So I resigned and Cisco Systems gave me a job, because I was their bright star. And really I wasn't really a bright star. All I did was bring the private sector into the Cisco Network Academy. Obviously, for educators, that's historical. For me, it wasn't.

*ESPINO*

That's what you'd always been doing.

*ANGUIANO*

That's what I had always been doing that. I got GTE, and GTE was very excited and they furnished everything. They were ready to give jobs to the women, to the people who were hired. Then GTE opened a telephone training for some of the women to work in their office here at Oxnard, their telecommunication office, and we got a lot of women hired. But the teachers, educators, didn't want it. They saw that as just providing services for the employers and that they wanted to deal with their curriculum and their teaching and that this was a hindrance.

*ESPINO*

Did they feel it was more that you were trying to move the college into a trade school versus, I don't know, a bastion of knowledge? I don't know what they had imagined for their students in the future.

*ANGUIANO*

This is the problem that I have with education, and that is that the Cisco Network Academy was online. The testing was all online. The training for the teachers, Cisco Systems did it, and all that the teachers did if they took tests online. Cisco corrected the tests, and if the student didn't pass the test, they would give them practice lessons online so that the students would learn the math and the technology and then pass. The system was really a standard for all the Internet. There was a lot of competition in the Internet with Microsoft, Cisco Systems, with, I don't know, three or four. You know how competition is. Well, the Cisco Network Academy was developing industry standard practices of all technology standard, so— [End of July 21, 2011 interview]

### ***1.10. Session 10 (September 19, 2011)***

*ESPINO*

This is Virginia Espino, and today is September 19 [2011]. I'm interviewing Lupe Anguiano in the library in Oxnard [California], the public library, which is a lovely place to do an interview. I'm so glad we got a room today. I thought that was not going to happen.

*ANGUIANO*

I know. This place is very popular. A lot of people come here.

*ESPINO*

It's wonderful. It's always full. Well, I wanted to start with your involvement, when you became interested in environmental issues.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, actually, I've always been interested in environmental issues, and I guess when that started was when I was a child living in Oxnard, living a mile and a half from the ocean in Oxnard. I remember, as a child, my dad

Jose Anguiano and mom Rosario Gonzalez de Anguiano used to take us to the ocean and sometimes we'd go grunion hunting. When the grunions would come in, the newspaper would say the grunions are going to come in. The grunions are going to be coming in. So we would go and take our blankets and take our tents and everything, and take our wood and all, and build a fire and sleep in the ocean, and wait for the grunions to come in. Sometimes they came in at twelve, sometimes at one, sometimes at two o'clock in the morning, and so it was a lot of fun. I would go with a bucket, and the grunions would just come in, just put your bucket and here this little fish would just be rolling around and swimming around the bucket. Then we would play with them and then we would put them back in the ocean, have them go back, and then the whole [unclear] continued. We'd roast hot dogs and have marshmallows and eat. Then when the grunions took longer to come, we would sleep, and then somebody would always be on watch. After our grunion hunting, some of my brothers would keep some of the grunions. Then we would just fall asleep, and in the morning we would get up and go home. So my appreciation of the ocean has always been part of my life. As I was growing up, when I really wanted to relax and rest, I'd go to walk in the ocean. As a matter of fact, the first day that you came to see me, I took you to some of it. The ocean view in Oxnard is very extensive. It starts from Port Hueneme all the way to the line of Point Mugu, and after Point Mugu, there's Malibu. I've always collected rocks, and so I have always been very interested in bringing rocks. I still have one of those beautiful rocks that I picked up, which is a white rock. It's just beautiful. It just glares. I think I've had it for so many years that now it has collected some dust, but one of these days I'm going to wash it. So I've grown up with the appreciation of the ocean.

*ESPINO*

Is it something that your parents talked to you about, as far as articulating any ideas about the ocean, about nature?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, yes, I learned—for instance, as a child, my parents would always say God created the Earth, and all things are good. God made those for us to take care of, for us to be stewards and protect what God has created. Life is part of God's life, which is in us also, and it's in the fish and it's in the water and all. I learned, since I was a child, how sacred water is because water is used to cleanse. Water is used for baptism. We cannot live without water. So I learned that from my parents, and so it was part of my upbringing to appreciate God's creation, be it the birds, be it the water, be it the ocean, be it the mountains. The mountains are awesome, and the fruit that Earth produces and what we eat.

Oxnard has always been a treasure in our lives because it produces many, many of things that we eat. Right now the most popular produce developed in Oxnard are strawberries and flowers. As a matter of fact, a flower

businessman from Holland moved to Oxnard and he is from here. He sends flowers all over the world, and you should see some of his flowers. His business is very large in Oxnard. Of course, when I was young, walnuts were very plentiful, oranges were very plentiful, and lemons have always been very plentiful, celery, onions. The onion raiser of Oxnard, Grilling (sic) [Gills Onions] is one of the top importers of onions in the world. As a matter of fact, they received an environment commendation, a reward. Right now I'm working with Agromin, Amerío [phonetic], who owns Agromin, and he is working with soil. He takes the greens that we discard and he picks them up. We have a green recycling in Oxnard, and he picks them up from all over the city. We have a green recycling, where all of the greens are placed, and he picks them up and then he recycles those. Through that, he is developing soil that is being used right now to grow organic food. He has been working with that soil to free it from pesticides and so now he sells that—I know Mr. Ito one of the strawberry business owners in Oxnard, he is using some of the organic and some of the soil produced from Agromin to grow strawberries. He has developed that to sell to growers so that they don't have to use the pesticides that really are very harmful to people, that go into the fruits and all.

*ESPINO*

Well, let me take you back, before we move on to that. Just looking back at the time when you were going to the beach with your family, that was a completely different time when people had values that don't match with today's values about the environment. What can you tell me about your experience? I'm thinking of this one scene in a TV show about the 1970s, and the family goes for a picnic and they just leave their trash all over, because they're trying to convey in the television show that's what it was like back then. People just threw their trash and didn't worry about it. But was your family different, or do you have any recollections of any lessons you learned about—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, you know, I'm eighty-three, going on eighty-three, and way back in those days, we always took care of our trash and we appreciated—I don't know what other people did, but we certainly took care of wherever we went to eat. I don't know. There's people who have come to California that are not California raised. I was raised here. My brother worked picking lemons. We lived in Lemonera Camp, and so we picked walnuts; we picked plums up north; we picked apricots in Moorepark. So we picked those, and we ate them and we saw how they were—should I say fumigated and then dried and then sold to the marketplace. So those are my memories. I don't know. At least I wasn't involved in that. You go to the Oxnard beaches, and they are some of the best kept beaches there are in California. I know once I went to Long Beach. I hate to mention this, but I saw the beach was just trashed. It was very sickening to me to see how people just left paper and

they left bottles and they left trash on the beach. That doesn't happen in Oxnard. The city cleans that beach every day, and then whenever I walk in the beach often, I always take a bag and I'm always picking up plastic, or I'm picking up bottles or I'm picking up things that people leave. I think a lot of us are doing that.

But it's true, I guess, that in other—well, I've seen that. Ventura has become better, but some cities don't have workers that really take care of the beach every day. Oxnard does. We have workers that are there every day. They clean the toilets; they clean the garbage; they have trucks that come in and clean whatever is left in the ocean. In Oxnard, whenever I walk—well, you saw that when you were here. I've had people that come from France, people that come from Canada, and they say, "Wow, this is a beautiful place." People talk about us going here or to Florida or to go here or there, because I guess there's an Ormond Beach in Florida, says, "Well, this is so clean." And then particularly one family that came from France, the dolphins were playing, and they were so excited about that. I said, "Yeah, we see them often." I don't know if you've been to the sanctuary, the islands.

*ESPINO*

No, I've never been.

*ANGUIANO*

The Channel Islands. Well, the Channel Islands are really a treasure of our community, both of Santa Barbara, Ventura, Oxnard, and Malibu, and we certainly have made every effort to make sure that those—and we've lobbied for those islands to be protected. They are right now a sanctuary.

Dionne [Espinoza] came one day, and I took her and her boyfriend to Anacapa. I noticed that the water level is rising, sea level is rising, and the island is becoming inundated by water. So that is happening. Also in Ventura you see—well, also in various parts from Ventura, Port Hueneme, Oxnard, and Malibu you see the erosion of the ocean, the sea level rising. Anytime I love driving on PCH [Pacific Coast Highway] because you can just see a beautiful panorama of the ocean, but you could see that the sea level is rising and it's getting higher. In some areas, if you get close to Los Angeles, you see those coming even very close to PCH.

*ESPINO*

When did your concern for the environment become a political concern?

*ANGUIANO*

When oil was struck in Long Beach, there was a just a major effort to drill oil. So it started in Long Beach and then it continued to Santa Barbara and the coast. You saw a lot of platforms being implemented to drill for oil. Then there was a huge spill, oil spill, in Santa Barbara that just polluted the ocean and thousands of birds were killed. It took years to clean that oil. And still in Lompoc, Chevron is still trying to clean up from those many, many years. As a matter of fact, some of the oil exploration were very close to the oceanfront. So if you go to the museum, [unclear] Museum, you'll see

pictures of those oil exploration. After the spill, California passed a law, which was part of the Nature Conservancy and the Coastal Conservancy, which really fined Chevron and Exxon and Mobil and all the oil drilling. I think the petroleum industry in Long Beach started with—I can't remember what their name was. In 2005, there was a proposal from BHP Billiton from Australia. BHP Billiton is the largest mining company in the world, and they wanted to explore drilling for natural gas. They wanted to import natural gas from Australia to California, and so they selected Oxnard as the site where they would develop a mechanism where the infrastructure, the tankers from Australia would come, and then they would degasify the natural gas and put it into pipes and send it into Oxnard to connect.

Well, what they were in the process of developing was what they call LNG, liquefied natural gas. Liquefied natural gas is a process where you supercool the natural gas from Australia and you supercool it to bring it to—because as you know, natural gas is very explosive, and so you would supercool it. BHP Billiton would bring it to Oxnard, and then in Oxnard they would degasify it into its natural form, and then they would send it with pipes, and they would put deposit it in Southern California Gas Company depositories, and then from there just distribute it throughout the United States. That was the plan. I became very much involved with that.

*ESPINO*

Was that your first struggle?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, that was the first time I really became politically involved in this.

*ESPINO*

2005.

*ANGUIANO*

BHP Billiton is the largest mining company in the world. They don't have any experience in drilling for natural gas. They don't have any experience in dealing with the process, but they were determined to break into that market, and so they were doing that by LNG, liquefied natural gas, dealing with that, and they were going to build these huge tankers that would be manufactured just for the drilling of natural gas in Australia and then supercooling it and bring it miles into Oxnard.

Well, the premier minister of Australia took Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Governor of California, to one of the Chumash, a Native American Indian, to Washington, and they took many of the legislators. Sheila Kuehl from San Fernando Valley, they took her and some of our senators, and they invited Susan Jordan, primarily because she was a strong environmentalist. They wined and dined them in Sydney, Australia, and then they shared with them their plan that they were going to do this. They were going to export natural gas via supercooling LNG, liquefied natural gas, and then they selected Oxnard. Susan Jordan, she's the wife of Pedro Nava, former assemblyman. She was the only one who stood up in the crowd and told them, "This is not

going to work. There's no way that you're going to be able to do this in Oxnard. Oxnard is not the right place." They argued with her. They said, "Well, you have a Port Hueneme. Port Hueneme has very deep water, and so ships would easily come through. The governor said, "Oh, we'll do it. We'll do it." And [unclear] the Chumash, they also agreed, and so did some of the assemblymen and some of the senators in California Assembly. Susan Jordan was the only one that stood up to them. So what happened was then they hired a lobbyist, and, of course, Australia, because they didn't have experience in drilling oil or natural gas, they partnered with Exxon Mobil. I think Exxon Mobil probably was the one that really brought that proposal to Australia, to the minister in Australia, because, you know, being the largest mining company in the world, they have a lot of money. So Exxon Mobil was involved in it. BHP Billiton was involved in it. They thought they had done all of their homework, and I think that they chose Oxnard because they said, "Well, this is a Latino place and they don't have strong lobbyists and they're not heavily involved in political."

So I first heard about it, they hired a lobbyist and they placed her in Oxnard in the tower, in the Esplana, in the Esplana Tower, a beautiful facility. They took a whole floor. I'm not sure they took the whole floor, but anyway, they were a very prestigious place. So they approached the Hispanic Chamber [of Commerce] in Oxnard, and I was one of the members. I was a board member of the Hispanic Chamber. When she came to make her presentation and ask for the endorsement of the LNG facility, I took time to look up who they were and where they came from and all, and I was just flabbergasted with their proposal. Then Susan Jordan had already started writing about the dangers and the damage, first of all, how explosive natural gas is and the pipelines that would be coming right through our neighborhood. We didn't have the [San] Bruno [California] experience that blew up. So they kept arguing that it was safe, it was safe, it was safe. Well, I opposed that.

*ESPINO*

How did you hear about it?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, at the Hispanic Chamber when the lobbyist came to talk to us. Then I did research and then I saw that Susan Jordan was opposing it, and then I started to see their lobbying track. They already had the governor on their side and [unclear], and [unclear] had the support of Robert Kennedy. So they started their campaign. What they did, they hired Hank Lacayo, a Latino from Oxnard, to be one of their consultants. Hank Lacayo is very popular and so he was their lobbyist. So when they came to the Hispanic Chamber and asked, I did the research and then I came back and I said, "These people are just throwing money all over the place. They're giving money to our legislators. They're giving money to the White House. They're giving money to the governor. They are promoting this, and this is very dangerous."

Susan had already started doing research on the dangers of LNG. Then the important thing was that it had never been tested. LNG had never really been tested. Yeah, they had been coming to Massachusetts, but California isn't Massachusetts. So we really started a campaign. Then Hank Lacayo came to one of our Hispanic Chambers, and then I asked him a lot of questions. One of the questions that I asked, "The pipelines BHP Billiton proposes are thirty-six inches and they're industrial pipes. They're not like the small pipes that come into our house that deliver gas. They are industrial. And then the degasification is going to be close to our islands, the Channel Islands, and that's a bird sanctuary, and we have whales and we have a lot of marine life that pass by Oxnard to go to Alaska or vice versa. The gasification, according to the research then by Susan Jordan, is going to absorb the larva and just absorb the eggs of the fish, and that's not going to work because you're close to the Channel Islands. It's a sanctuary. Then the other issue was the Clean Air Act, because the pollution that was going to come from the LNG would then place Ventura County in violation of the Clean Air Act. So BHP Billiton was trying to buy out Ventura County. Mike Villegas from the Air Pollution Control in Ventura County had argued that the navy was doing some testing in the area where BHP Billiton was going to place this degasification and that it was air-control safe. In other words, the pollution that was going to come out of that was no higher than the Point Mugu. So that was a big stumbling block for us. So Mike Villegas had originally given us an okay, and so we had to do a lot of lobbying with our Ventura County Board of Supervisors. Invariably, some of the testing that we did really proved that the air quality brought by LNG would really violate the Clean Air Act and so much pollution would just be a complete violation of the act and would harm our air, would harm our health.

So finally, Supervisor Bennet, who's an environmentalist, and Linda Parks, Supervisor Linda Parks from Thousand Oaks, and Bennet from Ventura started to study the situation, and they found that the pollution that was going to be brought was going to really endanger the health of our people and was really in violation of the Clear Air Act, so they wrote to Mike Villegas and they asked him to do additional research. Mike Villegas did, and he came back after a few weeks and agreed that it really would be very dangerous, it would be a violation of the Clean Air Act. But we had to do tons of work.

*ESPINO*

What kinds of things did you do? Was it research, advocacy?

*ANGUIANO*

Before 2006, when I became involved, Owen Bailey from Sierra Club had been working with Susan Jordan and a group here in Oxnard, the Sierra Club in Oxnard, and what they did was they did a hands-on where the pipelines was going to come in Oxnard. It was going to come from close to Neptune's Nest in Malibu. That's where the tanker and the degasification was going to

take place, and then the pipelines were going to come through Neptune, which is part of Malibu, and then they were going to come to Ormond Beach in Oxnard and connect with the Edison plant. The easement was going to be used to really bring the pipelines through agricultural land, but then it was going to be coming through the city of Oxnard.

What Owen Bailey did was he did a demonstration. He put people all through where the pipeline was coming, and it was really great and it hit the news and all. I attended one of the meetings and that's when I became involved in 2006. When I heard this, that the Sierra Club and the group called the Saviers Road and other people were already involved, I started to become involved with them.

*ESPINO*

Did you go to their meetings?

*ANGUIANO*

I went to the meetings and then I liked Owen Bailey. He's an excellent organizer. He really knows how to communicate with people and all, and so I started to communicate with him and then becoming involved with some of the meetings. So what I did to really support the effort, I talked to Supervisor John Zaragoza, who was then a City Councilman, and I said, "Mr. Zaragoza, the Latino people don't know this is happening in Oxnard because all of the information is being put out by the Sierra Club in English. Our Latino community don't know about this." And I said, "This is a very dangerous thing." So what the city did, they hired an environmental organization to really study the plan, and the plan was really great. The name of the environment business group was called—oh, what is the—in Denver, in Colorado, that is in the mountains? It's a very popular name. Anyway, this company became involved, and they studied the proposal from BHP Billiton, and they came back with a report.

*ESPINO*

Aspen?

*ANGUIANO*

Aspen. Aspen Environmental. They came back with a report really saying that it was going to cause a lot of pollution, and it did violate the Clean Air Act and it was going to be very harmful for us. Then they pointed out the danger, that natural gas, by nature, is very explosive. Methane is very explosive, and anything can ignite it, any little violation could just ignite it. So the City Council voted not to give permission to BHP Billiton to come through our Oxnard land. That was a big success, and the ones who really moved that agenda was, number one, Mayor Tom Holden, Andres Herrera and John Zaragoza, and Mr. Pinkasa. I can't remember who the other councilman was. Well, the one who opposed this was Dean Maulhardt, who was a strong businessman. Anyway, we got it through the City Council, and Dean just sort of said—he's a businessman and so he supported the project, and then Hank Lacayo was up there lobbying, so we had a lot of hearings in

Oxnard. The State Lands Commission came and the California Coastal Commission came, and we just filled the auditorium with five hundred, three hundred people.

*ESPINO*

What was your role specifically?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I testified in all of the hearings. I always started that I worked in Washington and I knew what lobbying was all about, and that the city and the state really needed to look at this from the standpoint of the Clean Air Act and the health and the methane.

A lot of the research and the words that I used were done by Susan Jordan and the Environmental Defense Center. Susan Jordan hired the Environmental Defense Center to be the lawyers, and she did a lot of work. Pedro Nava used to belong to the California Coastal Commission, and so he also was providing information and doing research and all. So I would take those reports and I would just use those reports, and knowing my experience in working in Washington, I would just testify against the plan. It was really not very difficult. You look at methane, how explosive it is, and just to think that thirty-six-inch industrial pipes were going to come close to our schools, close to our homes on Gonzalez Road, and was going to come through Ormond Beach. BHP Billiton, the richest mine company in the world, had all the money to just be lobbying, so it was a matter of David fighting Goliath with their money and us with our voices and our knowledge and our expertise really fighting against it. It was really a historical thing.

*ESPINO*

Did it get ugly?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes. Some of the reporters would say, "Lupe, what are you talking about? These pipelines are small. They come under your house already. Why are you arguing this?" One day, in the one of the debates, I told Hank Lacayo, I said, "We're talking about thirty-six-inch industrial pipes. We're not talking about the pipes that come under our homes. And even the pipes that come under our homes, we need to be very careful because methane, it could just explode and put on fire your house." The arguments became very heavy, and the opposition, particularly with the newspaper, they were just buying ads and they were buying some of our Assembly people, Sheila Kuehl and our state senator.

So what I told John Zaragoza was, "Our people aren't familiar with this. Why don't we have a Town Hall meeting." And John Zaragoza said, "That's a good idea because we need to share this information with the Latino people."

Many of them could not speak English. So we had a Town Hall meeting, and lo and behold, we had over three hundred people there, and that just really—it was like a match, just [demonstrates]. A light came. Sierra Club gave me an award. So we started the battle, and from then on, the group

just kept growing and growing and growing. We did a lot of demonstrations and we contacted our Congress—I mean our—at that time, [John] Garamendi was the director or president of the State Lands Commission, and BHP Billiton needed approval by the State Lands Commission to really start bringing those tankers to Oxnard. Garamendi, he loves whales and loves the ocean. He's a strong environmentalist.

*ESPINO*

Do you think it was your activism or do you think it was the people involved?

*ANGUIANO*

And [John] Chiang, our state comptroller, he was involved. We visited him and he supported us right away. Well, to make a long story short, Garamendi is a strong environmentalist, but he really wanted the facts and he really was not going to oppose the largest mining company in the world who had billions of dollars, nor was he going to oppose Exxon Mobil, who's equally rich and powerful. So thanks to Susan Jordan, thanks to Pedro Nava, thanks to the Sierra Club, thanks to our City Council, John Zaragoza, who supported not only me but the Sierra Club, and a lot of the other groups who were involved in this, our group became stronger and stronger and stronger and stronger.

So we had many hearings, and I have them all documented, but the final pitch came when the California Coastal Commission had a meeting because they also had to approve it. What we did, Susan Jordan got [Charles] Bronson from Malibu, who used to be—

*ESPINO*

Charles Bronson?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, Charles, the actor, because it was going to hit Malibu, really, and Susan Jordan started to get the movie stars involved. So many of the movie stars—you have to look at the Coastal Commission and you see—the surfers' organization, and then some of the City Council people from Malibu are surfers, and the mayor of Malibu. So, lo and behold, didn't they start to come to Oxnard to our meetings? We had the meetings in Rusty's Pizza on Ventura Road and close to Gonzalez. It was really incredible, and here these people came from Malibu.

*ESPINO*

What an interesting mix.

*ANGUIANO*

I know. We had a reporter in Malibu who was also—but the Malibu City Council opposed it. The mayor of Malibu opposed it.

So we had a meeting, a huge meeting, a hearing by the State Lands Commission in Oxnard, in the Oxnard Performing Arts Center, and we had close to about six hundred, more than six hundred. Malibu came, the mayor, Tom Holden came, Steve Bennet came, not as a supervisor, but as a citizen, and some of the movie stars came. They just said, "Hey, this is not going to

work. This is very explosive and it's going to damage our air, and we have Neptune's Net," which is a surfers' paradise. So it just really grew. I'll tell you, afterwards I just had a lot of fun because the more publicity we got, the more people started to come to our meetings. Then the final day was coming when the State Lands Commission was going to make the final decision, and we wanted to get thousands of people here, so what we did, we contacted CAUSE [Coastal Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy]. CAUSE was involved in wage. So they let us use their phones. But anyway, they allowed Marco Vargas and Marisela Morales and Carmen Ramirez—Carmen Ramirez was not involved with us since she was working for the lawyers, the Ventura County Legal something or another, and she was the one that really brought CAUSE into it. They put an organizer in, so Beatriz Garcia really did a good job in really organizing people from Santa Paula and from Fillmore and brought them in busloads. I don't know how much they really knew about LNG. I don't know how much they really knew about the issue of—

*ESPINO*

How do you think she was able to get them if it wasn't their own conviction?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, there was a lady who—PODER [de mi Pueblo]. It's a grassroots organization working in Santa Paula and in Fillmore, and this lady who headed PODER [unclear], something like that, she already had these people organized and so she told them that we were battling to protect the Clean Air Act, and then that the destruction, this natural gas that was going to come, that it was very explosive. She had already organized these groups, and so they came.

*ESPINO*

You think they had a sense of something.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

*ESPINO*

Because it sounded like maybe they were [unclear].

*ANGUIANO*

No, no. Well, the issue was that they had about one month or two months' notice that they had. Community organizing and education of our people is really something. One of the superstars of this was a student called Erica Fernandez, who is now at Stanford [University]. She was very, very vocal. She's a daughter of an agricultural worker, but what a brilliant student. She was going to Hueneme High School and she came before the State Lands Commission, and everyone was just in awe at her. Then some of the poor people came. I also organized a Latino group and LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens]. David Rodriguez came and testified, and then the union, CSUCI [California State University, Channel Islands], came and

testified, and so we drowned the testimony of Hank Lacayo. Hank Lacayo came—

*ESPINO*

Himself?

*ANGUIANO*

He came with the Hispanic Chamber, and you know who was representing the Hispanic Chamber? A black gentleman came to testify on behalf of the Hispanic Chamber. Can you beat that?

*ESPINO*

He could be Latino.

*ANGUIANO*

He could be Latino, but he wasn't.

*ESPINO*

Oh, okay.

*ANGUIANO*

But Hank Lacayo came in and he had the seniors and some of the unions who really wanted the work.

*ESPINO*

Interesting. That's fascinating. That sounds like a novel.

*ANGUIANO*

It is. I mean, the other day, I met the people from Sierra Club at Costco's, and we were reminiscing of the great times, because we had the whole community organized and we had the City Council. We had the support of Supervisor Zaragoza and the Board of Supervisors. So we had everyone, and so it was a great victory. Well, I'll tell you, when the day came for the final, we had about two thousand or three thousand people. Garamendi was concerned about too many people, and so some of the people had to stand outside, had microphones and everything. I got CSUCI, David Rodriguez from CSUCI, the head of environment science. He came with his students. When I was testifying, the students from CSUCI were coming in, and David Rodriguez says, "Wow, it really was something else." There was a rally outside and we were inside, and Garamendi was trying to keep everything under control because he didn't want to have a—and then our fire department didn't want to have a mob in the Oxnard Performing Arts Center, so some of the people had to be outside, so we had to put microphones outside. We stayed there until close to midnight.

Exxon Mobil did their darnedest. They had Hank; they had some of the union people who wanted jobs; they had some of their cronies. And it was so wonderful the way Mr. Garamendi really channeled—what was [Cruz] Bustamante's position? You have the governor. Lieutenant governor. Garamendi was the lieutenant governor, and as the lieutenant governor, he headed the State Lands Commission. His questions to Exxon Mobil were just historic.

*ESPINO*

How did you decide on your next issue after that?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, after the State Lands Commission approved it, we had a big celebration in the Oxnard Performing Arts Center, but then that wasn't the end. We also had to convince the Coastal Commission to approve it. After that, we went to Santa Barbara. Exxon Mobil tried to put a stop to the commission's deliberations and they tried to get a lawyer to put a stop to it, but Susan Jordan was great. She met with every one of them. So every one of the California Coastal Commission said, "We met with Susan Jordan. We met with Susan Jordan. We met with Susan—." Because they had to announce who was the lobbyist. When the decision came, the State Lands Commission, I think all of them supported our position. So that's when we had this big picture taken.

*ESPINO*

But this was before you formulated Stewards of the Earth.

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I was in the process of organizing it. Here it's under "Environment." It's under "Environment."

*ESPINO*

So you were in the process of organizing—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I was organizing as protecting our environment.

*ESPINO*

That was your organization that you formed?

*ANGUIANO*

It was really just me.

*ESPINO*

Okay.

*ANGUIANO*

I was working under that. And then after that, I formed Stewards of the Earth, and then I received \$12,000 from—the first time I received \$12,000 from—so this is our Santa Barbara victory. This is Erica Fernandez.

*ESPINO*

Who's now at Stanford.

*ANGUIANO*

Stanford, yes. And then this is Shannon Campbell. She's in Villanova High School, and this is me. The Women's Political Caucus gave me an award, and this is Susan Jordan. You know, Virginia, this may sound like a novel. It was hard work. We worked for three years to defeat this, but when we defeated it, news went all over the world, throughout the world. We made national news.

*ESPINO*

It was an international issue because you were dealing with Australia.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, it was. The brains behind it was this lady.

*ESPINO*

Does she get any credit for her work?

*ANGUIANO*

No. As a matter of fact, no. That's the heartache. That's the heartache I wanted to point out. You know, when big battles like this are won, the people who work the hardest are sometimes the ones that are not recognized, and the people that need a lot of recognition is, number one, her; number two, Pedro Nava, her husband; number three, Owen Bailey from Sierra Club; and the City of Oxnard, Tom Holden, John Zaragoza. They really deserve great applause for this victory because they were the ones that—some of the other players were Carmen Ramirez and the Saviers Road, and the Saviers Road also deserves a lot of credit. Carmen has then become a City Council person and, as part of CAUSE, she supported Das Williams, who is now our assemblyman. He was the one that was supporting drilling in Santa Barbara, BHP, and the Environmental Defense Center was also supporting that. The reason why they were supporting it was they said that within twelve years after drilling, the oil company promised to close all the platforms, some of the platforms, not all of them. My argument was, "You can't sign a thing with the devil," and I cried when Linda Crop from the Environmental Center supported that. Then Das Williams ran against Susan Jordan and he won. He lied about her. He painted a brochure with her with a glass of wine at the BHP Billiton, supporting BHP Billiton, which is a lie. Just what they did to me, they were doing to her. The whole Democratic Club supported Das Williams against Susan Jordan.

*ESPINO*

What were his credentials? Why would they support him?

*ANGUIANO*

Because he's a liar and a cheat. He was being supported by Hannah Beth Jackson, who was a former assemblyman. Before Pedro Nava was an assemblyman, she was our assembly. So it's a battle that continues right now.

*ESPINO*

I'm trying to just pinpoint a little bit of the division. What would be an issue that you would say—was he pro-business and she wasn't, in the sense that she was more pro-environment protection and he was more pro-business, or was it a political thing and [unclear]?

*ANGUIANO*

The issue was money. PXP Oil Company, the drilling company, promised to give the Environmental Defense Center and Das Williams—they gave him a lot of money. They gave money to Das Williams to beat Susan Jordan. They didn't want Susan Jordan in the Assembly, so they poured out the money. So his argument was for fourteen years, "We're going to an agreement we're going to do with PXP is they can drill for fourteen years and then they're

going to close the platforms.” What does that sound to you? You know how it sounds to me? In fourteen years, how much damage will oil drilling do to the ocean? That was the issue. And then, number two, what assurance will you have that PXP oil drilling company was going to keep their word? My experience in working in Washington and working with oil companies is that they’ll declare bankruptcy. They’ll move out of town. Fourteen years of drilling, the damage that could be done. After we had this battle, we had the Gulf [of Mexico] oil spill, and then Das Williams was a turncoat. He started to become an environmentalist. It hurts me to even speak about it, a liar and a cheat, and the Democratic Club supported him.

*ESPINO*

Do they still support him?

*ANGUIANO*

Of course. He was their candidate. He was a city councilman in Santa Barbara.

*ESPINO*

Have you had a conversation with him or have you talked to him about these issues?

*ANGUIANO*

He has begged me to support him.

*ESPINO*

What do you tell him?

*ANGUIANO*

“No way.” What would you do, Virginia, if a guy like that came to you who was lying, who was supporting a contract for fourteen years? And he did it without talking to the people. He just did it, him and the Environment Defense Center just did it, and Hannah Beth Jackson just did it. They didn’t bring it to the people to see what—and after we had beat BHP Billiton.

*ESPINO*

And he was successful then?

*ANGUIANO*

He won.

*ESPINO*

He won the platforms, the fourteen-year—

*ANGUIANO*

No. After the Gulf oil [spill], he retracted and he became an environmentalist, he says. It makes me sick to even think about it. You know what, Virginia? I think in the United States we have lost the sense of integrity, because I don’t think that people take lying as seriously as I do, or many others, people of my era, my age, or I would say really a lot of people that really, in all fairness, who live today. I would say that that is probably the biggest problem that we have in the United States, and this is why you have nobody supporting the Republican Party or the Democratic Party.

That’s why you have a growing decline to state, because we have lost a

sense of purpose, a loss of integrity, of truth. We just see a lie and say, "Oh, it's a lie." It infuriates me. It makes me so angry that—and people still ask me. You look at my car. I still have Susan Jordan.

*ESPINO*

I've seen it, yes.

*ANGUIANO*

And I supported Hillary Clinton. She would have been by far a better president. What did the Democratic Party do? I think she would have.

*ESPINO*

Why do you think she would have?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I think Barack Obama doesn't have experience. He just doesn't know how to negotiate. He lacks experience. Hillary, along with [William J.] Bill Clinton, would have done a better job, I think, in terms of the economy. They just know how to negotiate. They know how to work with employers. I work with employers and I work with a lot of businesspeople. I call a spade a spade, and they respect me because they know where I'm coming from.

*ESPINO*

Were you able to work with Das Williams on issues afterwards?

*ANGUIANO*

Right now? The things that I have seen him see done have not demonstrated to me that he's a statesperson. He went and got a bill passed for energy conservation and he didn't even talk to our City Council. He's still doing that. He gets in his room and he does his thing without respect to—so what's going to happen to the bill that he got passed and signed by the governor when he didn't even talk to us? He talked to Carmen because Carmen is part of CAUSE and he's part of CAUSE. He used to be the vice president of CAUSE.

*ESPINO*

You don't have to deal with him on some of the other issues then? After the pipeline, what was your next issue after that, the Clean Air Act?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

You gave me a document that says "New national [unclear] urgency to support the Clean Air Act and [unclear]."

*ANGUIANO*

And this was a press release of it, just released. It was released Monday, today.

*ESPINO*

Oh, so this is your work as of today. Interesting. Do you want to read that for me?

*ANGUIANO*

"The Center will call on its volunteer Clean Air Act advocates across the country to push their city governments to take action by passing a resolution. Evidence continues to mount about perils of climate change: hurricanes, drought, wildfires, floods, disappearing sea ice. Our city leaders can tell President Obama and EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], that it's time to act. It's time to harness the Clean Air Act. Such is said by Lisa, the Center's volunteer Clean Air Act advocates from [unclear] and then Tennessee." "It's time to stand up to polluters and those who do their bidding in Washington, D.C.," said Lupe Anguiano, a Clean Air Act advocate from Oxnard, California. "We can have clean air, a vibrant economy, and a healthy climate, but only if we get past the political rhetoric and follow the clear path that science has laid out for us."

*ESPINO*

Wow. So this is a press release from various—

*ANGUIANO*

There's three hundred of us.

*ESPINO*

Around the U.S.?

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Or is it global?

*ANGUIANO*

It's global, but in the United States we have about three hundred organizations. Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters, my former order of sisters, support this, and also there's various organizations, the Pacific Environment that I'm connected to, the Sierra Club is part of this and about three hundred organizations, and Erica, working in Stanford, is part of this. As a matter of fact, I just received—what I did was I sent it to Mike Villegas, who is the air control pollution manager for Ventura County, and asked him if he would have his board support it. A member of his board is John Zaragoza. I think he's still the chairman of Ventura County. When you called, this is the work that I was doing. That is behind what we did on September 30th, 2010, where we were working with Green Jobs and working on a green economy. We had a Town Hall meeting. I requested that John Zaragoza have a Town Hall meeting, and we have been working on that, and this is the Town Hall meeting that we had. We had Rose Braz from here.

*ESPINO*

Maybe you can explain, because we're recording this. So if you could just give—Rose who?

*ANGUIANO*

Rose Braz.

*ESPINO*

From?

*ANGUIANO*

She's the head of the Biological Diversity Center. She was one of the speakers that I—and then solar power, which was REC Solar, came, and then Bill Camarillo from Agromin. So we had a Town Hall meeting to discuss the Clean Air Act and to discuss, if we work on the Clean Air Act, how we would also be creating green jobs and protect the health—

*ANGUIANO*

Is this you—yes, I'm sorry. Protect the health. Is this you alone or is this you with your organization?

*ESPINO*

My organization, Lupe Anguiano, Stewards of the Earth, is me and our board of directors, and I initiate a lot of these projects. I organize the background information, the importance of the issue, do the research. Most of the research that I do is connected with the Biological Diversity Center, Rose Braz, who I'm working with in the Clean Air Act. Then I go to Supervisor Zaragoza or to some of my friends, and I present the issue and I ask for their support. They discuss it with their boards. They approve it or disapprove it. In this case they approved it. Then I worked with Mike Villegas to organize this Town Hall meeting. I selected Bill Camarillo from Agromin because he's doing soil conservation, and then REC Solar for solar. So we did this Town Hall meeting. It was very successful.

*ESPINO*

It says here you're going to have it, it says Wednesday evening, October 20th.

*ANGUIANO*

2010.

*ESPINO*

Oh, so it was last year.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, the press release came out—yes.

*ESPINO*

And where did they go from here?

*ANGUIANO*

Where did we go?

*ESPINO*

Yes, where did the issue go from here?

*ANGUIANO*

Where did we go? This is where we are right now, but we're also working with Bill Camarillo to organize a green economy. Creating jobs is really the private sector, and so I'm working with Bill Camarillo, we are, supervisor and I are working with Bill Camarillo and with Bill Buratto, the head of the Ventura County Economic Development, to put together a green job initiative. The green job initiative is very focused in what Agromin is doing,

which is working with the soil to really create organic and free from pesticide. What Bill Camarillo does is with the City of Oxnard, the City of Oxnard sells him all their trimmings, the green trimmings, and all of the green that comes from cutting your grass, cutting your trees, and trimming the trees. We put it on a recyclable bin and the city comes and picks it up every Monday. They have different days that they pick them up, and they sell that to Bill Camarillo. Bill then processes that, and they a lot of bark and trees and all. This is all of their—

*ESPINO*

Different kinds of potting mix and compost.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. Agromin is working also with Luminara to put together a recycling business in Santa Paula. I think it's going to be probably in Santa Paula. Right now it's working in Ormond Beach. I should take you there to see it.

*ESPINO*

This is fascinating because it's such a forward-thinking idea, the green economy. It's what everyone says is the future, and it's coming out of Oxnard, what people would think is this kind of backwater small-town mentality. I think that's a fascinating story. What kind of response do you get from the larger community? How do you educate people?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, Virginia, first of all, we need to do it, and the City of Oxnard has received a lot of awards for green economy initiatives. John Zaragoza, when he was a city councilman, really started the recycling center in Oxnard. So there's a major recycling process, and we receive national awards for that. He was the first one to really—that was before I was involved with him—to recommend to the city that they have these bins for the green trimmings for recycling and for waste, for trash. The trimmings, the greens [unclear] process. The recycling is then sold to a recycle company. That is processed, and the trash is, of course, dumped.

Oxnard, we dealt with the largest mining company in the world and we beat that battle, and we were, like, the first ones to really bring a halt to LNG. LNG continues to be prosperous in a lot of places. They even have one in Mexico, which is not working, and they have one in Massachusetts, which is working, and Tokyo is starting to—and China. But we're not going to have a facility that endangers the lives of our people. We're just not going to let that happen. I'm not going to let that happen. There's a lot of people living in Oxnard who are not going to let that happen. The City of Los Angeles is also—I think Mayor Villaraigosa is doing, also, really tremendous strides in the port, Long Beach Port. So that we're just part of that linkage. The problem is that not very many people know what we are doing, and I'll tell you why. It is because the major media networks are owned by major companies, and the largest one is big oil. I mean, they have control. News about renewable energy is growing. It's growing by leaps and bounds, and

you know where it's happening? In the local communities. That's why Washington is so confused.

*ESPINO*

You mean not in the big cities? You mean in the small—

*ANGUIANO*

Well, they're happening in the big cities and in the small cities, like Oxnard. They're happening in Los Angeles. It's happening in some parts in Detroit. Silicon Valley is filled with solar panels. Google, Microsoft, Apple, Federal Express, Costco, they're doing major investments in solar. Google invested I don't know how many millions of dollars in geothermal. Why it is that this is not known is a mystery to me.

To be very honest with you, Virginia, I see that education, in so many respects, is ten years behind. Why? Because you don't get into the books and into that until the people start writing and then you hear about it in education. That's always been my argument with education. My feeling is that people like Chicano [unclear] and sometimes the libraries and also some community have programs, but they're not really into the mainstream because they haven't gotten into the political structure, the implementation, the government structure. Small cities like Oxnard and also big cities like Los Angeles, Mayor Villaraigosa has struggled tooth and nail to get some of his initiatives and he has been pressured by a lot of environmentalists, and so has our city.

*ESPINO*

I'm sure also the big business too.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, and then the renewable energy companies are just growing by leaps and bounds. All of the money that they're receiving, they're putting into growing, and so they're not investing that in the government and all. The nonprofits such as the Center for Biological Diversity, the Sierra Club, the various organizations, Greenpeace, I'm connected to all of those environmental organizations, and that's 90 percent of the work that I do. We're having a lot of demonstrations throughout the country. As a matter of fact, Greenpeace just took down a major coal business in Chicago, but they had to go into disobedience and get arrested. Isn't it a shame that we're still doing that?

*ESPINO*

Well, that reminds me. Your mention of Greenpeace reminds me of the whole question of immigration.

*ANGUIANO*

I've talked to you before about immigration. For me, the root issue in immigration is that you have a global economy moving at a fast pace and the worker is not being brought into the global economy. Like China, they're using cheap labor. Well, cheap labor seems to be the trademark of a global economy, and that is not working. You have the uprisings in Egypt, in

Yemen. You have the issues being brought up with the unions, the strike that we're having probably with grocery workers and the state workers, and you have education being cut to the limit. I don't know. Education is the last thing you should—if you're working on an economy, the last place you want to cut is our high-producing education systems, such as UCLA, Berkeley. That's where our research comes. That's where our innovation comes. I mean, what is happening?

*ESPINO*

Those are important issues, but my question relates to, for example, environmentalist groups like the Sierra Club, who want tighter restrictions on immigration because they look at the immigrant and [unclear].

*ANGUIANO*

Well, see, I don't agree with the Sierra Club.

*ESPINO*

But are you familiar with that position?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes. I'm not a member of Sierra Club because of that and I'm not a member of the Center for Biological Diversity because they would like, also, to limit births, but I work with them on the environment.

*ESPINO*

Interesting.

*ANGUIANO*

I work with them on the environment and I work with Sierra Club on the environment because the National Latino Environmental Council is doing great work in the forest and the parks industry, but the energy issue is not on the top of their agenda. It's on top of my agenda because of my experience in Oxnard. But on immigration, I work with LULAC, and the root issue on immigration is that you have a global economy and you have a workforce that is built on cheap labor, and the global economy needs to address cheap labor. There's no way that labor workers are going to go along with cheap labor. The middle-class America, you're going to have to destroy the United States, and if you try to destroy the United States, you're going to have to deal with Egypt and you're going to deal with Yemen. The country that is doing very well in dealing with their workforce is Germany. Germany respects their worker, and in some ways, the Japanese in the United States. You look at plants owned by the Japanese, the Toyotas, the Hondas. You don't have labor disputes there because they're working with the worker. But Washington is in the woods. What can I say? And when will we Latinos get into this? Well, we're into it via the worker.

*ESPINO*

Our family members, our neighbors. That's true.

*ANGUIANO*

And if the grocery workers go on strike, well, I'm going to support them. I don't care about Ralph's and Vons and—who else? I mean, those guys change names like they do their addresses.

*ESPINO*

Albertson's.

*ANGUIANO*

Albertson's. They used to be Safeway. Now they're—you know. [laughs] You know, the struggle for democracy continues and I'm just doing my part. And, you know, Virginia, I'm not working alone. I never work alone. Then you look at the Women's Movement. Well, you know, the Democratic Party doesn't support us. Tomorrow we have endorsement of some women candidates, but the majority of them are running on a Democratic ticket. We don't have the support of the Democratic Party. We don't have the—by far the Republican Party and the Tea Party. They don't even know the Constitution. Are they going to destroy the United States? That's not going to happen. There's too many of us. I think, in the long run, the middle-class people are going to—there's huge battle in our community.

I'll tell you, the things that we have going for us in the economy is renewable energy, is technology, it's our university systems, it is our freedom of the press, even though they're controlled. But we have David Cruz. So it's education where we have excelled in the United States, and, by golly, we cannot let our university system down.

*ESPINO*

In your later years, to get on the subject of religion, how has that part of your life been integrated into your working life?

*ANGUIANO*

Well, I firmly believe that we are all created in the image and likeness of God, and the church, for me, is a living stone. It isn't the institution of role, the institution of the bishops, Bishop Gomez, or our pastor. It's Christ living within us, and my energy comes from Christ and my living his teachings, the experience that I have that I receive every day, that I'm created in his image and likeness, and that God lives within me, not out there. He lives within me and he's my inspiration. He's my love. He's my everything. The institution of the church is the institution of the church, just like UCLA is UCLA and Berkeley is Berkeley. [Edmund G.] Jerry Brown [Jr.], governor of California—everybody used to do their thing. The Catholic Church is part of the institution of the United States and they're going to obey the laws of the state, but me, as a person, I live my faith and I just respond to my conscience. So, for me, it isn't very difficult. It isn't difficult for me to work with the Sierra Club, who oppose immigration. It isn't difficult for me to work with Jerry Brown, even though he vetoed a bill here or there. For me, immigration, which is a critical issue, I see the root problem, and the issue is for me to work on remedying that.

I'm working with the sisters in Mexico who are training the women in Mexico to learn to bake, sew, work in the gardens, and I'm working to raise a computer lab for them so that they can see how the whole world is working. Then I'm working with Chiapas, where they recruit the women. Chiapas produces 36 percent of Mexico's electricity through water, through this—well, here, I'll show it to you in my page. Yes, look at "The Indigenous Environment." That's the largest producer of hydropower, electricity. They have that in abundance. Chiapas is a green forest. I visited the San Miguel Las Sardinias in the state of Chiapas, Mexico and all of them have televisions. Where do they have that? It's through the electricity. And what I'm trying to do is raise money to build a computer lab in the school, where the parents and the kids can learn the value that they have in hydropower. The Zapatistas have done a great job in having the indigenous people own their land, and so when I went to San Miguel Las Jardines, the village is controlled by the elders, and some of the farms are maybe as large as maybe this whole area, and they grow their crops and all, and they have electricity. So I'm working with them to really get some computers and then to get a satellite so that they can get iPods and connect with Apple and start seeing the richness that they have in their hydropower, and then also bring Agromin to their area so that they can start producing organic food to protect their own environment.

*ESPINO*

How did they receive you?

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, very well. As a matter of fact, the next time I see you, if I see you again, I'm going to show you where I went to visit them. They welcomed me with open arms because I'm working with the sisters, and some of the sisters have become sisters.

*ESPINO*

I see. So that's the religious connection.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

You have your spiritual and your rituals as an individual, but you also have your community activism.

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, yes, well, that's part of it. Everything that I do is connected to that, yes, and I'm working with these sisters. These are the sisters that I—I brought you a picture.

*ESPINO*

What is their name?

*ANGUIANO*

They're Poor Clare [Sisters], and they come twice a year to Los Angeles. They just left at the end of August. They come and we help them organize

meetings at the different churches where they come and they sell their goods. I used to work with our parish at Sacred Heart, and we used to give them 10 percent of the collection. With that money they have built a community center and a training center. I'll have to show you this, because I have a CD.

*ESPINO*

It would be nice to see that.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes.

*ESPINO*

Is there anything else that comes to mind right now that you want to discuss before we end? We've covered a lot of ground, but there's always going to be holes in—well, we talked a little bit about the redistricting last few sessions.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes, but you know what? My feeling about this is that you have to determine what is valuable and what is useful. By the way, I met with our former congressman, our congressman that—

*ESPINO*

Esteban Torres?

*ANGUIANO*

Esteban Torres. He came to an event that we had, the eightieth birthday celebration of Hank Lacayo. He came to that, and I told him about the Mexican American Women's Council. He says, "Oh, yeah." I told him that I had met with you and wanted to talk to his wife. He gave me his cell phone, but I just haven't had time to talk to him. I don't know if you're interested in that.

*ESPINO*

He didn't remember—

*ANGUIANO*

Oh, no, he did.

*ESPINO*

—until you told him.

*ANGUIANO*

What?

*ESPINO*

When you mentioned it, then he remembered.

*ANGUIANO*

Yes. [End of September 19, 2011 interview]

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