

Deena González

Deena González: Reflections on a Career in Chicana/o Studies

Chicana/o Studies Oral History Project

Interviews conducted by
Todd Holmes
in 2020

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Deena González

Abstract

Deena González is senior university fellow and professor of history at Gonzaga University. Born in Hatch, New Mexico, Professor González received her PhD in history from UC Berkeley, representing one of the first Chicana graduate students in the program. In her career, she held faculty positions at Pomona College and Loyola Marymount University, and served as associate provost of faulty affairs at Loyola before joining the administration of Gonzaga as provost and senior vice president in 2019. She is the author of “Malinche As Lesbian: A Reconfiguration of 500 Years of Resistance” (1991); *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe, 1820-1880* (1999); “Gender on the Borderlands: Re-textualizing the Classics,” (2003); and coeditor of *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Latinos and Latinas in the United States* (4 volumes, 2005); and *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Latinos and Latinas in Contemporary Politics, Law, & Social Movements* (2 volumes, 2015). She is a founding member of the scholarly organization Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS), and co-editor of the Chicana Matters Series at University of Texas Press. In this interview, Professor González discusses: her family background and upbringing; her educational journey from high school and the University of Mexico to graduate school at UC Berkeley; her growing activism at Berkeley and in the field for Chicana representation; her experience in the profession; her reflections on the development of Chicana/o Studies during the early years and how the field evolved over the decades; the struggle of Chicanas to gain equal footing in the fields of history and Chicana/o studies; the reception of Chicana/o studies at the universities she served; her experience as a Chicana in university administration; as well as her thoughts on important works and high points in the field over the last fifty years.

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Project History

By Todd Holmes
Berkeley, California

Over fifty years ago, UC Berkeley anthropologist Octavio Romano founded the publication, *El Grito: A Journal of Contemporary Mexican-American Thought*. In many respects, it was one of many actions of the time that sought to channel the educational aims of the Mexican American civil rights movement into the corridors of higher education. And in the years that followed, scholars on campuses throughout California and the West built upon those objectives, ultimately establishing the academic discipline that became known as Chicana/o studies.

The Chicana/o Studies Oral History Project was established in 2017 with the goal of commemorating fifty years of Chicana/o studies and documenting the formation of the field through in-depth interviews with the first generation of scholars who shaped it. As a research unit of The Bancroft Library, the Oral History Center has enjoyed rare access to the academy since its founding in 1953, compiling one of the richest collections on higher education and intellectual history in the country. Interviews with Nobel laureates and university presidents fill this collection, as do those with renowned poets and leading scientists. Thus, oral histories with the founding generation of scholars in the field of Chicana/o studies were a fitting addition. Moreover, documenting the formation of an academic field aimed at studying the Mexican American experience was a rare and special opportunity all its own.

The importance of the project was without question; the reality of executing a project of this size and complexity, however, ushered forth a host of logistical challenges. To that end, we at the Oral History Center forged partnerships with scholars and universities across the country, establishing what could be considered an unprecedented collaboration to document the history of Chicana/o studies and celebrate the scholars who played a vital role in its formation. I first created an advisory council composed of recognized junior faculty in the field. Establishing the council was important, as it not only brought a larger, community voice into decisions on the project's scope and direction, but also seasoned expertise to the nomination process for interviewees—a procedure that likely proved much lengthier and more complicated than anyone anticipated. Ultimately, the council helped develop a list of over twenty-five prominent and pioneering scholars to be interviewed for the project.

The second part of this collaboration developed with universities. The Oral History Center is an independent, soft-money research unit at UC Berkeley, which means the office receives very little direct support from the university. Endowments and fundraising underwrite the OHC's operations. For the Chicana/o Studies Oral History Project, a generous consortium of deans, provosts, chancellors, and presidents stepped forward to extend support. Stanford University sponsored the first two interviews, with the University of California Office of the President raising the bar by pledging to fund all UC-related interviews. The pledge not only sought to highlight the role of UC campuses in the field, but also served as a call to arms for other universities in the West to follow suit. Many university administrators answered that call. Deans at UT Austin, Arizona State, and the University of Arizona pledged support, as did administrators at Loyola Marymount, Gonzaga University, UT San Antonio, Brigham Young University, and the University of Houston, among others. Again, highlighting the leading role of

California in the field, the California State University system agreed to fund all CSU-related interviews for the project. The outpouring of support behind the Chicana/o Studies project stands as an inspiring collaboration within the academy.

The scholars included in this project represent some of the most influential writers, educators, and activists in the field of Chicana/o studies. To be sure, their contributions to the field are many, from teaching and scholarship to mentoring and administration, with each playing a unique and significant role in advancing the study of the Mexican American experience from a mere idea in the late 1960s to a mainstay on college campuses across the country five decades later. I'm indebted to each for their generosity and participation in this project. They not only opened up their homes and offices for the interviews, but shared their work and experiences with sincerity and candor. They also exhibited a noteworthy level of humility, as each would be among the first to call this project far from complete. Projects are often imperfect, and this oral history series is no different. Some of those we wished to include, such as Juan Gómez-Quiñones, passed away before they could be interviewed, just as funding complications have delayed the inclusion of others. Thus, as the first installment of this project goes to press, we remember those who passed before they could participate and look forward to the new additions to be made in the years to come.

This project significantly advances our understanding of the development and evolution of the field of Chicana/o studies. Yet the development of Chicana/o studies, as captured in these interviews, is more than just the story of a discipline. It is the story of a generation of scholars who broke through barriers to take their place in the nation's universities, and spent their careers documenting the history and experience of their community. It is the story of educational reform, where scholars of color demanded that America's curriculum equally include all its citizens. In many respects, it is also a story that highlights another side of the civil rights movement, one where actions in the classroom, rather than those in the streets, proved the long-lasting vector of social change. It is my hope that this project does justice to that legacy.

Advisory Council

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Interview 1: November 11, 2020

01-00:00:09

Holmes:

All right, this is Todd Holmes with the Oral History Center at UC Berkeley. Today's date is November 11, 2020, and I have the privilege of sitting down Deena González who is the vice provost or no, the provost and senior vice president of Gonzaga University. And we are here sitting in her beautiful home in Spokane, Washington, and this is for the Chicana/o Studies Oral History Project. Deena, thank you so much for taking the time to sit down particularly with a busy schedule such as that you have now. I did not mean to demote you. I mean you were vice provost at LMU and—

01-00:00:47

González:

[laughs] I was an associate provost at LMU and now yeah—provost and senior vice president as the president sometimes reminds me, you know? But welcome to Spokane, Todd, this is great, I'm so happy to be able to be taken back in time because our present times are so challenging. This is a difficult time of year anyway for students and for faculty, but in this COVID environment, it's particularly awful. And the recent elections I think really helped kind of steer us into a better mood, but still, we have monumental issues to address. And I don't know, looking back over time, thinking back about my Berkeley days, between 1974 and 1983, many things have changed and then many things have not, so—

001-00:01:44

Holmes:

Well, I'm so excited about this, and again, our two sessions we'll have together for this really talks about your life and career. And I guess we should start at the beginning though, so tell us a little bit about your family and family background.

01-00:02:00

González:

Well, it's nice to reminisce. I'm from New Mexico, I'm fourteenth-generation born and raised, and grew up in southern New Mexico. My family migrated there in the 1820s from an area just slightly north of Albuquerque, south of Santa Fe. So it was called Rio Abajo in that time period. My mother's family were ranching folks who ended up in Sierra County and so they—the Trujillos—were one of the seven original founding families of a town that eventually took the name Monticello. In the late nineteenth century, many towns changed their names and so the town I grew up in, and that is mostly my family, Garfield, used to be Loma Parda. And so when they got a post office, they had to give an English-sounding name, so they chose Garfield, I guess after President Garfield, and my mom's village, Monticello after Thomas Jefferson I suppose.

I was born in 1952 and grew up in the fifties and early sixties on a farm that my father used to rent from someone, with an adobe farmhouse, an adobe home. I think it was made up of five rooms in total, and we had a little casita in the back where we stored things, and we used that as a kind of playroom

and gathering room, and then just acreage that backed up to the Rio Grande. And the town of maybe 900 or a thousand people was almost all related, so they were all Gonzálezes or Apodacas. And I grew up with all my cousins and grandparents, grandmother, and great aunts, and a couple of great-great aunts as well, and uncles everywhere.

01-00:04:12

Holmes:

So you had a really big family. I think in one interview that you did a while ago, it was said that you had sixty-five first cousins just on your father's side alone.

01-00:04:21

González:

Yes, yes, and that's counting my—all of my first cousins' children of my dad's siblings and some of their spouses as well in that number and then on my mother's side, we were twenty-one. My mother had three siblings, unlike my father who had eight. A couple of his siblings died, one in young age and one who was in her twenties and so they didn't have children. But all of his other brothers and sisters had sometimes eight and nine in one family, some had four, some had three like we were and so there was a huge variety. But it meant that we were always together and in growing up, we knew each other, and the age range was vast. When I was growing up, I had cousins who were already teenagers and about to be in high school, and I also had cousins who were just being born and so that that age span I think meant a lot as well.

01-00:05:28

Holmes:

Discuss a little bit about your family environment. You're in a town almost all family, right? I mean I couldn't imagine that—I couldn't get away with anything you know, if I'm being honest.

01-00:05:40

González:

No, exactly, [laughs] and we couldn't either. When my older cousins had driving privileges, we'd pour into their car. If we didn't have a car, sometimes we would hijack one of the tractors on the farm, on my grandmother's farm. I knew how to drive a tractor since I was age five because my grandfather rigged the thing so that I could—with a stick, so I could reach the pedals and the clutch and get the thing moving. So we had a lot of wonderful experiences and sharing.

There also were a lot of family issues and challenges, and these I think were also known to us. It's funny because we didn't discuss things like that. I mean we didn't talk for example about alcoholism, which was very prevalent in the family. We didn't talk too much about mental health issues, and that was also prevalent in the family. I think until we were much older did we really come around to that. But everyone in the community knew and sort of integrated these particular issues. I think of safety and health and well-being were just very differently addressed in the fifties and sixties, and some of it was secrecy, some of it was—we don't talk about this or your aunt is just ill today and that just meant that she was isolating. And that's kind of how we grew up

in thinking about these things and so you can imagine the impact that the sixties and seventies would have on us when all of these things become much more commonplace, television is much more accessible. It was interesting in the Catholic environment like that that how we dealt with things was often through the church and through the structures of the family.

01-00:07:36

Holmes:

Did you have any siblings? I mean we know you had a lot of cousins.

01-00:07:39

González:

[laughs] Yeah, I do. I had a brother and a sister. My brother passed away a year ago and in his last year suffered from schizophrenia, particularly the last twenty-some years of his life, very heavy medications, which took a real toll on his body. And he was almost completely bedridden and cared for by my sister and then a whole group of aides who live in the community. And because it's a rural community, it was often hard for them to be able to find consistent help. He was an archeologist by training my brother Benjamin and had been on a lot of archeological digs in New Mexico and was very interested in history and all kinds of things, and could recite international and domestic events as if he were a political scientist. He also liked philosophy a lot, so he loved reading Heidegger and Dostoevsky, and he loved reading all about how things kind of came to be. And as a family I think because my mother was a teacher and a principal and occupied all these education positions, and also my father was an avid reader of newspapers, we spent a lot of time in quiet—quietly reading in our household. And so I think my brother not only manifested those kinds of habits, but he actually delved pretty deeply into issues and things like that.

And my sister who teaches developmental math at a community college in Las Cruces, my sister Rita. She got her PhD in education there and stayed with the community college, and then was closer to the family farm and able to take care of him when my father passed away in 2012. So we were very lucky that we had my father up till the time he was ninety-two. My mother was eighty-two when she passed away. So I feel like not everyone gets to their half-century of their life with both parents, and that had a lot of meaning as well.

01-00:10:10

Holmes:

Well, you were talking about growing up in Garfield.

01-00:10:14

González:

Yeah.

01-00:10:16

Holmes:

I mean, here you're in southern New Mexico and during these times, a lot of people are grappling with race relations in other parts of the country. How was that in Garfield?

01-00:10:31

González:

So because we dominated and the Euro-American or white families—there were farmers as well with varying degrees of success. Some have become some of the largest chili—green chile, hatch chile—manufacturers in the country today. I think that one of the things that shielded some of us in that part of the country, not all of us but some of us, especially who came from families that historically had identified themselves as Hispanic or Hispano, and the common phrase was Spanish American. That came out of a lot of the George Sánchez work and other people's work in the 1930s and '40s in New Mexico where scholars had traced lineages and culture and proverbs and stories, folklore all the way back to Spain, meant that there was always a sense of differentiation from people who came newly arrived from Mexico. And when I was growing up, those were still the prearrival days. Once the sixties came, there were many, many more migrations. And it isn't that my family wasn't mixed because many of my cousins and even some of my grandparents' siblings had married people who were actually born in Mexico or had come to New Mexico from Mexico and grown up with them. And so this isn't something new, but it was something that I think was subsumed under this rhetoric and kind of class ideology even in politics. So the shielding came not only from that tradition and that history, but I think it was class-based and I think that being a land-owning family had a lot to do with the differentiations.

My mother who was a teacher was a very strong advocate of—and incredibly liberal in her views of—addressing issues of inequality and so not just in her school but even in the practice. As a group of cousins or children, if we said something that was classist or racist or in any way disparaging of people, she would stop us and tell us, "Think about what you're saying and doing here. They probably don't have food, and you do, and that's why they bring the kind of lunches they're bringing or they get on the bus and look the way they look." And all of the things that children do when they are aware of differences and how children kind of channeled differences, my mother was very, very attentive to that. And I think that from a very early age was ingrained in me to look at the person and think through what impact I had on people around me. I think my cousins too when I think about them individually in how we played, how we later as teenagers attended social things, dances. We'd have a dance and it would be all of us, [laughs] and it would be all of us crowded in and then a lot of other friends were also very kind in their approaches. I think for the most part, we were all raised in households where there really wasn't conversation about what was ugly in the world. It was more what can you do to make it better, as Catholics, how do you approach this challenge or this problem? And then because of Vatican II when that all came into being, of course there was a kind of change in people's thinking about inequities and about women's roles in the church and so on. But having that kind of basis meant, yeah, I think we did kind of hide from some things, and certainly when the Chicano movement grew in New Mexico, which was in the late sixties.

01-00:15:24

And there was not a lot of farmworker organizing in New Mexico, but there was a lot of student organizing, and Albuquerque of course exploded. It suffered a lot of damage, there were student riots, there was a shutting down of the university, the national guard was called in. I mean there was just lots of things that were similar to what was going on everywhere. I think people were kind of shocked in lots of little towns across New Mexico like asking, "What's happened here? What do we not understand?" But mass culture, mass US mainstream culture I think reached New Mexico pretty late. It was really in the sixties. And what that allowed was that kind of childhood that I would say now probably, at least in my case, shielded us from a lot of the worst implications, and it's not that they weren't there. I mean I was supposed to be the salutatorian at Hot Springs High School. I had the second highest grade point average, and it was not given to me, and my mother had to go meet with the principal and the superintendent to ask, "Why, how was this grade point average configured?" And so there were lots of conversations, and no big stink was made about it, but it was clear to me in that and in other forms and certainly by high school that the racial landscape was inequitable and that there were just things probably in my mind frame that I didn't know very much about and that I needed to learn about even in that age, even in junior high and high school.

01-00:17:13

Holmes:

Well, talk a little bit about your experience there in schools. Your mom was an alum from The University of New Mexico. She was a teacher, and you as well as your brother and sister, all went to college and beyond, so it seemed like education was very much valued in your household.

01-00:17:38

González:

It was and it was from a very early age. We moved to Albuquerque in the summers because my mother was pursuing an MA and EdD degree and enrolled in lots of training. So for example, developmental education, it wasn't called that then—it was disability studies and so on. She was finding a lot of students that she couldn't teach in the rural school who had mental developmental challenges. So she went to school to try to figure that out and get a degree in it. And she had moved the whole family to Albuquerque.

I remember being maybe five—maybe six years old, so I probably was in first grade. One of the summers that we lived there, and we walked into the UNM library. In the old days, you could still drive up to it, and it was on the left-hand side, not where the entry now is. And into this massive reading room that's all southwestern style with Saltillo floors and the big beams and the vigas on the ceiling and so on and all of this kind of mosaic work in the walls, and I remember looking. We walked in, and she would always tell us, "Now, you have to be very quiet—I'm here to study, and you're going to sit down, and we're going to be here for an hour or two hours. If you need to go outside, you go outside and you can play over there where the little lawn or pond was." There was something there. And I remember looking over to the side as we

walked in and I remember very clearly asking, "What are those?" And she said, "Those are graduate student carrels, so when you're a graduate student, you're going to have one of those." And I just thought, okay, carrel, that's like something that you sing at Christmastime, what is that? I didn't ask anymore, but I remembered it.

01-00:19:28

And one of the times when I was back in New Mexico in 1978 from Berkeley doing dissertation research and was living in Santa Fe, I went down to Albuquerque to do research in the Zimmerman Library. And I remember asking my mother to meet me there, and I said, "Now, you're going to be shocked because the library is very different." And so we did a quick walk-through, and it was wonderful to hear her memories. And she remembers the card catalog, where it was and where the bookshelves were, and she said, "You know when I was work study, I was a student worker here in the library all four years," and she also worked in the dining hall. She said, "I would catalogue and some of these books here probably have the stickers that I put on," and so on, that was her job. And I just remember as I walked through with her thinking of her attachment to learning and to what that space signified of quiet. And she passed that on to me, to all of us, but I think it stuck more with me than it did with my brother and sister because they were more interested in being outside and playing and not paying too much attention to any of those things.

01-00:20:39

Holmes:

Well, tell me a little bit about your high school experience. You went to high school really at the height of activism and I know you were just kind of talking about how that came a little late to New Mexico.

01-00:20:50

González:

It did.

01-00:20:51

Holmes:

But talk about your experience at that point as an aware teenager. A lot of things in the world going on, and how did those events shape both you and your experience there in high school?

01-00:21:03

González:

There were a lot of things, and it was interesting because our high school provided us with a lot of clubs and extra activity. So I remember we had a faculty sponsor that we all adored. We all loved Pop Gamer or—is what we called him. He taught our world studies, our history classes, social studies, and he was the director of the—I think we called it the—was it the international relations club? I don't know where in the world it got that name because there was not a whole lot that was international about it. But anyway, there we were, we would do field trips. One of the most impressive things too that we did—I can still see the setting, the air and the leaves on the trees and kind of even the mood of the place—was the trial of Reies Lopez Tijerina and that

took place in Los Lunas, New Mexico. I must have been what, a sophomore, a junior—and our club, we were on our way to Albuquerque for a fair. I can't remember, but it was some sort of high school student gathering. And so our little club, maybe we were seven or eight, we were the students who were in the honors track, and we would take classes together. So pretty much from my freshman to my senior year, we were a group of twelve or thirteen students who took every single class together and in our senior year had four classes in the morning all together in a row and then in the afternoon were freed up to do other things. Some were athletes, so I was on a couple of teams. Some were artists or interested in art, so they would go to the art studio or the little room that was designated the studio in the high school and do their projects. And so we had a lot of freedom on the basis of our being able to take these more advanced placement kinds of classes. They weren't called that; they were just called the senior track, honors track.

01-00:23:14

But we got in the cars or the van—I can't remember what we were in—and stopped on Los Lunas, and he had sought permission for us to be in the courtroom. And so we all sat on a bench in this small courtroom, which was very kind intimidating because it looked like an old court—typical kind of old courtroom with a lot of wood. And we listened to a phase of that trial and had to before we got there, learn about Reies Lopez Tijerina and the land grants movement in New Mexico. So that was one moment of real awareness for me of what was happening in terms of Chicano and Chicana history, very important moment. And just seeing Reies Lopez Tijerina sitting there as we'd see him on the news and the newspaper and there he was, and then digesting that and talking about it—all of the rest of the trip was dominated by that. And in fact, we asked if on the way back, which was supposed to be a Sunday if we could stay until Monday, so we could have Monday morning and go to the courtroom. So we were able to, but half of us were asked to go in and half had to wait outside and then we switched because by then, things were getting really heated. There was a lot of police presence, FBI presence. You could just kind of tell there were these guys from Washington sitting around, and they looked very different. I mean, it impressed me that this was something not only very serious and people were taking seriously, but that it was something that mattered—that this was really an important issue for New Mexico. So that was very impressive and clear probably in my mind frame at that point since no one used the word *Chicano* or *Chicana* even then in New Mexico—maybe at the university, but that would come a little bit later. It's still nevertheless registered as a marker.

01-00:25:16

Holmes:

How about Vietnam? I mean with such a large family and probably a lot of male cousins, how did the war impact your larger family and then how did the discussion of the politics of the war enter—?

01-00:25:32
González:

That was a difficult, difficult discussion and moment. My dad was a veteran, a World War II veteran and rarely, really talked about being on the front lines. He had gone into army intelligence, so he'd been tapped, and he was very young when he enlisted and went off to Georgia. And all that I know about that is that he liked it, but he didn't like having to spend a lot of time away from his unit. And when they were assigned to go to Europe, he went with the—I guess it's the 101st Battalion I think it was, and he ended up in the Rhineland. He was in the thick of it, and they were moving toward Czechoslovakia. And so what I had heard over the years were little bits and pieces of that, not anything in full detail. Until I interviewed my dad for the World War II Oral History project at UT Austin, I didn't hear really the full story, and that's a really interesting interview with him in the kitchen in the home, in my grandmother's home—what became their home.

With Vietnam, one of the things, my brother drew a number in the 100 something or other, so we felt that he was probably pretty safe. But he had already made a plan to leave to Canada that he would be a conscientious objector he said, and that was really hard. I remember that conversation with my mother and father, and my dad finally saying, "You know I would never wish anyone to go through what I went through," and that was almost all he said really. Many of my cousins enlisted. Some of them had been in ROTC, some of them had been in other areas—most of them did not end up going to Vietnam, but many of my cousins married guys who did go to Vietnam. The men who went there, they suffered a lot. The neighbors and the neighboring boys from our generation, I'd say a whole group of them also ended up in Vietnam. They drew very low numbers in the draft, and they came back incredibly damaged, not unlike what the World War II veterans had I guess been like when they came back too.

It was a really difficult event because what I remember more than anything is unlike today where there is a reckoning and kind of acknowledgement and even an outpouring of support and endorsement for military and families, at least vocally, there was none of that. You did not hear anyone, not a priest, not a mayor, not a justice of the peace or a county commissioner or someone get up and say, "Thank you to the brave men and women who have returned." It was stated very quietly and not in a very proud way, and a lot of it I think is because of the images that were coming across the television set. I mean they were very effective in terms of just shaping our concern that there was something really wrong going on. And what was this country in Vietnam, what was this area, what happened there, and why was it so long term I think more than anything.

01-00:29:34

I mean it was a very important time throughout New Mexico where again New Mexico very proudly sends and has participated in the US military forces. And it has done that since World War II, which is why when Ken

Burns did his series on the military and on enlistment and left out Latinos entirely, added it on as kind of an after fact three minutes or five minutes at the very end, people were so deeply insulted and injured. I mean the heroes of Bataan, the Philippines, the march there, that's a big thing in New Mexico, and families continue to remember it. The Navajo Code Talkers is a huge thing in New Mexico; people continue to talk about it. The enlistments in World War II and in Vietnam and Korea, people really integrated that into their family dynamics. And so it was very injurious and very hurtful I think that that recognition took time in the case of the Vietnam generation to really understand and make sense of. And I don't know that that still has even happened. I don't know that there's really any reconciliation about that. When I go home, I see a number of our friends, friends of the family, and others who kind of want to talk a little bit about it, but they're not really focused very much. They don't seem to want to call attention to themselves, and that's similar to what happened with the World War II generation, they just—it's very hard to get them to talk.

01-00:31:20

Holmes:

Thinking of all of that—civil rights, Vietnam, the Chicano movement, Chavez and the Farm Workers Movement—I mean all of this going on in that late period of the sixties, did you see in the larger community a generational divide? You know, that children versus the parents kind of political divide? What was your experience on that?

01-00:31:50

González:

I think there was certainly a good bit of that because our family and our generations were affected very much by mass and popular culture I think. And I also think that there was an Americanization that had gone on for our families. My parents, for example, I think were probably the first generation that were really truly fully bilingual in New Mexico. So my mom and dad spoke Spanish to each other, and they spoke English to us. I spoke only Spanish to my grandparents. My grandparents spoke only Spanish even though my grandfather could speak English, and my grandmother had limited English, but she could make her way if she needed to. So these linguistic divisions I think really marked the generations and also because so much happened in terms of the church as a social setting and a political and cultural setting.

In the church, there was a lot of interest in preserving generation—regard for elders, care of elders, elders were not separated, they were very much a part of the family. My grandmother in the house that my parents inherited lived with her sister in that house and so I was around my grandmother and my great-aunts. That mattered, I think that mattered a lot. I didn't perceive it or feel it as a coercive kind of cultural or generational kind of what people have described in Chicano and Chicana studies as familism or familial kind of devotion to the expense of individuality and so on. I experienced it more as something that was important to the survival I think of the culture and of the language of the

community. But there definitely was with the Chicano movement, with civil rights certainly, and with Vietnam, a sense of difference. And I remember perceiving that, and it came through the music. When young men started just letting their hair grow and when we began wearing T-shirts and jeans to everything, that was a real concern among the families and the elders about what was going on and, oh, the next thing will be drugs. And of course there were drugs that infiltrated and that came through especially if people went to college. There was a lot of smoking of grass and probably some LSD, certainly in my generation in college, and I think people perceived this as a kind of breakdown—not only a moral breakdown but a kind of breakdown between us communities and generations within the communities.

01-00:34:56

Part of the generational divide also manifested itself around high-level Democratic politics because New Mexico has always been pretty much a Democratic state; although that has changed in recent years. And the Chicano and Hispanic, Hispano population there has been very heavily Democratic and voted in that direction and elected its own folks to offices both high and internally. And there's been a breakdown of that I'd say in the last twenty, thirty years, but up until that point, people tended to vote, and they had no problem asking, "Who are you voting for?" So when it came time to vote for Humphrey or McGovern, my brother and I convinced my dad—my mom already was sold—to vote for McGovern, and that was a big thing. I remember sitting down and talking about that, and my dad just wanted Humphrey to win and thought that was the best thing. And we thought that McGovern was really much more a forward-looking kind of hip person and would take our interests into account and so on. And his loss was a really big lesson to all of us about how things moved so slowly and changed so slowly. And then, of course, the Nixon years, we just were—I mean people were kind of in a fog in the same way they might be with Trump now. Like we just wanted it to end; you know, it just was awful. The loss of John F. Kennedy was really a key event. It was just people—Kennedy was Catholic—they had his pictures on the walls, they had mugs, they had doilies of JFK, every household had these, and they took that really, really hard. And so when you got to the stage where Nixon was suddenly the president, I remember people thinking, 'Oh, we were really losing ground here.' So the generational splits tended to manifest themselves I think in those ways.

01-00:37:30

Holmes:

Do you remember where you were when John F. Kennedy—?

01-00:37:32

González:

Oh yeah. I was in my classroom in Arrey Elementary I think standing, and the phone—the principal's office was also our classroom, so [laughs] he had a desk at the side, and he taught the class. And there were two grades combined—must have been, what, fifth and sixth grade, yeah, because by seventh grade, we were off to the junior high in the town in Truth or Consequences or Hot Springs and taking the bus in. But, yeah, I remember, he

picked up the phone, and I saw him take out his handkerchief and removed his glasses and bend over on the phone. And what was happening was his wife I think was calling him—I think she had called earlier and had said earlier the president had been shot, so people knew that, but then when he was declared dead, that was really, really hard. And then he had to gather himself up and turn to us, and we were all standing I remember, kind of in a semicircle. Maybe we were going to lunch or recess, something was going on, but I just remember we were all standing up, and it was just horrible. And then he had us all sit down because he was going to have to go to each classroom and tell each of the teachers and make sure everyone was all right. And by the time he came back to us, people were just visibly—all the students, kids were crying. And then we started seeing parents drive up, so parents started coming to the school. They didn't know where else to go because a rural community, there's a little tiny post office and a little tiny store, and that was it, a gas station, those were the three places. So they came to the school, and the school didn't really have an auditorium. It was a rural schoolhouse, the new building hadn't been built yet. The cafeteria was kind of the largest room and so people began gathering there.

And interestingly by that evening, my mother was teaching her class—we were there—I remember that people began bringing food to the cafeteria and so the community started gathering that way. But that it had an impact across political lines and racial lines and so on to me, really seared something in my brain about how national events in this little, tiny, dusty, rural town in the middle of nowhere participated, was part of that so yeah. Well, I hadn't thought about that in so long. I'm thinking now about Trump, and I don't know why I didn't go back to the JFK moment too because there's something there that is really heartbreaking in the current fiasco of the president not wanting to declare himself as exiting the office.

01-00:40:43

Holmes:

Well, let's talk a little bit about your undergraduate years. Well, you officially, I guess, have your degree from New Mexico State University.

01-00:40:52

González:

Yes.

01-00:40:53

Holmes:

But you also attended a number of surrounding universities—I have to admit when I was researching this, I just got totally jealous. So you graduated among the top of your class.

01-00:41:05

González:

Yeah, yeah—

01-00:41:06

Holmes:

And you earned the New Mexico Tuition Scholarship.

01-00:41:09

González: The scholarship, right.

01-00:41:11

Holmes: Discuss what that is and the experience you were able to have with that.

01-00:41:14

González: So the tuition scholarship program I think probably continues to this day—I don't know when it stopped if it did—but it allowed those who held it to take classes. And wherever you ended in your last senior year, you were declared a graduate of that institution. And I actually spent in Las Cruces I think at least, what four, six semesters easily, and one at UNM, one at—I actually did a thing at Highlands University in Las Vegas, New Mexico that was part of the New Mexico system, at Saint Joseph's College in Albuquerque, which was a little, small private Catholic school that now no longer exists. It was a really interesting exercise in not only being able to be in different places, which I liked, but also being able to take classes and kind of absorb the culture of an institution from all these different angles. The faculty were different in each of those places. Some people thought University of New Mexico was more liberal and New Mexico State was more conservative, and that probably was the case. I think really conservative was probably Saint Joseph's College, which was led by nuns and had a few brothers, so there were a few priests.

I can't remember if it was—I think it was a sociology class there, and it was all about the magnificence of the family. And I remember thinking, 'Oh, my God, this is really kind of crazy because this isn't what my family looks like at all, [laughs] and where does this come from.' But it was delivered in this kind of mainstream but also through a Catholic lens and maybe helped me see these kinds of differences too.

And then at UNM, the history and the anthropology in particular were so strong; in Latin American studies, especially language was strong. I tried to take Navajo, and I did make it through. I think it was a summer session, and I made it through the six weeks, but I have to say I learned about the language and the structures of the language and what lay behind the thinking because it's a very intellectual exercise, learning Navajo, and it's very difficult. I couldn't get the sounds quite right, and I was embarrassed by it. I tried, but I, at least, learned a lot about what went into linguistic facility and development. And then I took Spanish there, and even though there were Chicano and Chicana studies classes beginning at University of New Mexico and at New Mexico State, in all my undergraduate years, I had one what I would call, Chicano studies class, and it was a literature class taught by an adjunct faculty member. It was really interesting too because it was almost like having international faculty in front of me like I had at UNM, Latin Americanists, right, who were from Latin America standing in front of me because I would say, "Who is this person, what is he talking about?" And so he would get up and he'd put it on the board, and say, "We're all going recites this, so don't buy Safeway or don't buy grapes," right, or whatever the phrase of the day was. He

always had a phrase of the day and then we'd get into the literature and read Tomás Rivera and we'd read some of the older New Mexico Hispanic writers who weren't exactly what you would call radical and in the Chicano tradition. But nevertheless, it was a rich literature, the tradition of literary studies. And so we would analyze the perspectives in these works and think through, and he would come at it from a Chicano and Chicana lens.

01-00:45:49

So that was my first introduction, and I didn't quite know what to make of it because I would compare it and go back to my southwest literature that was taught by very efficient scholar, critic of—in the literary tradition who sat at the front of the class and lectured off a folder with her notes and would walk us through. And I think in that class, we may have had one book, and it was probably *Bless Me, Ultima*, it was probably [Rudolfo] Anaya's book, and that was it. There was Wallace Stegner and all of these other folks that were important in the southwest, but there was no focus on Chicano or Chicana anything. So that was an important piece in the undergraduate years. I think that I had some exposure, and it certainly made me curious. I just didn't quite know what to do with it. I didn't call myself Chicana or Chicano. I knew the movement was there. I knew that at UNM, I participated in student activism and student activist groups, but a lot of those were organized by the then SDS chapter that was pretty strong. The anti-Vietnam group by my junior and senior year was boycotting and shutting down classes and invading offices, or taking over offices and so on. And I remember being on the sidelines of that but very much aware, writing petitions, going to the state legislature to petition legislators about one thing or another. It was interesting, but it was not like the Chicano and Chicana thing was the center of my universe in the way that it was for many people at UNM. They were really strong leaders in that movement but I just remember still feeling pretty distant from it in a way that meant I had not integrated it. And the black student movement was also very animated at University of New Mexico as was Native American Studies. Native American Indian movement had come into the university as well and was arguing for greater presence and more Native American Studies and so on. So again, I was aware of all of that.

I think the place where I tended to participate was usually in gender and women studies because there was a burgeoning feminist movement on the campus. And once I got involved in that and I started thinking about myself and I started calling myself bisexual. So my sophomore year, I'm bisexual and my junior year and my senior year, I'd go home and I'd say to my brother and sister, "I'm bisexual," and I tell my mother, "I'm bisexual." And I remember no one would say anything. They'd just kind of look at me like, "Okay, this is another one of her things that she's going through." And I had a boyfriend and at the end of my undergraduate years, we got married and so it was a little—there's a little bit of dissonance [laughter] between what I was saying and doing and thinking.

01-00:49:18

Holmes:

Well, talk a little bit about your majors. You went from being, if I'm correct, a pre-med major your freshman year to switching to history, anthropology. Discuss that transition and then did you also take a Mexican American or borderlands history class? Because I know UNM had a very fantastic, very strong history department at that time.

01-00:49:47

González:

Very strong history department. The two classes that I had in history at UNM, one was the Southwest and one was Latin American, I think—well actually three because I remember taking Latin American both part one and part two. You know when I started, I decided that I wanted to explore the sciences, and I had thoughts about being a doctor, you know, 'can I do it?' I had done fine in what was precalculus, I guess high school senior math is what they called it, and in algebra. So I took calculus and then statistics in my first year of freshman year and I did chemistry, and by the time I got in the second semester of freshman year, I guess it was organic chemistry, I was like, "Oh, no, no, no, no." I loved biology, and I took physics as well in there, and oh my God, I remember in organic chemistry, I thought, I'm not going to be able to wing my way through this. In math, I could do it because I had excellent memory and I could memorize. If nothing else, then I could tell—I could discern patterns and I would get tutors to help me, so I did fine. I didn't make, I don't think, A's in either statistics or calculus, but I got through them and felt like I'm understanding what I need to understand. But when I hit organic chemistry, that was just a whole other thing, and there were so many pieces to it, and it was so complex. And I thought, I really have to like this stuff in addition to wanting to learn how to move from one part of it to another part, and I felt quite lost. And then I realized at some point too, not only did I feel lost, but I didn't really like it, it wasn't interesting to me. Whereas I was taking a history class and doing really well in it, and I thought, I really like this stuff and then I took a literature and English class in there as well—those were the other two classes—and I really loved it. And so I thought, no, I'm just going to drop this, I'm going to try something else.

So that summer between my freshman and sophomore years, I stacked up on history and anthropology, and that was it. That's when I said, "No, if I have a choice here, I am really not interested in pursuing the science stuff" because it really requires—skill and talent are one thing and inclination and all that but it you have to have your heart in it. You have to really love that, and I could tell I didn't, so—

01-00:52:35

Holmes:

Well, so you end up getting your history degree from the New Mexico State University.

01-00:52:41

González:

Yeah.

01-00:52:43

Holmes:

Who were some of the advisors or professors that really stand out that helped you along that during that, that way?

01-00:52:50

González:

Really amazing folks. Ray Sadler was doing Latin American, and Harris, Charles Harris was the other Latin Americanist, and I took every class I could under them. And my mentor, my advisor was Ira Clark, and Ira Clark was a historian of New Mexico who focused on water rights, and he had studied with Herbert Eugene Bolton at Berkeley so that was that. He is the one who introduced me to Berkeley, to The Bancroft Library, to the resources, and so when I applied for graduate school, he was the first person. I didn't even tell my mother, father, anyone, best friend. I went directly to his office, and I said, "Here are the letters of acceptance, and I have to make a decision at some point," and I told them, "This is where I'm kind of leaning," and he looked at all, and he said, "No, you have to go to Berkeley." He says, "There's no other choice, you have to go there," and I was like, "Okay."

He was really good about trying to understand my dilemmas or where I was headed—he wasn't a person who was given over to a lot of personal detail. It wasn't kind of the advisor-mentor relationship that had you ponder how you're feeling today or all of that. He really focused on here are your skills, your talents, your things I think you can get done in this field, and I appreciated so much that he took me seriously. I never felt by any of those historians at UNM, the Latin Americanist—I'm forgetting the name now of the Latin Americanist that I took there—I never felt in any way either diminished or demeaned because I was Chicana or because I was a woman. They were really very good about understanding that there was a role for me to play in the field, and that they didn't have a lot of students who were interested in going to graduate school. And they would ask me, "How did you get to this point? How did you decide that you want to do this?" And I would tell them my story, and they were, "Oh." Ira Clark's father worked for the railroad and so Clark remembered very well his father. They were Okies, they were Oklahomans who migrated in the Dust Bowl, and he would remember those Dust Bowl images and talk about that. And so to me, it just made a huge difference that I could have a relationship with someone like this who in a very quiet way was very proactive and an advocate.

And I remember when I got into Berkeley, he was just so proud. He was just happy and said, "You know if your parents, if they want to know anything or if I can be of help, let me know. I will drive out to them, to the farm," and so on. So I just remember that when I drove up, I was waving this envelope, I reached out outside the window of the car and started waving it. And my mother was just like, "Oh, my gosh," and she said, "What is it?" and I said, "Well, they're offering me a scholarship and it's the Graduate Minority Fellowship at Berkeley and so it would have paid—" It paid my out-of-state tuition for year one, and I think I got—it gave me a stipend of \$200—\$300 a

month, which back then was enough to like pay for a room. [laughs] It's pretty astonishing now when think about it.

01-00:55:56

And so all of these things came together, and it was a hard decision for me. I had applied to UT Austin, UCLA, Santa Barbara, University of New Mexico, and I forget where else. That part wasn't such a difficult thing to think about. It was when it came time to leave New Mexico, you know, that was the place where I felt like, okay, can I really do this, am I really doing this, and what in the heck does this mean? And I remember thinking almost like, I can't believe I'm doing this. It's kind of like when I got provostship at Gonzaga University and arrived here in Spokane. I remember walking in this front door saying, "I can't believe I'm doing this, what in the world have I done?" [laughs]

01-00:58:01

Holmes:

Well, we're going to come back to that story in our next session because I want to hear more about that. So if we transition a little bit to look at the field of Chicana and Chicano studies that's developing at this very time that you're finishing up your undergraduate years there in New Mexico. And in many respects, you applied to the powerhouses that would be known within the field—the ones who are really pushing forward Chicana and Chicano studies. Were you aware of that kind of focus when you were applying?

01-00:58:43

González:

Not at all, not in the least. I mean I was aware of the resources that Berkeley had. I certainly had followed the Free Speech movement and the activism. And when I visited Berkeley to see the university and so on, I remember just thinking, oh my gosh, I just love this place, this is amazing—where have I landed? It just seemed all very strange. Whereas Los Angeles to me because I had relatives, my cousins lived there and I'd visit a couple of summers when I was high school, didn't seem strange to me at all. Los Angeles just felt big and massive and kind of freeway-ish. And UCLA certainly felt like a huge university. Austin, I wasn't so sure about living there. I had this real sense that somehow Texas was incredibly either racist or didn't have a clue. I don't know what my impression was, but I knew it was a good institution and the same with Santa Barbara. I mean I applied because I was told in the UC system, it's a good idea to have backup within the UC because you may be able to transfer out if you don't get into your first choice or place.

But the Chicano part, I mean what I knew about Berkeley was that I knew it had in 1968 and '69 established an ethnic studies set of programs and that they were primarily undergraduate and they were primarily taught by adjunct faculty. They were visiting faculty, and I also knew on the other side of that that history was just enormous, that it was this enormous department of sixty-nine, seventy people. There were three women in the department when I got there, three women faculty out of the seventy. That it was intensely competitive. And I had looked up enough and when I visited, went by the department and luckily stumbled on to someone—one of the administrative

assistants at the front desk who just looked at me as if I literally was like Dorothy entering Oz, and she said, "Wait right here, I'm going to get someone to chat with you." And so she managed to find a graduate student who was working I think in Latin American history with one or two of the Latin Americanists, and that person said, "Come, we have a graduate lounge, come and sit down, and I'll chat with you." I don't even know who he was other than that he was very friendly and answered a lot of my questions and just kind of almost conveyed the idea that anyone can do this, anyone with half a brain, you just need to be dedicated. And then he said, "And just be ready to read a thousand pages a week. That's what you're going to be doing, that's going to be your life for three years." And so I remember looking at him like, what, that's not very appetizing. And then I remember at the same time going to the library and maybe taking a look there. I don't think I went into The Bancroft Library at all, but I remember thinking, wow, this is really amazing and leaving there thinking, this is what I want to do.

01-01:02:14

So, yeah, the Chicano and Chicana thing didn't come even in the first year that I was there. We were discouraged very actively in the department from going into the Ethnic Studies hallways even African American Studies, which by then was becoming a kind of standalone department. The African Americanists in the history department and the Latin Americanists in the history department and not so much the women historians but those folks really kind of suggested that no, they won't be able to be your outside person on your committee, you have to get someone else. So I got Alan Dundes in anthropology or folklore, and that was fine, but I couldn't get anyone from Chicano and Chicana studies. And, you know, it was funny because at Berkeley, the more that they said no to me, "Well, oh, you're not going to find anything on women really or Mexican-origin women," the more I became convinced, "oh yes, I will,"—so it had the opposite effect.

And I think eventually in the time that I was there certainly from 1974 to '83, quite a lot changed. For one, there were more women faculty hired. I think there was more of a reconciling that these were legitimate fields of study that you couldn't do US history if you didn't know African American studies, that's just impossible and not good. And I think people are coming around to thinking that if you don't know Latino and Latina history in the US or Chicano and Chicana studies in the Southwest, you're certainly not going to be able to do a very credible job of being a faculty member who is conveying to students the freshest, most cutting-edge scholarship.

01-01:04:16

Holmes:

I come back to your studies there at Berkeley in a moment, but I wanted to just step backwards to get more of your impressions of your arriving at Berkeley. I mean that's a big jump from, say, Garfield, New Mexico, particularly at this time. If we're looking at the Bay Area—the whole of San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, there is a lot going on during this time.

01-01:04:42
González:

There was a lot.

01-01:04:43
Holmes:

What were some of your first impressions during those early years?

01-01:04:49
González:

What did I do? Well, especially being in the motel on University Avenue because that's all well, *a*, that we could afford, and, *b*, that I could find in terms of making reservations and calling places. So I went there on a scouting mission but then also when I moved there, my mom and dad and my then soon-to-be husband in the car with me, and in the car—this was a Chevrolet car of some sort. I remember it was green, I can't even remember what the car make was, but it was my mom and dad's car. It was some big kind of lug of a thing, but it had a nice, big trunk. So I had a trunk that I still have, still own, it's outside in the garage, a blue trunk, and in that trunk, I had put in all of the stuff I thought I needed. Like there was a little portable radio with a cassette player I remember and some cassettes and various things. Oh, I think I had even bought an umbrella because I never owned an umbrella in New Mexico, I just had a parka and whatever—it doesn't rain enough in the desert and then I had my winter coats and jackets. And I booked a room at International House, and part of that came because the graduate minority program when I had been on a scouting mission had said, "Send boxes if you need to, to us, we'll accept them and hold them for you because we have a basement in California Hall," they said, "we have a section of the basement, we can put your stuff, and then you'll come and get it when you're ready to move in." So incredibly helpful just in that way. Huge, here's Berkeley, 30,000 students, and here's this little program, and they're helping me, so I had the sense right away of people really caring.

And then when my parents dropped me off and left, I just—all I can think of and remember is the feeling of like my stomach had a hole. There was a hole in the middle of my body, and I couldn't get past it. I was just like, oh my God, and I tried to do things. I think I went, and I took a shower. I went down the hall to the bathroom, took a shower, came back to my room. By then, I had pretty much unpacked everything, I had made the bed, I had put books up, and put out the little black radio with this cassette recorder thing in it. But I remember thinking to myself, again, 'What in the world am I doing, what am I now—what have I gotten into, where in the heck am I going to find some measure of normalcy in this?' International House, it had a twin bed and very old furniture and a tiny closet, so I kind of did okay, well, I guess there are two things I could do. There's a library in this space, a study room, huge library, beautiful library and there's a dining hall, and the dining hall wouldn't open until the next day when everything officially began. But there was a café, and it had glass—International House had the glass thing and the café looked out to Bolt, so the school of law was there and then Bancroft Avenue coming up. And so I just remember thinking, okay, I went to the library, sat down, and started reading, doing some things, and then I started to feel a little

bit more normal like, okay, this seems okay. And then I went to get something to eat at the café, and it was funny because I was in the line and I was just going to get a sandwich, sit down at a table, eat, and think, okay, I'm not going back to my room because if I go back to my room, all I'm going to do is cry. I'm just going to be incredibly distraught if I sit there in that room. And there was no television. I mean first of all, it was in the era when very few of us had television. You listened to the radio, maybe you turned on the news, or you went to some place that had like a lobby or a living room and you listen to TV that way. That's how I had done it all the way through college, so I never had my own television.

01-01:09:29

I get in the line and I go through, and at one point, there's this guy standing there, and he's staring at me, and I'm thinking okay, what—what's this and I looked at him again. I looked at him twice, right, and he said, "Aren't you in the history department?" and I said, "Yeah, I am, who are you?" And he said, "You know, my name is Jeff, Jeffrey Hanes." He said, "I'm in history too." He said, "I'm just staring, it's my first year." I said, "Oh," I said, "Why are you in this café?" and he said, "I live here, I'm living here." I said, "Oh, really?" I said, "Wow," I said, "I didn't see you," but of course, there were like ninety of us new folks in the department and so that was it. I said, "How are you doing?" and he said, "Well, I guess I'm okay." He said, "It's a bit lonely," and the minute he said that, I thought, "Okay, this is going to be my friend, this is it." So I went and sat down, sitting there, he was waiting for his food, and he said, "Can I join you?" I said, "Oh, yes," and we started talking and we just really—I don't remember too much about the conversation. He later remembers, he remembers talking to me about kind of where we were from and who we were. And then he saw my hand, and he said, "You're married," and I said, "Yeah," and I said, "But where is he?" and I said, "Well, he's in New Mexico finishing up. He's got a whole semester to finish up, so I'm living here." And then we talked about his being from New York and he had gone to Williams and so there was all of this, and I said, "Wow." I said, "So you really probably feel pretty comfortable here in this environment?" He said, "Not really." He said, "I've been at a small school, and I was in Japan for a year, but—" So that's about all I remember from the conversation. What I walked away from is feeling like, okay, this is doable now, this can happen and then everything kicked in.

I mean the next day, it was just orientation and start classes, and we were told we were going to have to be interviewed to enter a particular seminar. And there were twenty-two of us in the field of US history and only nine of us would be able to get into the seminar, so they were going to hold these interviews, and of course we rebelled right away. [laughs] That kicked in a whole other thing among the US historians, and we began to be known as the troublemakers—but it was good because again, what happened I think as we gathered was that I started to feel a sense of community, that these were

people who were all kind of pursuing a similar thing and I didn't feel quite as alone, and that was key.

01-01:12:20

Holmes:

Discuss the environment at Berkeley throughout your graduate studies particularly for a Chicana scholar. You were alluding here just a bit ago of a lot of history faculty saying, "Don't go over to that Ethnic Studies building," you know. Discuss that environment and your experience.

01-01:12:39

González:

Well, it's interesting because Dwinelle Hall is impossible to figure out, and that's where the history department was. So once you found your way to the history department, you'd probably do anything is what we all used to say to each other. I remember sitting again in the student lounge, and back then, it wasn't even—I guess a little bit later it got fancied up. It literally was like these leftover tables with chairs and a very dreary space, but we inhabited it, we lived there, we had mailboxes there, and so on. What I remember was more than anything, there was one other Latina in this class of ninety, a new incoming graduate students, Isabel Tirado who was Puerto Rican, and she was studying Soviet history from New York and Jesse Warr who's African American, and Jesse had come from Amherst. I think he had been some place before or in between. And so Jesse was interested in US history, and that was it. I mean there was one other woman from San Jose State who dropped out like in the first five weeks of the quarter, and we had two people who left immediately, almost immediately like within a few weeks, so then we were twenty. And then of the twenty, what I remember was feeling like not so much that I had to represent the Chicano or Chicana voice but rather like kind of who are you, what do you think based on where you're from.

So my peers in that group, particularly among the Americanists were pretty aware, I would say, politically. They had come from places where things like the Chicano movement or Native American studies or African American studies wasn't something rare or odd, and I think it helped because it kind of felt normalized. But I would get questions, and it was interesting to me that what bound us all together always was this pursuit of and this love or this interest in history and in what we were studying to do or wanting to do with that information. None of it was job or career. I never remember having a single conversation with anyone about where do you want to go, what do you want to land on, what are you going to do, never. Because it was 1974, '75, and, I don't know, we didn't have a whole lot. There weren't very wealthy students among us. I think there were a few upper-middleclass students but no one who had deep wealth. No one talked about careerism or a career. We talked about things that mattered to us about history and about learning history or about political science or philosophy or whatever it was we were trying to do. And I just remember that it allowed me to kind of feel like I was part of a group in a way that, as an undergraduate, I never did because as an undergraduate, I spent a lot of time really studying, really reading, and a bit of

travel, kind of going from one place to another, making friends but not feeling very much like I had a community of people who were more like me than not, you know. And because it was New Mexico and predominantly Hispanic, I didn't feel like an outsider in New Mexico.

01-01:17:01

So at Berkeley, I did feel like an outsider and then I was joined by all these other people who also seem to feel like outsiders, like we don't quite get Berkeley, we don't quite know what is expected or what we're doing here. And we'd hear things about the rankings, that was just always kind of floating around that the faculty we had all wanted to be at Harvard. They didn't get Harvard so they got Berkeley, so they landed there. Yeah, there was all of this kind of elitism that floated around, and that none of us really addressed or paid much attention to I think because we were really busy trying to learn and in seminars, perform. And impressing the professor was kind of part of that, the game, and I learned that pretty quickly. I also learned that I had some real deficiencies in terms of history, preparation for history—that the kind of background I had had in New Mexico meant that I probably needed to do some things, remedial things at Berkeley. So one of the things that someone recommended to me, and I can't remember if it was a faculty member or maybe—probably one of the other grad students who was doing the same—to get a handle on the faculty was to go and attend their undergraduate upper-division classes. So I went to Leon Litwack's upper-division class, Larry Levine's upper-division class, any of the big classes where I could just sit in a chair and no one would notice. And I took notes, and I kind of integrated, and I read, I read whatever they were assigning, and that helped me prepare for my seminars in a way that I think I was not prepared. And it wasn't even so much the reading, it wasn't so much the participation in the seminar, which once I kind of got the handle on what one did in the seminar, it was really more the writing. It was writing papers and paying attention to writing and interpretation and paying attention to the role that research played in that interpretation, and that was something new and different. An undergraduate experience in New Mexico would not have prepared me for that kind of level of thinking and of participation and of kind of work in a graduate seminar.

There were times when I would think, why are they asking me this or why are they turning to me on that? And I would talk with Jesse about being African American and his being the only one out of ninety. Isabel and I would talk about being Latinas and how misunderstood she was as a Soviet historian, that people were just astonished that she was Puerto Rican. And at the same time, I think in the end, what a lot of people did was really reckon with the fact that, I don't know, in that department in particular, you can be just about anybody and do pretty well if you pay attention, if you put your mind to it, and you have a little bit of skill and talent. So I think we all took a lot of heart from kind of that perception following the initial one.

01-01:19:38

Winthrop Jordan in this sorting out of the seminar for the grad students, so our first day really or our first week, was interviewing us, and people were coming back into the graduate lounge and saying, "Oh, they asked about this and that and that, so you should say this and don't say that." I sat down, and he said, "Well, hmm, where are you—oh, New Me—?" He said, "They have the baseball team, right?" I said, "No, that's Arizona State," and so [laughs] that was kind of what kicked off our conversation. And he was looking out the window, he had his feet on a desk, and he had a pipe that he was filling up with this incredibly good-smelling tobacco, very sweet tobacco. And he was kind of taking his time and so on, and he said, "Well, you know, I just wanted to meet with the students and figure out how to put the seminar together because I can't have all twenty-two of you in it." And then he said, "Hmm, Gonzalez," and he said, "how long has your family been in this country?" And I looked at him, and I just remembered thinking, 'Oh shit.' Something clicked, something just started getting me thinking about where the question was coming from, what right do you have to be here, what—I mean all of that just kind of, 'Okay, I'm now going to have to be a Hispanic and not a Mexican,' and I just started doing this whole mental dance. And so I said to him, "Which side of my family?" and he said, "Well, whatever side." He was like tapping his pipe, and then he was pressing it and kind of doing this whole thing and then just starting to light it and so on. And I said, "Well, my dad's family has been here since 1598." And he kind of looked at me and then I said, "In my mother's, I don't know 25,000 years, whatever the anthropologists finally determined." And he was "Well, very good, very good, um, so you want to be in this class?" and I said, "I would love the opportunity to study with you, yes," and that was the end of the interview.

Well, when I went back to the graduate lounge and I told people this, they gathered, everyone gathered, and they were like, "Oh my fucking God, don't you know he's Jordan, Jordan, Winthrop, Winthrop." And I said, "As in Mayflower Winthrop?" and they were like, "What do you think?" [laughs] And I was like, "I thought he studied African Americans, whatever, blah, I thought duh, duh." I was kind of like okay. And they were just beside themselves. My peers, the students who were trying to get into the seminar were just like aghast, and I think it hit them probably even sooner than it hit me. And when I went back to my room in I House, I remember writing about it, I don't know, where, what journal or what place I probably wrote about it, but I just remember feeling like, okay, well, I had blown that opportunity, now what am I going to do?

The next morning, again, we all gathered, and we said, "You know this is crazy. We need to tell them that they have to create two seminars, they admitted us, and that's the end of that" and so we did. We all got together, and we asked to see the chair of the department. He could come to the lounge and meet with us—and he brought the two faculty members and so then we ended up in a seminar with I think Winthrop Jordan and Bob Middlekauff stepped in

said, "I'll offer a class," and that's how we resolved it. We did that and so I felt like, okay, something good came of this. But I just never forgot that image, that conversation, and I thought, Berkeley really told me right away what it was and what it was about and—yeah.

01-01:24:54

I don't remember resentment or anger about it. What I just remember was thinking, okay, what this is saying to you is you need some sort of strategy, you need to figure out here what this is about and how you will be affected or going to be affected by being in this particular place. I have to say, every single time I was in one of the seminars among the history faculty, a difficult issue would come up always masked as a kind of intelligent question, never a kind of, "what a racist thing to say" or "where the hell do you get off thinking that way." It was always masked in this dialogue, this frame. I have to say that people really, really did pay attention and worked out what I think had everything to do with our own individual politics, and that gave me the space to be able to go to Chicano and Chicana studies, go down the hall, and say, "Okay, I don't know anything about African American studies, but everything I'm reading over there leads me to believe that I need to know. And I don't know Asian American history in the US, how in the world am I going to learn that? I know some Native American studies from my undergraduate years, I certainly know borderlands history, but what else do I need to know?" and that I think is what was really critical. But, yeah, it was difficult, it was a difficult exercise I would say, yeah.

01-01:26:52

Holmes:

Well, talk a little bit about your introduction then to Chicano and Chicana studies. I mean as a field, even the department—by the time you stepped on to the Berkeley campus, it was really just starting in many ways to take shape.

01-01:27:08

González:

It was, and it had some women in it, one woman and a group of faculty very devoted both to students but also to the field of study, and it had artists and people like that. Larry Trujillo had been an adjunct teaching lots of different kinds of history. Mario Barrera and Carlos Muñoz and Alex Saragoza were kind of the tenure-track-line faculty finally, and Sylvia Lizárraga who did Latin American and Mexican border literature. And so they four were the kind of tenure track and then Larry I think was adjunct dean, and there were lots of people like Rupert Garcia taught art—Chicano art classes. I went over actually to see Ron Takaki because he was teaching a large Asian American introduction to US—what did he call it—I just remember the number. It was 130, I think it was Intro to US Racial or Ethnic History something like that, and he needed TAs because there were over 350 students enrolling. By the time he left or retired from Berkeley there were what a thousand students in the class. He had to hold it I think in Zellerbach or something, kind of like the Leon Litwack thing. And so he needed these TAs and he invited me. He was interviewing, and I said, "You know I don't know very much, and no, I haven't been really over to Chicano studies." By then it was a year in, and he said,

"Well, I'd really welcome if you could kind of be a TA and come over and take a look at what we're doing." And through him and teaching and TA-ing in that class, I began to go to many more Chicano studies events, and there were lots of them. There were lots of activities and programming both undergraduate and some graduate student stuff too. So I got to know Alex and Mario and Carlos, and by the end of my second year, I would say I was probably pretty familiar and checking in regularly with the Chicano studies faculty and learning at that point about a whole group of Chicano grad students.

01-01:29:42

So the Chicano Political Economy Collective that people like Pat [Zavella] and Andres Jimenez and David Montejano and Alex and Carlos would all talk about. That had formed in the probably mid-1970s and so they invited me. They started inviting me, and I would go to their meetings whenever I could. I mean there were a lot of times when I had to do history stuff and I couldn't be there, or I had a paper to write and that would be the priority. But I went when I could, and I started to get to know slowly individual graduate students, and I started to seek them out. We would do things together, like if it was someone's birthday or if it was on campus if there was an event, I'd attend it. And I just felt like I was beginning, at that point, to miss—Berkeley itself as a town, as a city, didn't have a lot of Mexican activity, in fact even Mexican restaurants for a long time. There was just that one out in the Marina and one in the flatlands and no such thing as a taqueria, no such thing as any burrito stand, nothing. There were some Asian restaurants and takeouts. There was that Greek place on Telegraph Avenue, and what constituted ethnic food was pretty minimal even with Japanese, not really.

And so I think those were the places where I started to feel a little bit like homesick and started to realize that I was missing something. And then going into San Francisco and being connected a lot to San Francisco by way of some of the political activism that was going on and then finally learning more about what the Mission District meant and Latino populations and a real mix and cosmopolitan kind of atmosphere there began to mean a lot more to me. And so I think it was through that kind of awareness that seem to me to be pretty slow in the making. I always felt like there were other people at Berkeley who, oh, they were members of the Chicano movement from the beginning, they were in Oakland when all of the stuff happened in Oakland. They were in San Francisco when trials were going on and so on, or they were with the farmworkers right from the beginning. For me, it was later, it was really in '76, '77, '78 that I started to really begin to feel like this is a field of study that I didn't know was possible to imagine, to create, to kind of even think about. It was history, anthropology, and we were all very uninter—we were not interdisciplinary. Folklore was my most interdisciplinary space at Berkeley.

01-01:33:03

And so I remember going to Sproul Plaza one day feeling a little bit lonely, feeling tired. I can't remember if I was working at the library in the undergraduate or the graduate research unit there that I had a job in. Oh, the farmworkers were speaking and I remember that Dolores Huerta, I had heard her speak at UNM maybe in '69, '70 and so I went to hear her, and I thought, this sounds really familiar. And what she did was she began talking about the work of people who labor in the fields and whose lives are marked by insensitivity of others and so on. And I think she had said this in Albuquerque, too, about how what is wrong about standing up for people who bring food to the table, so you can eat, and that kind of thing, powerful, powerful messages. And I remember thinking to myself, wow—growing up in New Mexico as I did and even in the movement of the sixties and understanding the power differentials and class and racial privilege, I've never thought about it in the context of a kind of academic field of study. And who had spoken before her and who spoke after her were people who were talking about Chicano studies, and they were saying as a requirement of the university, Ethnic studies as a requirement began even then, and of course didn't come to fruition till I think, what, the late eighties that finally something got put on the books. It made an impression, it made a really deep impression, and again it was one of these I need to know more, I don't know enough, and how am I going to get there.

So I started doing a lot more sitting in on classes that people like Alex and Mario and Carlos were teaching, talking more with the other Chicano graduate students and how they identified, why did they use the term *Chicano* particularly because the number of them were born in Mexico, so the *Méxicanos* who adopted the Chicano and Chicana identity. And I really started thinking about it in terms of you know, there is something about taking this word that means and has meant in such a pejorative way, the people who were at the bottom of the scale and always in all measurement, by all measurement and transforming it into something that is valued and valuable to that generation that I knew would be coming in the door. We knew in 1978, '79, the Latino population was going to explode. We could tell, and the massive migrations were beginning to change Los Angeles. It was becoming the largest Mexican City outside of Mexico City. And that and the Bay Area had always had a Latino presence. So putting all of those things together really made a lot of sense to me, and it began to feel right. It just seemed like a good thing for me to not only explore but to really think about as authentically valid, as something that was vibrant and living, breathing, kind of movement. And I started understanding then what it meant because a lot of the people I was surrounded by had been very participatory in forming the Chicano movement and most certainly in forming Chicano studies as a movement. So it began to make sense, and I felt welcome. I was also coming out then, so it was like that was the other piece not so welcome on that front, [laughs] so—you know.

01-01:37:31

Holmes: Well, discuss a little bit about your experience, because I want to get into your dissertation and such, working up there.

01-01:37:38

González: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

01-01:37:39

Holmes: But diving into the literature—those early works that we would put under that umbrella of Chicana and Chicano studies, what works really stand out to you, struck you, and inspired you?

01-01:37:53

González: Well, it's interesting because it wasn't any Chicano and Chicana studies work per se until I came through the door and had looked at what was missing in these other texts. And very impressive, important work that people like Edward Spicer at University of Arizona did on Native America and Elizabeth John in her work on the borderlands and many of the tribal communities, the nations of the borderlands, *Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds*. And when I had to do a paper on those two, I kept thinking, what lies here in the middle. I mean there's Native America and there's Mexican America, but there's like something else between those. And so it was that space of kind of being and thinking through, where do I find this, where do I get to these resources? And so in going to Chicano and Chicano studies, certainly things like Al Camarillo's *Chicanos in a Changing Society* had enormous relevance because I thought he took this idea and applied it to California. And Mario Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest*, my God, I thought okay, this is really a critical book because it tries to frame up the application of something through a Chicano lens that's much broader, that can be applied more broadly, that anyone in political economy or political studies can take and understand. I just remember thinking, these are critical ways of looking at what still for me as a historian was probably the most important piece, which was the archive, the evidence, what is in there, and where can I find what I want to do in that archive.

And I was going to The Bancroft, a lot on weekends, especially every Saturday, every single Saturday. Even if it was just two, three hours I would just sit there that afternoon and access the Spanish archives of New Mexico, the territorial archives of New Mexico. They were all in microfilm, I'd sit there, and I'd go through and look, and then I'd also ask for books from the early New Mexican historians, the early Spanish borderlands historians, all the Herbert Eugene Bolton students and their dissertations and so on, which were all on file there in The Bancroft, which was great. And I would just read, and there were these amazing stories, and I would think, you know, I don't know that what I would be doing or what I am doing is Chicano history, and it isn't really Native American history, again, it's falling in between those lines. And not until I began piecing it together that whatever perspective or approach you think you're taking, and in history, we were always invited to think about

whether we wanted to do social history, we wanted to do political history, cultural history, or economic history. Those are your four choices, and you go into one of those camps and then you bow to the gurus and the masters of that area. Okay, so I did that, I looked at social history. I was led and helped a lot by Gunther Barth in his doing the kind of the history of the West and having done work in that area, but I still couldn't find kind of that home.

01-01:42:01

And again, in Chicano and Chicana studies, part of what happened was that it led me to think through how do you make the field of history better even if you're not going to call yourself a Chicano and Chicana historian, which I didn't. I didn't call myself that—I think I became a Chicano and Chicana historian really when I got to Pomona College because that's how they looked at me anyway. So I figured okay, then I guess that is who I am, I'm going to do this. It was the outside shaping, I think the inside in that instance, and it was important at least in terms of preparation at Berkeley for me to be able to say that this discipline, this thing that we call history isn't something elusive or strange or unavailable. It can be very available, but it's got to be done in a different way, and I always felt that. Studying with Woodrow Borah and Tulio Halperin, I mean some of the biggest names in Latin American history was an experience. It was an experience, and I don't know that they ever got what I wanted to do or even began to understand in any way, shape, or form. But what they did do was introduce me to the way they thought of Latin American history and to the way they had changed Latin American history I think for the better in most instances. Woodrow Borah because he was Jewish was not hired in the history department, couldn't be hired in the history department, so he landed in rhetoric at Berkeley in the floor below history. And he used to talk to me about that and say, "I was practically in the basement." That in the 1950s, late 1950s and the folks who really were not only anti-Semitic but interested in keeping especially Jewish historians out faded away, then he was hired and came in the door. I don't know that Berkeley has a Chicano and Chicana historian today, I don't think so. It didn't have an African American historian in any field until Waldo Martin was hired, and Waldo went to Berkeley and went away, took a job somewhere else, and then came back. I don't know about the women numbers there. I know that they increased, they're much better, but I don't think that again that was the goal. I don't think it was anyone's goal at Berkeley.

Yeah, the issues that were studied, relevance for contemporary challenges, that was not very much in the camp or in the work that historians felt they should be doing. So instead who did we get? Well, we got to meet the queen of the Netherlands. I remember when they spruced the bathroom in Doe Library because they thought she or her entourage might be going into the bathroom. So suddenly, all the marble got polished—it hadn't been polished in twenty-five years—so the floors and all the woodwork, [laughs] everything got polished that the queen could use the restroom or the services if they needed to. Prince Charles came to visit, and we got to sit down in a seminar

with him, very smart, very smart man, very interesting, very different from what I had imagined. And the students in the Tudor/Stuart class got to ask him questions, and they handled it kind of like a seminar. Who else came? Carey McWilliams—Walton Bean invited Carey McWilliams, and that was a lot of fun, and he was really interested in what I was doing. He was kind of like, "Who are you, how'd you get here, what are you doing, why don't you follow up on the work of so-and-so?" and he really wanted me to do contemporary US Mexican history. Who else? Paul Taylor I think came through. I mean there were just names of people who I read in these things. As you're asking how did the dissertation take shape or the background to the dissertation, a lot of it was that kind of exposure to a range of people and ways of thinking.

01-01:47:08

And then there was all of the other Berkeley craziness. I mean Berkeley, there's film and there's art and there's dance, and I remember the first time I saw Judith Jamison in Zellerbach or at Berkeley, Pacific Film Archive when we'd go, and I remember sitting through the entire Fellini series. I think I may have seen one Fellini film when I was an undergraduate. I can't remember, but I remember sitting through the whole thing, and I was like, oh my gosh. I mean there were things that fueled this, the curiosity and that just said shape this project in way that makes sense to you but that isn't restricted by any one thing. That was probably the biggest key and lesson, and for that I'm really grateful. I mean people say, "Yeah, but it was so racist," and these guys in the history department and so on, it's like, "Um, you know, in all your life, you balance off things, and, yeah, I don't want to hide and mask that there was a lot of conflict internal I think and racialized even." But I just remember thinking, I'm not going to let that affect me because I want to get to something and do something that I think I can do and that I think is valuable and helpful and that I can share with a lot of people to make some sort of difference, and in the end, that kind of won out. Yeah.

01-01:48:52

Holmes:

Well, speaking of which, that is exactly what you did was make a project that was not only just different and unique particularly if we look at what had been written at that time, but it was also your own. So the dissertation which you filed in 1985, *The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe: Patterns of Their Resistance and Accommodation, 1820–1880*.

01-01:49:16

González:

What a long title. [laughs]

01-01:49:18

Holmes:

All dissertation titles are long, right?

01-01:49:21

González:

Yeah.

01-01:49:22

Holmes:

Which was published in 1990, *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe, 1820-1880*. So let's discuss a little bit about the genesis of this project. In many respects, it's almost kind of a going-home story, right, of really studying the roots of where you grew up and where your family has for fourteen generations called home. Discuss how this came about and how it developed?

01-01:49:57

González:

You know, it's kind of funny because I had wanted to write something that was kind of like a Spicer or an Elizabeth John book that was big. It was epic, it was going to be kind of—I think I was going to call it "Native Presence or something in Hispanic New Mexico or something like that." I was going to try to do kind of relationships, which were very intriguing to me between native peoples and the Spanish and later some Mexican colonizers and so it was going to be about colonization. It was going to be about colonial relations; it was going to be sort of all of these things. And I realized, wait a minute, that's like ten history books, that's a Bancroft-like project because they're all so different. I mean there's just several hundreds of native peoples and many languages, and I didn't speak one of them, so there went that.

So I really left Berkeley in 1978 for Santa Fe. I got a scholarship, I was going through a divorce, and that was really painful, really horrible, very, very difficult. And I had had a lot of support from my then ex-husband, financial support and so on, so I didn't have to do what a lot of undergraduate students did, which was work twenty-five and thirty hours a week in addition, you know, wage-paying jobs. I could kind of pick and choose and do TA-ships or research assistantships because he was working as a teacher, and he could provide food and pay the rent. So when we separated, one of the things I did was I went in and I told my advisors—I remember telling Gunther Barth, "I'm in a really bad spot, I haven't been in here for a few weeks because I'm getting a divorce, and it's very difficult and so I don't know what to do. I know I have to move, I know I'm going to have to get a job, and I'm actually even thinking of taking maybe a leave of absence," and he right away said, "Oh, no, no, no, no. We have this scholarship, the Otilie Schubert scholarship for students working in the field of Western US history," and he said, "and you're going to get that, and it's going to pay you \$400 a month, will that be sufficient?" And I remember he said, "I do not want, Miss Gonzalez, to probe into your personal financial business, but if you could let me know," and I said, "Yeah, that would be sufficient," and it paid my tuition in addition, so—

01-01:53:10

So I applied for the fellowship scholarship. The department had just received the money, there were two of them, I got one of them. And then he said, "I still think you should file your prospectus for the dissertation, let's get that through the committee, and then you decide if you're going to stay here to do the research or go to back to New Mexico or whatever." And so I talked to my parents, and my parents had said—my father had said, "Okay, well, I'll try to

find you a car, since that's one of the most important things, and if you come to New Mexico, we'll help you to get settled," and I had said, "Well, I'm going to go to Santa Fe," which even then Santa Fe was beginning to be pretty expensive as a place to live, not as bad as the Bay Area. I packed up the apartment, I took what was mine, I put it in a friend's basement, and I moved to Santa Fe for the year. I remember as I was driving, my Ford Fiesta that my dad provided from Berkeley to Santa Fe, I remember thinking as I drove through Utah and saw the cliffs and that incredible red, I can't do something that's huge. I've got to really be defined in what I'm going to seek or think about. And I had already started to do work, as I had said, in The Bancroft, and I kept finding women's names appearing in court case after course case. Every time I opened the archives, every time I went into a roll of microfilm, yet another woman, and it would take me forever to read because the script was sometimes illegible, and plus I had to read in that nineteenth century Spanish and so it would be just kind of magnifying and line by line till I got used to what the words meant. So it seemed really arduous, but I thought, okay, I landed in Santa Fe, got settled in. My brother was living in Santa Fe with his then wife and so they were very helpful and let me stay in their apartment while I searched, and I found a little house—behind another house—and so in exchange for some babysitting or childcare and dog poop duty, I was able to rent this house for \$180. And then of course I didn't factor in the incredible electric and heating bill, so I put in a little chimney or chiminea, I put in a little fireplace thing, woodburning in the living room. And my friend from undergraduate school, Carol Taschek, came over, and she helped me cut the wall and put the pipe in, and we kind of got the whole thing going. And then I got a whole bunch of wood and so then, okay, the living was taken care of and then I just started going to the archives.

01-01:56:19

And in the archives, Myra Ellen Jenkins was the state historian and so when I arrived there—the summer before I guess I had been there. She had been very welcoming, and she was a gruff person. She has been the state historian, and she had been the archivist of New Mexico for many years, but she liked the idea, and she said, "You know I wrote an article in the 1940s. I think it was on women something in New Mexico, so let me see if I dig it up." And she brought it through and said, "Here, take a look at this." It was all about some women politicians and writers and so on, and I thought, well. And I told her I want to focus on the nineteenth century, and she said, "Oh, that's going to be difficult, that might be a little hard." By the time I got into the archives in '78 with the fellowship and living in Santa Fe, there was a new state historian, Stanley Hordes, a Latin Americanist would become the state historian. He was running the archives, and he saw what I was working on. He saw that I was doing all of these kind of microfilm and cases and asking for file folders from the 1820s and '30s and pulling up a lot of court cases. And so one day, he comes by and says, "Have you run across this thing, Juana Lopes?" And I said, "No, this doesn't look familiar." And it was a Xerox and so he said, "I'll bring you the original," he said, "but take a look at this," and then he said,

"and especially this that I've highlighted here," and it's circled, something. And he said, "Is that what I think it is?" and I said, "Let me read it." So I started from beginning to end, and in that, that was the document from 1832 where she says, "It's my ass, and I own it, and I'll give it to whomever I please." And so he came out with the original one, and I looked at it, and I said, "Oh, my God, and this is it. This is it. This is what I'm going to do."

01-01:58:34

And so then, Stanley would let me go into the vault, and the vault then is not where it is now. Now, the vault is climate-controlled and just this whole, and it has beautiful space, and everything moves on trolley, you can just pull things out, and it's just a very different situation. But back then, everything was kind of literally on metal shelves, some wooden shelves but mostly metal, and big, huge ones as wide as this ottoman, and things would just kind of be resting and sitting there. And they were organized by year and by whatever. But he just said, "You know, you can spend time in here if you want," and so I did. I started going in there, I would just go in, and I'd pull some things from the shelf, and I'd sit down. There was a table and a chair and then sometimes I'd go out to the reading room, and I'd ask him, "Can I take this?" and he'd say, "Yes," and you'd have to wear gloves and you have to do all of that and pencil, use pencil and so on, just like The Bancroft Library. I'm in there one day, this might have been in winter because my apartment was super cold, so I'd try to get to the archives [laughs] as early as I could and stay as late as I could. And I remember I was really cold, and it was cold in that section in the vault, and for some reason that day, I decided to go in there. All week, I had been working on a bunch of other things and had stacks and stacks of mostly court cases from the 1820s, 1830s, 1840s. And I look up and I see that these books are all kind of lined up like on the shelf here, but it's a metal shelf and it's very deep, and behind it, I see these edging like the spine of something kind of holding up, kind of as if a book fell underneath it, and it was being held up. So I went over to it, and I moved everything, very carefully, and there were these four humongous [books]—each was about maybe this thick and they were about this wide, each one. There were four of them and so I pulled them. I get them one each, put them on the table, not stacked on top of each other. I kind of did what the reading room asked us to do, and it says US Court Probate Journals. And I start moving through those, and I think, 'Oh my God, this is a treasure trove.' I mean there are complaints against women for prostitution, for not taking care of their children, and a whole bunch of other cases, complaints of women against other women, men against women, and women against men, businessowners and especially Euro Americans.

01-02:01:35

And so I just thought, okay, now I'm beginning to see what I might be able to do here. And then I started kind of transcribing and as often as I could Xeroxing and then because these were probate journals that have probably been hidden back there for decades, I mean no one had seen them, there wasn't any microfilming done of them. So I asked if I could do that, is could

we take pictures and get a camera going. And so I think eventually they did. I think they're probably now available by microfilm, but that was another part to all of this was kind of this, the discovery, that the kind of luck—lucky that Stan Hordes brought that document to my attention, lucky that I was able to be back in the vault just looking, just feeling things, and then finding them, and that I had in my head an idea about how I wanted to develop this work. I still didn't know what I was on to, but I knew that it was interesting, and it was a dynamic story. There was much to tell and that I was there. I was the person kind of being able to read the documents to begin with and then do something with them. So all that—it just motivated me to do. And in between, I was also—it isn't to say that I was like in the archives from 8:00 to 5:00 because that wasn't the case. I had a life in Santa Fe. I was going to the gay bar, the Senate as it was called, every Friday, every Saturday night and meeting friends. I made several friends. A dear friend of mine who was pregnant had returned to Santa Fe, and she was pregnant with her one and only child, with Mario and so Patricia Duran became a good friend of mine. She was a Santa Fean, so she introduced me to all of these things that were going on to our family, and I would go to these events and things. And then I'd go down to the farm at every opportunity or my parents came to visit. So my sister then was moving to Albuquerque I think, so I was able to spend time with her. So all of that came together, and my grandparents were alive, and I was still able to get myself to them and to see them, so again, I think I was animated and inspired in a way. Oh, and I would do runs. I was running, which was very good up in the little hillsides, the hills of Santa Fe, and I'd bump into all of these people, these actors who had their homes. Robert Redford was constantly—every time I would go on my run or park my car and go on a walk, he would be running in the opposite direction heading back I think to his house. And there were all sorts of people. Hanging out in Santa Fe, you'd walk into a bar, a bakery or the plaza downtown or a museum, and you'd see all of these folks and so I kind of felt like I was on a vacation in a way, so—

01-02:04:57

Holmes:

Dissertation research when we look back in retrospect, it usually feels like that, right?

01-02:05:02

González:

Yeah, it really does and you don't at the moment when you're living it think that at all. So those who are doing dissertations if you're ever hearing this interview, enjoy it. It is the best time; it's heaven. [laughter] I think the archives are heaven.

01-02:05:20

Holmes:

So what develops out of this, the scope of this work, and you're largely following three women and weaving that story together to just tell what I think is a very multilayered story. Discussing the sources and the research that went into that—what came together in the sense of weaving that story together?

01-02:05:48
González:

This was the challenge. Each of those people I thought deserved their own book in so far as one could do, and I could've spent all the time just learning who they were. I didn't do that, I didn't do the background, I did do more where are they in the census, when did they die, who are their descendants, right, all of that kind of genealogical piece. But I could have, and they certainly deserve a kind of interesting if not set of plays or dramas, movies about them in their own right. What I did in the dissertation, I tried to lay it all out as a coherent story about women's resistance to colonization, women's resistance to Euro-American intrusion in Santa Fe in that period of time and Hispanic women or Latinas at least colluding with Euro-Americans as well.

And so in those documents that I studied, there was not a lot about women exerting their class privilege. So certainly against servants, the servants and so on, some of these women had—they themselves were not like Juana Lopez, she was a servant, she was a worker. That would be a really important part of the story to tell and to round out, but since I decided not to do a kind of biographical sketch of each one, instead I thought each of them represents something that's very different as it's in progress and process. And the earlier part, the piece that has kind of Gertrudis Barceló or La Tules in the middle bridging the two worlds of the older Spanish Mexican world with a newer Euro-American one I thought was a very important placement. Earlier, the Juana Lopeses and each of the women that I described in that first chapter, I think they still existed in the mode of thinking of themselves as kind of the center of the universe or the center of their universe. They were very much I think people who were very animated and culturally incredibly strong in their ways, but La Tules kind of breaks that apart I think, and she kind of bridges but also plays the role to a great extent of being not only a broker but a kind of bridge between these two eras. And then finally, the widow Chaves is clearly in this whole other direction and era because by then it is clear who the winners are in the contest. And the women are not winning, they're in fact losing quite a lot, and they've resisted through the century. They've resisted, and they fought, and they've proven their resilience, but it has had a price. It has been a great price.

01-02:09:12

So in setting all that up, the one thing that I kept thinking to myself, and I think it's because I'd had these classes in literature and was kind of in that mode when it became a book because I was interdisciplinary in my orientation at that point, I was already at Pomona College when I was writing it as a book, I was thinking about interdisciplinarity. I was thinking about being a Chicano and Chicana studies scholars, but I was also thinking of a lot of the work that feminist historians had been doing. And I wanted to tell the story, it was a good story, it was good social history. I wanted every paragraph in the book to stand alone. I've never said this that I wanted each paragraph to be taken out of the book and read and be understandable as a solitary paragraph with a beginning and an end. And it was the hardest thing to write that way. Every

time I'd get lost in the detail or I'd feel like, okay, I'm just saying too much about her or him or the situation, I'd be brought back that way. It's just if this has to stand alone, what is it really saying, what is the significance of this point here? And it was the thing I learned from Gunther Barth. It was why is this important? Why is what you're saying right now significant, what is significant about it? It's analytical thinking and analytical writing, and it's a very different way of being, particularly when you grow up in a culture that is descriptive and where analysis is narrated. It isn't left unattached to the human being or the person, very different way.

01-02:11:16

So I was going through all of that as I was trying to structure first the dissertation where it was just get it done. That has its own story about my dissertation being flown to Berlin and my having basically two weeks to certify for Pomona College because the president, Alexander wrote me a letter saying, "You will no longer be an employee if you have not finished." And that's because the chair of the history department when he bumped into him or saw him at something, he asked, "Where is she,—is she close to finishing? She has a contract, and we know that it was a two-year contract," and the chair didn't say, yeah, she's finishing, of course she's finishing. He said instead, "Uh, but I'm not sure." So I get this letter in the mail at my home, and I look at it, and I'm like—I was in the middle of just at that point in time, hmm, I had finished, I had gotten everything typed and printed, and it had to be typed in certain cotton, archival paper, it wasn't that easy to find, it wasn't easy to find a printer. The department of Chicano studies at Pomona College had helped me by getting me a couple of students to proof and make sure every page was in the box but also to pay for the cost of the paper, the printing, and the proofreading to be sure that everything was there, and also that everything was formatted properly. And again this is kind of on the cusp of using computers.

This will be the '85, the late spring of 1985. I taught three classes that spring semester. I had I think ninety students that semester. It was probably the semester when I had the most students ever, and they were all great students, they were wonderful students, but I was pulling my hair out. I was trying to finish the dissertation. Emma Pérez and I were living in this house in Claremont. She was about to take her oral exams at UCLA, I was writing the dissertation—it was just nightmarish. And how I know that it was so bad on me or for me was that one day, my car was parked in the driveway. We didn't use the garage, this was a rental home that Pomona College had rented to me to be there, and I was packing it and moving things to the car from the house. So I was going to go to my office, and this was probably the final stages either printing or reading one last time before I sent the thing off. And I came back inside, and I looked at myself, and I had a shirt or a sweatshirt on and no pants. [laughs] So I've been going in and out of my driveway moving three sets of books and who knows what else in basically my underwear, came back

and I was mortified. I just remembered like crying and thinking, what a state of mind, what a crazy, crazy, crazy place.

01-02:14:30

But the key was that all of this support had been given to me, and my advisor, so Gunther Barth had decided to take a Fulbright and push that up. Even though originally I think he was supposed to leave that summer, he left in the spring or spring quarter, so March at Berkeley. And when I contacted him and said, "I have to get your signature on the page, on this title page or my job is in jeopardy because I have to like—" whatever, it was June 30 I think whatever the date was. And then he said, "Well, I'm Berlin, oh, boy, I don't know what to do, maybe you can get someone else to sign at Berkeley, get your second reader, Jim Kettner to sign it," and I said, "No, it has to have your signature because that's what has to go to graduate division for them to certify that I'm finished." And so then we finally worked out that actually, the department is the one that certifies, graduate division just accepts the paperwork. So we concocted this scheme where somebody, I can't remember which of the European historians, was going to be landing in the Berlin airport at a particular moment that very same kind of set of days. If I can get this dissertation to him, to handle deliver, Barth could sign the thing, and then we could probably get it back to the US in time or have someone who was returning through Europe to bring it back. And what in fact happened is this faculty member was only in the Berlin airport very temporarily and then actually ended up coming back to the US and brought it back to Berkeley, and so—and Berkeley wrote a long letter, I mean from the graduate dean, from the chair of the department saying we do not certify PhD candidates in the summer. We do that in the fall semester in September is the due date, but this is to show that she has submitted all the requirements and is certified, and has this certificate from the grad division showing that she has completed the PhD. And so that ended up sufficing, but it caused just such turmoil, and it was so awful, and it was typical story of taking a job as an ABD, so.

Anyway, in all of that, there was then the book to turn to, and to think through, and to figure out how to really make it valuable and meaningful for me—not just as an exercise or something that had to be done. And by then, my mind frame was also if I stay in this profession, in this field, and I took the Pomona College job before I finished to see am I able to do this, do I want to do it? I really had no intention of staying at Pomona College, not for eighteen years. I thought I'll go and try it and who knows what will happen. But my intention to stay then was driven because of the colleagues I had there in history department and in Chicano and Chicana studies—I was jointly appointed—and because of the students and the nature of the work among the students. So it was a really good transition, and I was the first person to get a job of our cohort or group, which was also surprising to everyone that I was in a field of study that suddenly was just beginning to be noticed and where people needed to have. And the person at Pomona College, the chair of the department, Steve Koblik, was just so proud and so happy because he hired an

Asian American as the Asianist, and he hired an African American as the Africanist, and so I was supposed to be the Latina hire or the hire as the Latin Americanist, and that was my second field not my first field. It was a real challenge to be a first teaching job with that particular kind of student at Pomona that was very incredibly well-prepared, super, super talented group of students who absolutely had no idea about Latin American or Mexican America at all.

01-02:19:18

Holmes:

Well, I want to follow up in our next session about your experience at Pomona. Maybe before we take a break, I do want to talk just briefly about the reception of the book.

01-02:19:28

González:

The book, yeah.

01-02:19:29

Holmes:

Because it was lauded by many as a new lens of really incorporating Chicana history, a women's perspective, and postmodernist kind of thoughts at this time, of questioning objectivity?

01-02:19:47

González:

Yeah.

01-02:19:47

Holmes:

It's really not just recycling arguments and perspectives, say, from a dissertation but really recrafting it into a discussion that fits today of questioning the middle ground, right?

01-02:20:01

González:

Yeah.

01-02:20:01

Holmes:

From Richard White, questioning western history and some of the pillars within that. But then you also get on the other side, *The American Historical Review*.

01-02:20:13

González:

Which I stopped subscribing to and I said—and I've been doing a lot of work for the AHA, which is the other piece on this, so, yeah, they assign it, and they give it to this guy at Samford University that some people say is Stanford University. I'm like, "No." And the dude is just unbelievably not only biased but I don't think read the book. I really don't think he read the book. And so then the question was do you respond to it, which of course the AHR loves to have people respond to the reviews and so on. You know, I just said, "I don't care about that anymore. I'm just not at a point where the mainstream or the male-stream journals are significant or important. I didn't write it for that, and I'm just going to leave it." And Oxford really wanted me to when I—by then Susan Ferber was my editor and was working on a whole bunch of other projects, and she said, "You know, I think there are steps you can take, and

here are some of them that we've done with other people to address and challenge him, challenge the review." And I said, "The number of people who read this, um, yeah, people will access it, but it's in one journal, and I really don't think I have the time to be talking back or doing cross talk with people who didn't quite get what the book was about," and so I let it go. I have somewhere in my archive, there's a whole folder that says response to AHR review, but I did write them and I said, "I'm not subscribing ever again," and I was really pissed off.

And then I ended up, as a result I think of that, on the committee on minority historians for six years of the AHA, which was a great gig. That was a wonderful opportunity to really kind of help change things. And now, I think with reviews like that, I don't think they would accept them in this day and age that they would probably ask for some sort of third party to look at things and take a stab at it. Yeah, I mean the impact to my mind was something that's readable—I mean this was the first book on women of Mexican origin for the nineteenth century. And there have been other great books. I mean Vicki Ruiz produced *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives* for the twentieth century and then eventually Miroslava Chávez would write about California, and also—who's the other person who wrote on nineteenth century? There's the book on Texas women, and there's one also on Arizona, so there were others that followed, and that was great. It still is a desert around that. There are not a lot of people who can do this—handle the Spanish or are willing to take that on because of the time commitments, and we're still at the point of the profession of history where it's kind of a privilege to be a historian. You need resources, and you need a lot of support, and it's not like very many, I think, especially women have that kind of opportunity even now. Even though we number more—now we may be up to thirty-five or thirty-eight Chicana historians in the profession of history.¹ At the time I wrote the book—there were three Latinas and maybe two Chicanas. Vicki had certainly finished, Antonia Castañeda had finished her dissertation at Stanford too and so we were a very tiny number. There's no way they could've gotten someone to review it. I think Asunción Lavrin or one of the Latin Americanist historians reviewed it for one of the newsletters or journals, but there were just very few, so, yeah, that's gone. Now, I think when a book comes out, there probably are a handful who could step in and very competently read the work and offer good criticism and good insights.

01-02:25:01

Holmes:

Well, that's well said. Maybe we should take a break and then we'll start our next session.

01-02:25:10

González:

Thank you.

¹ A project by Dr. Lorena Chambers is tracking the numbers of Chicana (Mexican origin) historians and it has exceeded 100, effective 2022.

Interview 2: November 11, 2020

02-00:00:01

Holmes:

All right, this is Todd Holmes with the Oral History Center at UC Berkeley. Today's date is November 11, 2020, and I have the privilege of sitting down for our second session with Deena González who is the provost and senior vice president of Gonzaga University, and this is for the Chicana/o Studies Oral History project. We are here at her house in the lovely town of Spokane, Washington. Deena, again thank you for your time and hospitality today.

González:

Thank you, Todd, for being here and for doing all of this hard work.

02-00:00:37

Holmes:

Truly my pleasure. I want to get into your career, particularly its start at Pomona College. But before we do that, I also wanted to give you some time to talk a little bit about some of your activities during the latter part of graduate school. We ended last session discussing your dissertation and the book, and how you were pushing the envelope and breaking new ground in regards to Chicana history and really bringing a woman's perspective into that discussion. You were starting to do that in a variety of levels both at conferences and in groups, and I wanted to talk a little bit about the NACS conference in Arizona, I think it was in 1982. And you're on the panel *Mujeres en Marcha*, "Women on the March," right? Discuss a little bit about organizing that panel, being part of it, and the aim.

02-00:01:43

González:

Well, it was an exciting time, we were graduate students, all of us at Berkeley in sociology and in history and political science and lots of different fields. Lita, Adela de la Torre was in economics, studying agricultural economics even, so sort of through the sciences area. Lupe Frias was in economics, and Beatriz Pesquera was in sociology. They were studying with Arlie Hochschild. She and Teresa Cordova, and Margarita Decierdo was studying with Harry Edwards and also with Arlie. So there was lots of interesting cross-currents among this group of women who began to meet. Interestingly, this project I had called the graduate minorities women, was a project that the chancellor Ira Michael Heyman had funded for us was part of the Graduate Assembly. I think this was right before I became chair of the graduate assembly, so chair of the graduate student body at Berkeley. I had this project under my belt, and we generated a lot of interest among different groups of graduate students, women of color were gathering, and these students, all of us, we were gathering in lots of different places, but the graduate assembly is one of the key places. And as we got together, we kept thinking that what we needed was a group that was devoted to the kind of work we were doing in Chicano studies but with a Chicana emphasis.

02-00:03:31

NACS then, the National Association of Chicano studies was that, N-A-C-S. It was not N-A-C-C-S like it is today, the National Association of Chicana *and* Chicano studies. And so part of what we did was instrumental I think in pushing that particular agenda on to the NACS executive board and to the groups that then began entertaining the idea that there was sexism and there were all sorts of hidden barriers as well to women's advancement in the academy.

As we organized at Berkeley, we began to also reach out, and we saw that UC Davis had a group of women who were similarly organizing, and it had been Ada Sosa-Riddell's long-term objective there to get a national or academic group of women together who were doing work in Chicana studies—we didn't call it Chicana studies then, we just called it women working on their topics. And so it was a very vibrant time in this 1979, 1980, '81. Over the years we got together, we formed a group, we formed an advisory board. We had bylaws, we had a charter, we asked for money, we requested money. So the Graduate Minorities & Women's Project at Berkeley was one of the places that helped fund MALCS to get together at Berkeley, write up these documents, and really talk about what we aim to do. So we decided two things: a working paper series, that was also Aida's long-term dream, and then a summer institute, we called it an institute. And that would be a whole set of weeks, two weeks on one of our campuses where we would reside, we would come in, we would do nothing but help each other in our writing, in scholarly production, and also talk about the issues that were confronting us and that we felt very deeply about. So we had a number of meetings and we would travel. We'd go to Davis, Davis would come to Berkeley. We also had women from Stanford participating and then some from UC Santa Cruz as well, and most of us were graduate students. The only faculty member was the faculty member in Chicano and Chicana studies at Berkeley and Ada Sosa-Riddell in Chicano and Chicana studies at Davis and so it was a very fruitful time.

And we were organizing as *Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social*, so MALCS was organizing to help not only change organizations and culture, institutional culture, but really to advance our interest as academics, as Chicana academics, and we were very much Chicana. We became more Chicana, Latina, and our original charter in MALCS actually addressed native women because we had at least two if not three women who were Native American or were half Chicana and half Native American, and they felt too very strongly that we should have that in our original documents. So it is still one of the few Chicana Native American women's academic organizations in existence. It's now well over, what, thirty-seven years almost, more, probably reaching its fortieth year, and it continues to hold conferences, and we continue to show up. I think I was at the last one in Albuquerque. It is a conference now, and it is very much geared toward bringing in younger women into the academy or introducing younger women to role models, to people who might serve as their mentors and so on.

02-00:07:32

It also had a huge impact on NACS itself because we went in as a group, and at that meeting in Tempe, the room was packed, just packed. And so my parents were there, they decided to drive from New Mexico to Tempe, and I invited them, and they took a hotel room, and they and my sister were there to hear this first panel where we laid out a series of complaints against the male professors, the male faculty and NACS itself who were very good about taking in the criticism and listening. And people were hugging the walls, listening very intently, and thinking, oh my God, there's something new here. And it was tough feminist talk too, so that was the other thing that I think was probably pretty new in an organized way, not in a personal, individualized way but in an organized way. And so the men had the joke, a joke going that these are women marching, and they said "y hombres corriendo," so men running. So the women are marching, and the men are running. [laughs] They had a nice, little joke going.

And we talked about all the difficulties. We talked about the sexism and how it had been addressed to us and all of these sort of things and basically sort of said, "We're watching and we're expecting more." And it was a hard conversation. It was one of these difficult conversations, this dialogue that was initiated, but I think it had an important impact and certainly helped the group of women who began to think of ourselves as a kind of collective, as a kind of collective spirit addressing real injustice and correcting that. And it spilled over into NACS and so then a plenary session at NACS to kind of burst the doors wide open. I gave a talk called "Malinche as Lesbian," and it was so funny [laughs] because in mixed audiences sometimes, you kind of forget who all can be there, and NACS has been really impressive in bringing community members and senior citizens in particular to its conferences. And so I remember getting on the elevator and I was in the back at one of the exits, and these two elderly women, probably my age or the age I am now, get on [laughs] and one of them says, "I didn't know Malinche was a lesbian, did you know that?" And the other one says, "No, I didn't, but you know, I don't think she gave any proof of that." [laughs] And so they got off, and I thought, oh my God, it's like I missed the boat, I missed it. And people were laughing and roaring about it later, and of course we were having a good time just thinking through what it meant to say that someone was kind of an outsider—had an insider-outsider's perspective but was marginalized and certainly in contemporary Mexico not to be discussed in any way, shape, or form. She's the traitor.

02-00:11:02

So those were important moments. I think they had long-lasting impact and effect, and frankly when we were going through them, it isn't as if we sat there and said, "How can we get the guys' goats, can we get them really animated and agitated? And we're going to tell on them, we're going to say all of the things that they've done, all this horrible thing." We didn't think of that at all. What we thought about was, we have a message and if we stick to that

message and we talk about it in a personal way and we integrate it into what we're trying to create here, we think we'll get the message to the right people. And it clearly did resonate and continues to because there's so many young women. And I think that MALCS has thought about renaming or talking or describing itself as a Latino and Latina organization as well, so there's a lot of thought going on about that. And then within it, there are various caucuses that have formed, so there was a lot of anxiety in NACS about having a lesbian caucus and certainly having a *joto* or gay men's caucus.

Caucuses in NACS have to be sponsored by a group, so the women's caucus, the Chicana caucus had to sponsor the lesbian caucus, and that in and of itself too created all kinds of concerns, why can't we just have a caucus if we say we are? And there probably will be a transgender caucus in NACS in the not too distant future and many more. I think that once you open those doors, sexuality is kind of the new—not frontier but it's the new—it's the next thing that I think will be coming to and through Chicano and Chicana studies in terms of contributing even to the kind of work that we can do, so—

02-00:13:11

Holmes:

Yeah, well, and to get to your point too is that you're talking of long-lasting effects. I mean MALCS still has a journal that's being published.

02-00:13:18

González:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

02-00:13:20

Holmes:

That's very impressive, particularly when we think in this larger profession. We have the stable organizations, but there's many groups and organizations that come and go.

02-00:13:31

González:

That's true, and the journal, I mean the *Chicana/Latina Studies* journal has an editorial board, it's peer-reviewed. And I think, I forget what the numbers are, they usually report them. At MALCS, they'll report out how many people have received tenure, and one of the publications that many of those people have listed for tenure is the journal and its reputation so yeah, and it looks nice. It's a nice-looking journal. If you saw our early working papers, literally we stapled and we mimeographed or Xeroxed practically the paper thing. I think it was mimeographed—Ada Sosa-Riddell in her archives probably has all of those originals—and then we'd staple. It was literally almost like construction paper and some sort of image that someone had created and we just copied it on to the thing. So that's a long way, yeah, to have come.

02-00:14:31

Holmes:

Well, and it should be remembered too that groups survive in this business through attendance and participation. And so that it's still going strong almost forty years says a lot.

02-00:14:41

González: Yeah, yeah.

02-00:14:42

Holmes: Well, Deena, I want to transition here to post-graduate school—

02-00:14:48

González: Postgraduate. [laughs]

02-00:14:48

Holmes: —and as you were discussing a little bit of your first job at Pomona, which as you were saying, you thought was only going to be maybe a short time. It ended up being about eighteen years. Now, you started as an instructor in 1983.

02-00:15:04

González: I was instructor because I didn't have the dissertation, so it was all but dissertation, and hired as an instructor in a joint position, so history and Chicano/a Studies. They had been searching for this position for a long time, and according to the chair of history and also the then chair Ray Buriel of Chicano and Chicana studies, they couldn't find someone who they really felt bridged those two worlds or who they thought could do the job of kind of inviting students in and even training students in this field, and so. And because it's an elite, private, liberal arts institution, and at that time had 1300 students—I mean they have a few more now, but it's not like it's grown, it's not several thousand students—they were very happy to have faculty come in the door who could serve multiple purposes. And I thought because of my own liberal arts college kind of background and idea in New Mexico that this would be interesting, and coming from Berkeley, I have to say, I had doubts. I visited, they were very friendly, they spoke about how they would support me and give me a semester's sabbatical right up front and funding to help me finish the dissertation, and those were all things I needed. But more than that, I think they were really interested and intrigued by the possibilities of creating and having entirely new fields of study within the history department and also within Chicano and Chicana studies. There were four faculty in Chicano and Chicana studies, and I think the historians numbered maybe seven at the most in the department, so small and lots of advisees and lots of tutorial method.

Pomona at that time was not ranked in the category it is today, number five or six in liberal arts institutions or four and five some years like it is. It did not have the \$2.5 billion endowment that it has now, but it was close. I mean it was millions of dollars, multimillions of dollars of endowment of donors, of graduates who had made their way to the California superior court system who had just had very impressive careers and who, as students, just scored very high on standardized tests who had been to many private schools. And 60 to 70 percent of them at least in the years that I was there were paying full tuition. So in other words, their parents were well enough off—they had enough wealth that they could afford to send their student there. But when I

arrived, one of the first things that happened is we moved into the house, the rental home that Pomona provided. It was a typical suburban on Indian Hill Boulevard, so the main boulevard right near a park.

02-00:18:21

And within like, I don't know, a day certainly, the U-Haul truck pulled up, we got all our stuff in, there wasn't a whole lot of stuff. Within a day, the neighbors next door came over and knocked on the door, and they said, "We're the Lacey's from next door, we want to welcome you." "Oh, thank you you're—" "The college let us know that somebody would be moving in," and so they said, "and we're so happy you're here," and they said, "We made you a pie," so there was this gorgeous pie from one of their fruit trees," and they said, "and we're Democrats" [laughs] and so I thought, okay. "Glad you're here, here's the pie, and we're Democrats." And I looked at Emma [Pérez], and I remember thinking, okay, can you translate this? You're from Texas, you probably know this suburban stuff in a way that I don't. [laughs] And it was like July third, so we moved in July first or second, third—this was the third and then we saw all these people setting up all these chairs and so on. So the Lacey's left, we said, "We'd like to have you over for coffee or something and—" and I'm thinking, okay.

We look at the window, sleeping in the next day till whatever it was nine o'clock in the morning, and there are people with little lawn chairs everywhere, not on our lawn but on the front, in front of it, and it looks very active and animated. So we go out there, I go out there with my cup of coffee and so on, and I said, "What's going on?" "It's the Fourth of July parade, are you new in town, don't you know anything?" And down the street comes the mayor in a little convertible and the Claremont High School band—it's this little, ragtag parade thing, Americana, oh, and flags everywhere, and I'm thinking, oh my God. One of the contingents in the parade the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, and they have a little banner and they're marching, and they say, "US out of El Salvador." And so I tell Emma, "This looks kind of interesting, don't you think, this little town and they have this chapter? We should look into it." And so that the parade ends and everybody disappears and I think, okay, where in the world have I landed? What in the world am I doing?

And then we go to school, and the van arrives that next day, and I get there. It's parked in front of the building, and I'm there and having them pull the boxes into the office, settling into the office. And I get a phone call from a colleague who says, "I'm so-and-so and I just want to welcome you. I think I saw that you've arrived because I saw somebody who's kind of Chicana-looking with someone else who's not Chicana-looking, and I'm wondering, is that you and your friend?" I said, "You mean Emma," and I said, "Yes, yes, I think it is us. That is us." So I thought, okay, what is this about? And Ramón Gutiérrez had been at Pomona College, and he had sent me a note saying these are some of the people who'll be friends and friendly and get to know them

and so on. So I had some introduction, but it was a strange way to kind of immerse myself in this predominantly white institution. There were about, at that point in time, maybe 10 percent of the student body was Latino, not even 1 percent Native American, I think there were five, six Native American students, and African American might have been 2 percent, and those numbers grew over time. But in addition when I asked, "Okay, how many women of color faculty are there?" It was, "Well, there's you, and there's a Cuban American Montenegro in the Spanish department, and that's it." And I said, "Holy moly, this is going to require some work."

02-00:22:34

And so Ray Buriel was so good about first of all getting me situated and helping me to figure out and navigate the history department waters but then also thinking through what I needed to do to stay at Pomona. And that included, too, finding ways to recruit more Chicanos and Latinos and more faculty of color. So I took on and chaired for ten years the affirmative action committee, and we would report the numbers to the faculty. That was the job, stand up there and hand out a sheet of paper and you'd see all the zeroes. And then after a couple of years, you started to see one, two, one, one, two, and when I left, by the time I left, there were fifteen women of color hired there doing work in and about women of color, African American, Latino, Asian American, and I think they had one Native American. So it grew, it grew, and it was very important work, but it took a lot.

And I have to say there were quite a few allies. I was able to hire also in participating in the department searches, get some hiring done in our own department, in the history department and in Chicano and Latino Studies, so you saw people like Lourdes Arguelles take the MacArthur Chair in Gender and Women Studies, and she ended up at Pitzer with an appointment in Chicano and Chicana studies, the other MacArthur appointment at Pomona College was Dorinne Kondo in Anthropology. And Vicki Ruiz took a chaired position in the Claremont Graduate School. She was there I think in Claremont maybe four or five years, and she was in the chaired position jointly appointed to in Chicano and Chicana studies. And then we had just a whole number of other women of color really making their way and impressively, I think, changing the culture of those institutions because the Claremonts are all linked.

So, yeah, Pomona was interesting. It helped me finish a dissertation. It helped me develop. There is absolutely no doubt that a lot of the committees I sat on, the Ford Fellowship, the Ford Foundation fellowship that I got in 1987, all of those had to do with a name of the institution, that's what that was about. And so it opened doors. Everybody came through Claremont—writers, actors, thinkers, politicians. We had Hillary Clinton there. She was a good friend of Nancy Bekavac who was the president at Scripps. So Nancy when she got her invite to the White House, and the Clinton's presidency had Hilary Clinton come to Claremont. I mean the list just went on and on, very privileged, and

also I think a lot of work that—at the Claremont Colleges for me, that really, really assisted my own development in Chicano and Chicana studies, I would say had to do with the fact that there was a very strong black African American presence at Claremont. And it was marginalized to be sure, but there were people who were doing the work, and it was a coherent, cohesive group of people, and that helped me enormously. So it wasn't just Chicano and eventually Latino studies. The Asian American studies formed there later than African American and Chicano studies, but it too was very important, ten, fifteen faculty in the Claremont Colleges as well as a very large Asian American student population now. I don't know if it's at 30 percent, but the numbers are high.

02-00:26:47

Holmes:

Discuss this a bit: the Claremont system is unique in the sense where, first of all, there's not many liberal arts colleges in California, right?

02-00:26:56

González:

Right.

02-00:26:56

Holmes:

A lot of people don't realize that. And then this is home base for where they're at, right?

02-00:27:01

González:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

02-00:27:03

Holmes:

And how many again is there?

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González:

There's six. There were five when I was there because the Keck campus, and I don't know if it's still going, was just an idea. That was an idea of a new science-based college. So Harvey Mudd, Claremont McKenna College, Scripps College, the Claremont Graduate school, and Pomona College, and Pitzer College. So there are six if you count the graduate school and then the seventh would've been Keck.

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Holmes:

And these are all interconnected because you chaired I think for three years intercollegiate department of Chicana and Chicanos Studies.

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González:

Correct.

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Holmes:

So is that that the faculty say from that department would meet together across campuses?

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González:

Correct. So it was intercollegiate because you could not get tenure in that department; you had to be housed in another department in a college. So I was in history at Pomona College. But we all had joint appointments as they were called, and we gathered, and sometimes we're six and seven. At one point, we had three chaired positions that all were part of Chicano and Chicana studies as well. So Lourdes Arguelles, Vicki Ruiz, and also Harry Pachon held the Keenan Chair in political science at Pitzer College. And so it was really exciting and interesting. There was this real effort to kind of elevate the work, the scholarship, and the understandings. And the students took to it really, really well in the sense that they were curious and they felt that they were getting the very best exposure to something that they needed to know when they went out in the world, and I think that that's again what money can buy. You can create entire fields and you can create communities, discourse communities that are highly functional and very attentive and important.

02-00:29:06

Holmes:

So you would say the reception of Chicana and Chicano studies among faculty and students was warm?

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González:

I think it was warm, and I think sometimes they didn't quite know what we were doing or if we got upset or issued some sort of statement, sometimes there was not a sense of why is that. But I think that people learned that we were taking—and of course in that era in the eighties and even into the nineties, there was no discussion of first generation. You said first gen, people would think, um, what they're first-generation anthropologists [laughs] or the first-gen something? Not at all associate to—in the way that it is now.

The other thing at Pomona College is that it was need-blind like, well, many liberal arts private institutions are but if someone got in, they were in. They would be subsidized as much as was needed. So Pomona still I think has that, that policy, and what it meant is that very, very poor students, students of no means whatsoever, even students who had been homeless at some point are in there studying with students who come from Phillips Exeter, who come from all of the private schools across California and so on. And so there's a real effort to recognize that this is an important part of liberal arts education. It wasn't easy; I mean building that kind of growth took a lot. Even in the eighties certainly, there was a lot of sexism and misogyny I would say. There was also a lot of misplaced misunderstanding from a generation of faculty, older faculty who got the job there at Claremont by virtue of who they were, who their families were, or because they met someone at a conference, a president who said, "I have a job in political science, you want to take it? Here" and so they would describe getting the job to me. And here I was being put through rigorous interview process and all kinds of things—there was a whole different generational approach to things.

02-00:31:32

Holmes:

Well, your time at Pomona is also a time where we see a field that you were just getting introduced to at Berkeley really come into maturation particularly by the 1990s. Reflecting on the works of the early generation as you really began to get to know them in your studies, what really struck you about these works?

02-00:31:55

González:

Well, there were interesting things, especially, what was missing. The deficiencies of course was one thing, and that's critique, that's criticism. It's what we're trained to do in graduate school. You go to what's not there, and you talk about what's not there. And so with a lot of the case studies, as I would call them, whether Al Camarillo's book or some of Mario García's books at that point in time, the El Paso book in particular from Mario, I would say that women were markedly absent, but more than that, there wasn't a perspective that was a kind of feminist or through a woman's lens, through a lens of gender and even of sexuality. So there was a kind of dry political or social history being narrated in that early work with a lot of attention paid to discovery. That is recovery of what was in the archives and the way I felt I was doing in my work and then discovery of these communities, lost communities and visible communities being presented to the profession of history, and that takes a lot of energy. It's hard to be imaginative and creative when you're spending all your time kind of proving your existence or proving worthy of even being in the space and taking up space.

So I don't know that there was a defensive tone in a lot of that early work, but I do know that when Gloria Anzaldúa produced *Borderlands* and Vicki Ruiz produced *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives*, so there in the late 1980s as those books emerged, I began to see a kind of shift in how people began thinking of Chicano and Chicana studies or history even, and there was a kind of hunger for more. And again remember in those days, we could've filled just one bookshelf. One bookshelf would've have constituted Chicano and Chicana studies, and in the Chicana field, Martha Cotera's book, a volume, Irene Blea's book, a little volume, Magdalena Mora and Adelaida de Castillo had put together a reader at UCLA and then Vicki and Gloria's books, and that was it. That was the whole field. Today, if you sit there, you've easily got fifty to sixty works all exploring lots of different possibilities and journals and encyclopedias and all kinds of other things, collected works. I think it was a very important time that Chicano studies laid the groundwork and then from it emerged all of this kind of interest because people did see. You have half—more than half—the population at any given community as female and you don't know anything about them, that seems like a major problem. And so it didn't take a lot of convincing to tell people this is why we're studying this.

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It also was riding the feminist wave and craze of really producing and even people breaking down barriers and moving through into publishing firms. It wasn't easy, but the publishing firms were beginning to get a clue that, gee,

this material sells, and it's needed in the classrooms, the classes want it, and I think probably that was the biggest sale. I mean imagine a book today in Chicano, Chicano studies if it's assigned in a field, in a Chicano, Chicana studies class at UCLA, and that's 500 or 600 students as is the case in a couple of those, that's 500, 600 sales. It's common in our academic work, our books, if they sell two to three thousand copies, you've broken even, you've done well. The press is happy and interested. Most don't sell more than that, and yet, here someone assigns that book three times in a row, you've got a best seller. So there is a need, there's a hunger, there's a market, and I think that that also helped shape the field because everyone wanted to begin writing and thinking in accessible terms.

02-00:36:41

Holmes:

Another facet of the field that also began to arise was the study of the borderlands.

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González:

Yes.

02-00:36:49

Holmes:

Which in some ways, we can argue, that's been there a really long time—

02-00:36:52

González:

A long time, yeah.

02-00:36:53

Holmes:

—we just shined a new light on it. And one of the things because I know that's something in some respects that your work plays with and focuses on, particularly bringing the discussion back to the nineteenth century. Because if we look at the field, it's very heavily twentieth-century focused.

02-00:37:15

González:

Very, mm-hmm.

02-00:37:16

Holmes:

And so discuss your perspective on that as that was evolving during this time as well.

02-00:37:22

González:

It's interesting because a lot of the borderlands historians trained in the 1940s and '50s who had such a huge impact, there were several hundred of them that Herbert Eugene Bolton alone trained as MA students and some as PhD students as well. They produced a volume of work that I would say also aimed at kind of the recovery of this notion, and that was his big point. His energy was devoted to emphasizing to the country at large what you don't know about the Southwest or about the Spanish borderlands is to your detriment. This is an important area of the country, and the northeast was not terribly interested. It was kind of the western empire and what was out there was just kind of empty. And I think that Bolton did a huge service that way in bringing—especially bringing forward what was happening with—in Mexican history

and in Latin and Latino history as well. So the developing fields there, the Latin American history piece and this other piece were critical to I think everything that we were thinking and talking about in that era at least as central to US history.

02-00:38:55

He had an argument; he had a kind of idea. I think where we took it in Chicano and Chicana history was to refocus again this emphasis on the borderlands but from a perspective that said things do not move east to west, things move south to north. And the borderlands is the great meeting place of these cultures that came into conflict, these ways of looking at the world. One is Mediterranean Spanish, Catholic if you will and native, and the other is Anglo Protestant and English in large measure. And so understanding the United States, and that's what was helpful about having people like Patty Limerick and Richard White who trained themselves as well in Chicano and Chicana history—I mean that is they read it. They read this, and they themselves are not Latin Americanists, and they don't know Latin American history necessarily, but what they learned through Chicano and Chicana history was Mexican history is important to this part of the country and to Chicano history as well. And the Europeans began to jump in on this. European attention in Chicano and Chicana studies was growing in the late eighties, early nineties, and certainly by the turn of the century. These whole conferences dedicated in Germany and in Spain to Chicano and Chicana studies is pretty magnificent because they wanted to know what ethnicity and race look like and what this meeting ground, this multilingual, very diverse region of the United States means about the United States. And so they were interested in it from all kinds of angles. And once the Europeans got it, I think a lot of the northeasterners in the US too said, "Oh, wait a minute, we're missing something. What do they—I don't know what they're talking about." And that helped form, I think, and push a lot of the work that we were doing frankly.

Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* was not used in Chicano and Chicana studies. It was used in feminist studies, but Chicano and Chicana studies came very late to that—maybe in the nineties a few classes were women taking Chicana studies or Latina feminist traditions or Latina Studies like the class that I taught at Pomona. Those were places where people were introduced to Anzaldúa's very complicated way of looking at the world. But most of the men that if you look even now, men who teach a Chicano and Chicana studies class very rarely assign Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* because I don't think they know how to teach it frankly—it is complicated. But Gloria's book that's been translated into all of these languages, Chinese, it's in Turkish, it's in Russian, it's in one of the Malaysian languages, it's in, of course, French, Spanish, German, it's Danish. It appears in all those languages, why? So I think that helped enormously.

02-00:42:26

Holmes: Well, speaking of the turn of the century, in 2001, you left Pomona—

02-00:42:33

González: I did

02-00:42:33

Holmes: —and joined the Chicano and Chicana studies department at Loyola Marymount University. And you're not only hired as a full professor but also chair of the department.

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González: Yeah.

02-00:42:43

Holmes: Discuss how this opportunity arose and what really inspired you to finally leave Pomona for something new?

02-00:42:51

González: It was a hard decision. I thought I would live out my life at Pomona College. I certainly enjoyed the students; I enjoyed my colleagues. I can't say enough about some of the people who were hired, in even as I was leaving, a number of new faculty new energy, young scholars—Rita Alcala at Scripps and Miguel Tinker Salas came in as the Latin Americanist at Pomona itself. There were a lot of people, and I was very tied to them. I was very close and felt like I was doing good work. But what I didn't like was that I was kind of two people there. I was the person who did the Chicano and Chicana studies thing and the person who did the history thing, and it always felt like I had two full-time jobs. And I thought, wouldn't it be great to be in one department where I do one job, and that is I attend to that department, I attend to Chicano and Chicana studies. And I was convinced that given the numbers at Loyola Marymount of Latino and Latina students that that role would be extremely important and helpful. I was also with somebody who was teaching at UCLA and so the commuting was getting to be really wearing from Claremont, forty miles out to UCLA, so it made a lot of sense to be in one place. I also like the west side of Los Angeles. I thought, if I have any opportunity, this is going to be the only one to do this.

The Catholic Jesuit Mission at Loyola Marymount is something that I was very drawn to right from the outset, but I have to say I also probably didn't know very much about it other than from the outside. And so Kenyon Chan, the dean of Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts hired me, and Kenyon Chan was really very good about explaining to me, "You find some things here that are probably going to be better, but you'll find other things that need work and that are not." Loyola Marymount didn't have the wealth that Pomona did. It had great applications, it educated students from a variety of classes and groups and histories, had a great track record, but it too was at the phase where it was growing. It had just acquired the new part of the campus, the Howard Hughes one-million-square-foot building, the former headquarters of

the Howard Hughes Corporation. And so that meant that it wanted to grow, but it also meant that they didn't quite sometimes know how to do that. And so again, I was faced with this lack of faculty of color, a student body that was in demography really changing and growing, and what to do. And so, as chair of the department the council of chairs in the Bellemont College of Liberal Arts was extremely important and helpful to the dean and did a lot of work and filtered through a lot. I was able to do some really wonderful work there I think and to get things organized and at the same time not lose track of running a department and hiring. And we hired in and grew, so we went from four people to six, and we were able to get not only the hiring done but a new curriculum plan going. There was an effort to draft two new big things: One was the new core curriculum and another was a faculty handbook process that revised the whole tenure procedures.

02-00:46:30

The other thing at Loyola Marymount that I felt unlike at Pomona College because at Pomona College, I have to say, I burned a lot of bridges in the work that I did. I built a lot of alliances but this also came at a price, and there were people who were really pretty weary and pretty tired. They would say things to the chair of Chicano studies like, "Can't you muzzle her?" and, yeah, there were some hard and rough things said. So I stepping into Loyola Marymount felt like it was a new opportunity. It was a place to grow, and it was a place too that I thought honored or would respect my leadership abilities in a way that Pomona never would. And so one of the things that happened after chairing—and I chaired the department for eight years—I served as program director and led the American Cultures program there and really found myself intrigued by how people were motivated to change departments and really think about how they were doing the kind of work that would suit a changing demography student body. And so that was the other thing.

And so as chair of the Chicano and Chicana studies department, it was interesting because the other chairs of all of the other major departments English, philosophy, sociology, political science began to look at me as kind of the leader of the chairs group and one who could work with the dean and then the deans began to kind of tap me and say, "Could you do this and do that?" And so I felt like, oh, you know, I kind of am liking doing this work, and I'm learning a lot, and there was a lot of support. So when the opportunity came to be a fellow at the Center for Teaching Excellence and take on some projects, vice president of intercultural affairs what is the equivalent of their chief diversity officer came to me and said, "You know you have some real leadership abilities, we've seen that, and so I've convinced the provost to send you to the ACE program." So the American Council and Education, ACE, has an executive leadership training program and so I was sent to that in 2010–11. By then, I had been a decade at Loyola Marymount. And that too was just very inspiring because it meant that I was able to see the impact that executive

leadership and administrative leadership could have in an institution. And I hadn't seen that before as a chair doing the work, teaching classes.

02-00:49:35

We formulated our new curriculum in Chicano and Chicana studies, so we had—when our students graduated, it was so amazing. 65 percent of them got placed in top-rank research universities for graduate school and/or went to law school or medical school. And then another 30 percent were employed immediately because they had done a senior thesis and they used that as their passport, you know. I saw the value of that, of being on the ground and at the same time thinking, okay, these are blueprints that can work for anyone everywhere. And so we began implementing some real changes both in the college of liberal arts but more university-wide. And this opportunity then that LMU provided meant that when I came back, the hope in a leadership training program is you'll come back and occupy a different position and so I was ready then to give up the chair-ship. I thought that was good training, there was someone available who is willing to step in, so the department wouldn't be left high and dry. And I was invited to serve as the—let's see—director of faculty development and so I did that in 2011-12. At the end of 2012, the new provost reorganized the provost office and offered me the position of associate provost for faculty development, so I just folded in everything I was doing. And again these were very important moments in terms of making decisions about where am I going next. I have to say I wasn't entirely comfortable in moving from a faculty position with everything that that implies into a full-time administrative position. I really had to think that one through. The training program was remarkably helpful in that.

02-00:51:46

Holmes:

What helped you make that decision? Because that was one of my questions when thinking about this and having you discuss this—you were already a full professor. There was a lot more comfy ways, as we well know, to spend out the rest of your years before you wanted to retire.

02-00:52:06

González:

[laughs] Yeah.

02-00:52:08

Holmes:

And you were explaining a little bit of what was driving you, but what really helped you make that decision?

02-00:52:11

González:

And part of it too, one of the things that had been holding me back up until that point was this notion of, oh well, things will come to me, it will happen. Just like the job at LMU kind of came to me and I'll just kind of—and someone taking me aside and saying, "No, not in administrative work, it doesn't happen that way. You need a strategy, and you need a plan." I thought, okay, I've been there before, strategies and plans, so I guess I'd better give this some attention. I also felt like I still had some projects in me, I had some

books that I wanted to write, I still have those. I'm working very hard on a much longer-term project on these seventy-nine women's wills that are now transcribed, translated, and the only thing missing is my narration of the sections in between to make it a big comprehensive, enormous book. I don't know who's going to publish it; I'll probably have to do it online in some format because it'll be a thousand pages. But it is the first sort of set of primary documents in their own words from these women again from New Mexico and testimonies. So there were lots of things like that that I have and that I figured that I'll get to at some point if I have a sabbatical or if I have time in retirement to kind of just sit there. So the scholarly part, I was a little bit less worried about than I was the teaching part and reaching the students.

But I also have to say—like many faculty say by years twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight—"You know, I'm just tired of grading, that's the one thing. If I could teach and not grade, I'd be very happy." Or "If I could teach and not be directed by so many mandates about the students, mandate to do this, department mandate to do that, assessment accreditation, all that burden that takes away from the teaching, I'd be very happy." And so I was beginning to feel a little bit of that, the intrusion into the classroom space and the sense of, you know, this is really getting to be more difficult than I remember it, and that forced me to really think about a kind of career move or career change. I also thought, well because I'm tired of this, there must be a lot of other people who are, so could we do something—could I make it a little bit different, could it be less onerous and less dictatorial in kind of its planning? And, of course, becoming an administrator it's like, uh, no, what we're trying to do is just keep everything, keep what we have and not make it more difficult. And sometimes the intrusions of the federal government and of the states and so on can be pretty difficult.

02-00:55:08

So as an administrator, I thought, um, I get together with the provost of the Jesuit Colleges and Universities, the AJCU network; I get together with the independent counsels of the state of Washington, this whole other network; I get together with the Ford Foundation fellows. Those are kind of my three big—and of course the American Council on Education fellows and all of the people who have gone through that program. So those are the big areas where I get direction and learn and kind of keep myself upright. The one thing everyone says in those networks is, "Why did we take this position? Why are we doing this? Really?" [laughs] And I understand that in COVID-19 we are particularly taxed and so I didn't think were in vision even that my time in moving from a professor position to an administrative, fully administrative position was going to require the fortitude that being a provost does. It just is—you can't explain it, you kind of want someone. I keep telling our faculty and even the students at Gonzaga, "You come and shadow me, just pick, all days are the same, it doesn't matter. You pick the day, it doesn't matter, they'll all be the same. Shadow me, and I think at the end of the day, you'll say, 'Oh

my God.' Sign a confidentiality agreement, you cannot talk to anyone about anything you see and half of what you see cannot be repeated ever."

02-00:56:54

So half my day is kind of occupied that way and so some people say, my friends, my colleagues, the ones in Chicano and Chicana studies say, "Why are you doing it? What in the world possessed you?" Again a big part of it is that when you're in the room and a decision has to be made, a call has to be made and you know that it can help underrepresented minority students or faculty or the staff, or you know that it helps women and you make that call, I think you feel good, you feel rewarded. I feel like I made a difference or I pitch in my perspective, and it kind of changes the discourse. That's another place. I think it's also important to have faculty that is senior faculty, full professors in the room when decisions are being made, somebody who's been there and that's so rare in most administrative leadership teams. It's more often the case that the people in the room are trained professionals who have gotten there by just being very competent administrators so yeah. [laughter]

02-00:58:06

Holmes:

Well, thank you for doing it, somebody has to do it.

02-00:58:07

González:

Yes. [laughs] exactly, I hear that every day, and "I wouldn't want to have your job" is the way a lot of our meetings end.

02-00:58:16

Holmes:

Well, I want to transition a little bit here to scholarship. I want to actually talk about a piece, which you mentioned as it first came as a talk, "Malinche as Lesbian." And you published this in 1991 in the *California Sociologist*, a special edition on culture and conflict in the academy as well as updated it I think later on for a collection in 2005. Discuss the genesis of this article.

02-00:58:47

González:

Yeah. It came directly from my teaching, so thanks to the students at Pomona College who hung in there all those years and also those later at LMU. As I looked at Malinche's role, I guess that I found myself one day as I read about who she was and read people like Miguel Leon Portilla and others who were interjecting into history the narrative a kind of Native American perspective or the indigenous perspective in as much as we can know that and or do that. And one of the things that kept striking me is no one has seen the conquest or describing the conquest or narrating the conquest of Mexico by the Spanish through the eyes of the person who was there. There's been a lot written about Cortés and his son and various others have tried to rectify his reputation, and certainly in Spain, there's a lot about him. There's a lot even written about Cuauhtémoc who is at the helm of the Aztec empire when it is conquered. No one seemed to want to talk about Malinche's role and hear these things. Octavio Paz and others took her on, and they configure her as this traitor who falls in with the Spanish. And they talk about her as a young girl when

actually, she was a young adult. In that day and age when average life span was thirty-five years of age, at twelve and fourteen, she's a young woman, she's ready for marriage, she would've been married. An incredibly obviously intelligent young woman, ambitious—she already knows Náhuatl, the language of the Náhua people, and she speaks a Mayan dialect, and she learned Spanish in six weeks as the Spaniards attest. I mean how is this possible? Who does that except maybe a diplomat, a foreign service linguist, I mean all kinds of things.

02-01:01:14

And so in my mind as I was tracing out the trajectory and reading the native or indigenous codices, interpretations and the reframing and the reexamination of those ancient texts, they describe her as positioned between Moctezuma and Cortés in those meetings. And so again my thinking is a woman is at the center of this, and one of the texts describes that Cortés is speaking, and she's already translating to Moctezuma as he's speaking. And she does the same when Moctezuma speaks, she's already translating to Cortés. So what does that mean? Is it accurate, was it right? But nonetheless, she's at the center of it. No one captured that anywhere in sight. A few Chicanas had begun to describe her. Adelaida del Castillo had written a very important article that I think was part of her senior thesis as an undergraduate, and her article about Malinche really caused me to think, you know, this is an impressive moment in history. I really worked on the idea because the most kind of reviled, exiled, marginalized, peripheral women throughout history tend to be lesbians or women whose sexuality is questionable. I thought, well, to me—she is a lesbian. She's like somebody who's ostracized and constantly made into the other and is viewed and defined in her traitor role, not in her capacities, her talents, her skills. And so that's how that all came into being.

As I talked about it more in class and students would ask questions like, "Can we really trust those sources, and how do we really know?" and so on. And then the texts describe her as being married off, that Cortés after she becomes his lover, after they become whatever, lovers and they have two children together, he casts her off to his lieutenant or whatever. I don't think so. I think this is a woman who had a lot of choice and optionality and options, and she came back to the court and petitioned to have her children declared Spanish, declared upper caste or class, and they were. They were certified as Spanish descendants, as criollos, and then she came back to get the inheritance for one of them, for one of the children, for the son. Again, this is a woman I think who is looking out bridging these centuries through conquest. Yeah, she was just central to history, so I figured okay, why not make her a lesbian, make her rhetorical in that way, a rhetorical question and think through the implications of those who are marginalized. What did they mean for history?

02-01:04:41
Holmes:

Well, it was really well done.

- 02-01:04:42
González: Thank you.
- 02-01:04:43
Holmes: Then you also in 2005 coedited the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Latinos and Latinas in the United States*. This is a huge project—
- 02-01:04:42
González: Yes, it was.
- 02-01:04:55
Holmes: And I want to mention, so you coedited this with Suzanne—
- 02-01:04:59
González: Suzanne Oboler, yeah.
- 02-01:05:02
Holmes: How did this opportunity arise?
- 02-01:05:04
González: Oh my God, I have Arturo Madrid to blame, so let's thank Dr. Madrid, now a Trinity former president at The Tomas Rivera Center. So Arturo had signed on with Suzanne Oboler to edit. They had been approached or they had approached Oxford—I can't remember quite how that worked. But the idea was we have no major encyclopedia work that gathers all of these things together, and there were many things going on at the same time. I mean there were lots of recovery projects. Nick Kanellos had the recovery project out of University of Houston that's still going and is recovering texts and especially in literature. And we knew about all that. And then Arturo decided to accept the position at Trinity University as Murchison Professor of Humanities there and to kind of move toward retirement, out of The Tomas Rivera Center into retirement. He was just beginning sort of his years there, and he said, "You know the field has grown, it's gotten so complicated, I think this needs somebody much younger." On or about 2000 I think it was, maybe 2001 as I was moving to Loyola Marymount, and I explained to them, "I'm moving here, but I have this enormous project, and will that be okay? I'm going to need some time," and they were fine. They said, "We'll help you with some assistance, we'll find a research grant, and try to help you that way as you chair and do all these other things." So when Suzanne and I had the conversation, she was trying to find a volunteer on the advisory board, and I was on the advisory board with Norma Cantu, Devon Peña and—oh gosh, who else was on it—Silvio Torres from Syracuse and—who I'm missing—Nena Torres from UI, Chicago where Suzanne was then, Frances Aparicio who ended up going to Northwestern or Northeastern, which is the other one in Chicago? Was that Northwestern? Northwestern I think.
- 02-01:07:07
Holmes: That's Northwestern, yes.

02-01:07:09
González:

So she ended up leaving UIC and going to Northwestern. And so there were lots of different—Pedro Caban was another person—folks on the committee, on the group and then Suzanne really began asking, "Who could really do this?" We were anticipating a million words. We were anticipating well over 500 entries. We knew it would be at least three volumes but we probably thought four as we developed the list. And I was hesitant, I was kind of like, okay, I don't know Suzanne Oboler very well at all. I mean, I'm just meeting her here for the first time. I've been invited to this project, I'm taking a new job, is this what I want to do? And I just finally ended up making the call and saying yes because I felt badly that in this room of Latino and Latina scholars, the Chicana and Chicano voice could very well be subsidized or subsidizing in the context of those conversations. With Devon Peña, with Norma Cantu, with myself there, I thought there's a strong chance and likelihood that won't happen, but I have seen Latino and Latina scholars take over and kind of monopolize at the expense of Chicano and Chicana studies, and I didn't want that to happen.

02-01:08:45

And boy, whatever money we made from that, which wasn't that much, we more than earned it because we had some really, really difficult conversations. We did a lot of work to build consensus about what would finally determine even the distribution of the content and along what lines. So we ended up with this kind of, oh, 68 percent if that's the Mexican percentage and the 10 percent Cuban or the whatever. We ended up even in that territory of just trying to figure out what was truly representative. And in the end, the reason we came up with those big essays on census or demography, on sexuality, on the big, big topics is that we couldn't find people to write necessarily about Central American sexuality in the United States for example, but we could find someone to write sexuality and talk about all of the different groups. So that give and take, that process. And really to her credit, Suzanne Oboler just followed through every step of the way at times when the project was ready to just die, to just disintegrate because we had people who didn't turn in the work or the advisory group fell off the stage. People had surgeries, they lost their parents, they themselves got ill, I mean there were just a whole range of things, and still we just kept on it, and by 2004, had a full draft—I think late 2003, a full draft.

02-01:10:48

And all of 2004 was devoted to just running, working through the draft. We went through three or four different editors at Oxford. They changed all the time, the project moved from this one that to that one, and we had massive lists and spreadsheets and Google Docs by then luckily and Dropbox to some extent. But we didn't have the kind of Microsoft Teams or SharePoint or things like that that we have today to really manage these big, huge bundles of information and so we made it work. It was an interesting project, and for me, just being aware and in touch with what was happening in Latino and Latina Studies generally in the country I think was a very good thing.

02-01:11:36

Holmes: Tell me a little bit about the selection process and just the whole process of this because—

02-01:11:42

González: [laughs] And so—

02-01:12:00

Holmes: You're working with an advisory council to come up with topics, right—but then there's essays that you wrote, there's essays that you had outside writers. Just give us kind of a bird's-eye view of the process of putting this together as a coeditor.

02-01:12:00

González: One of the things was to sit there and listen to the board as the board kind of pieced together basically the buckets. It was like a strategic planning process; everything was thrown in. We had a list of over 2000 topics I think at one point and broken down by according to what was important. For example, we had a probably half-hour debate on the notion of having the word and an article on acequias, on ditches. And Devon argued strenuously, "In the anthropological world, in the environmental studies world, in every world, these are important markers of our existence over time in the borderlands in the Southwest, and this is why they're so important." I think one of the encyclopedias opens with acequias and someone else might say, "What in the world is that in? and I don't know some other, "Jennifer Lopez isn't on the cover or the front." Big, heated debates and discussions, and all of us finally landing on these concepts of big, major themes. That took a lot—how do we discern which ones are the five or six guiding themes? It would've been easier to say, okay, culture, politics, the arts, and we did that at first, that was the guiding. But then as we got deeper into things, we said, "Yeah, but what about politics, and we're not really part of the national political landscape yet, voting and demography, all of these things. So how can we begin discerning what is important and what is less important?" And it was a long process.

We actually also had two outside people at least who came in and looked at our list and said, "Okay, this is what we're concerned about that we're seeing as not present or this is overly represented. So, of course, what was overly represented was color and identity and those kind of things, and I dug my feet and then said, "No, those are important. I agree, we need to add more on the arts, we need to add more even on political presence, and so on, but we're not doing that at the expense of these other important topics." We also didn't know how to balance out the history part. You'll notice that we went back—The Laws of Burgos are in there, so this fourteenth-century code and the caste, the racial caste classifications, but we said, "These are important for anyone wanting to understand why are Latinos and Latinas so 'hung up' on identity or identity practices?" Well, because they've been present in our lives forever, and they direct what we do, how we respond to the courts, to the legal system, how we respond to, I don't know, sociological events or social events.

So we wanted people to have that kind of understanding and, at the same time, wanted the thing to be very accessible to a pretty wide audience from high school students. We invented a fictional librarian in Nebraska, and this poor librarian in Nebraska was our [laughs] point person on anything. And any single time we'd get into this kind of very deep, very treacherous theoretical level of an essay, say, "How would the librarian in Nebraska react to this?" And we'd say, "Okay, that makes our decision."

02-01:15:52

We enlisted Suzanne's reach because she was editing the journal of *Latino Studies*, Latino and Latina studies journal was wide, so she knew who to call on. She was editor of that journal as she was doing this project and so we did that. We relied on all of these networks to really pull in experts and expertise, and we'd ask people if they couldn't do it, could they refer. And I went after the Chicano and Chicana lists in particular. I said, "You have to do this if you don't want this to become an encyclopedia written by Latinos and Latinas only," and, oh my God, people would, "What do you mean, what are you talking about?" I say, "I can't say more. I just need you to be very, very proactive and helpful," and of course we didn't pay. They got—I don't know how much a word—five cents a word, twenty cents a word, I forget what it was. So most of those articles paid—some of them were fifty dollars, some of them were \$100, a few were \$500, and the big essays might have been \$1000, which of course is just nothing compared to what the work is, but they did it. They really did come through. So we have great colleagues, and when you read that list of contributors, you see the depth of the expertise. Yeah.

02-01:17:15

Holmes:

Well, in many respects, that encyclopedia project, in many ways, is such a gift to young graduate students, scholars searching for topics, right?

02-01:17:30

González:

Yes.

02-01:17:31

Holmes:

Or trying to get their head around topics, right? And in your next project, the *Oxford Encyclopedia on Latinos and Latinas in Contemporary Politics, Law, and Social Movements* largely also does the same. And in this it's not just the history because it's contemporary, right?

02-01:17:48

González:

Sure.

02-01:17:48

Holmes:

So the history is more put on the backburner of let's record today for the historians here a few decades down the road is the way I interpret it. But tell us a little bit how this project—you coedited that with Suzanne as well.

02-01:18:02
González:

Well, yeah. So Suzanne Oboler and I had not had enough of each other. I mean at various points I could tell you the truth, we had knockdown, drag-out arguments, big arguments about content and about just politics really. And in the end, when Oxford approached us and said, "We'd like the second set—" Oh, well here's the other thing that of course one ever talks about in academe, which is money or funding. The first encyclopedia made Oxford about \$1.5 million, so we're pretty rare. It has now sold over—I think we were close to 15,000, maybe 10,000 copies certainly, and because of the online we maybe even towards fifteen if we counted all the online purchases. That's a blockbuster seller because their encyclopedias might sell 800 copies if they're several hundred dollars in cost. So you have this enormous attention to this particular need and topic obviously, and they were aware of it. They were aware that they were pretty deficient in Latino studies, they hadn't published a whole lot, they needed to do more, and they really saw this as a way of contributing and of making an impact, and of course it had an impact. It had a very important profit margin as well and so that allowed the second volume, the second undertaking to really move forward in pulling together the things that we thought we hadn't covered enough or sufficiently in the first project but that also were becoming increasingly critical to the placement of Latinos and Latinas in the United States as a demographic. That was key to this undertaking.

02-01:20:03

And we tried to organize it in ways that were like the first project but found very quickly that we could not get in terms of the advisory board people who were willing to stick through for longer than a year. So we used the advisory board for a year and then in the second year it really just fell to Suzanne and to me, and Suzanne was very, very important at the end. My mother passed away in 2005 when the first encyclopedia was coming out and then her mother passed away as this one was underway. And we were both really operating under very strenuous, very difficult conditions and situations and so doing a more condensed version made a lot of sense. And then also because of the way we had done the first version, we had a lot more at our fingertips available to be able to translate it into this other work with the focus on the, as you're saying, the contemporary and for the future. A lot of work needs to be done, that is clear, and I think we sensed that in the work, in the second instance particularly around law, legal institutions, and politics. I think those are places and fields where Chicano and Chicana scholars and Latino and Latina scholars were beginning to have a real impact if they go into those fields. It's wide open.

02-01:21:39
Holmes:

Well, I want to transition to your next phase that you currently have in your career and that you touched on here a little bit ago of coming to Gonzaga. So in 2019 if I'm correct,—

02-01:21:50
González:

Right, right.

02-01:21:50
Holmes:

—you were selected as the provost and senior vice president of Gonzaga University. How did this opportunity arise, and what attracted you to the position there?

02-01:22:03
González:

It's interesting because when you finish these executive leadership programs like I did in 2011 and then serve—I was very comfortable. Loyola Marymount University, I really enjoyed the work with the provost there as associate provost to faculty affairs, working with the faculty, working with the deans. It was a role I knew very well and that I enjoyed working with chairs and mentoring them, working with individual faculty, had a great office. There was a lot of support staff. To my mind—that's what's having a functioning, working provost office signified and meant. Now that I'm provost, I don't know how to recreate that [laughs] and so I had thrown my name out into the ring a few times, and there were some wonderful opportunities in different types of institutions. I wasn't certain that I would get hired in the Jesuit network really. There's still some reluctance to hire I think gay and lesbian administrators in a Catholic environment. It's not impossible, it isn't that there aren't gay and lesbian presidents even or provosts, but there tends to be a kind of quiet practice about them. Some of it is not just the attachment to the Catholic church in some official capacity. Gonzaga is a part of the project or the work of the province, the Jesuit province meaning it is part of the Catholic—not so much the diocese but part of the Catholic outlined base and foundation that is the university. And so it can be a little tricky navigating and negotiating all of those things, but I wanted to try to see if there would be an opportunity and was pretty amazed. Because this president who served as president now, when I arrived, he was entering his tenth year, so after ten years and thirty years at Gonzaga. So he is a long term, has worked in many of the different areas. Started in student affairs, pretty much as a graduate student almost, went off to get his PhD, came back, worked interim academic vice president for a while, vice president of administrative services, I mean just a whole range of capacities everywhere, so he knows the university really well as anyone would after thirty years, but in his case I think from being inside all these offices.

02-01:25:13

So what I thought was that this was a really impressive and important decision on his part, but also for me, would help me assume these responsibilities in a way that helped me not only to move pretty quickly and fast on the learning curve but also have an impact, make an impression. Because I do think of this kind of as my last job, and I don't want to be a president, it's like that's not in the cards. I guess in accepting and thinking through the implications of this, I thought this opportunity is one where I finally feel like the match between the institution and its leadership and me and what I bring to the position seems

aligned in a way that it had not been the case in some of those other places where I had applied and where I was number two. I mean it seemed like people were really always like, "Oh, do we—don't we?" And I'd have these conversations with presidents and they'd say—or the search firm, and they'd say, "Oh, he's really torn, he doesn't know what to do, he needs another week, can you hang in there for another week?" and I would go, "Okay, okay, what can I do?"

02-01:26:43

In this case, I think in being a provost, I had seven months of a honeymoon. I had seven months of a kind of learning curve that was moving along and where I felt like I was beginning to not only have a little bit of a sense of the faculty and of the students but also of colleagues, other senior leaders in the university and then COVID hits. And so from March 15 to today, it is not at all what I had imagined. Parts of it, the work of the provost office obviously continues. So rank and tenure and this and that, all those continue as if we were still the same, but we're not, we're different. COVID-19—this pandemic has shaped and upended the academic universe in a way that we, at this moment, can't even begin to integrate just how much of a change we're seeing and we'll see. And so one of the things that I keep trying to tell myself, and Gonzaga offers a lot of opportunities for this, is within those parameters given now what seem to be pretty severe restrictions or constrictions of assignment and roles and responsibilities, what is it that I feel I can get done and would be helpful to the institution? And I think that comes from being in survival mode. I mean that is we're trying to save a university in this case, and we've called upon and pulled on all the strings we can to not lay people off, which we've not done, to not dip into and have people rescind or leave their retirement contributions, so we've kept those, we've sustained those. And at the same time, to support the work of the faculty and to keep the students on campus and keep them safe in a pandemic. And I think in all of those cases, we've done a good job, but I'm sure that for example if I go back after these couple of hours of meeting with you—and Microsoft analytics is very gleeful about this—they happily report to me every week what I've been doing and "You've answered 700 emails, you received 2140 emails. Of those however when you were in meetings, you were not responding to emails, which means 85 percent of the time, you are fully in your meeting." They lay all this out for you in this set of metrics, and you're like, oh my God, I wish I didn't know that because it makes me very tired when I think about that. "Generally speaking, you responded to emails within 4.2 hours" or whatever it is.

02-01:29:49

I think we can do a lot but I think the goal now for me is really how do we sustain some of the work we were doing before COVID-19, keep things on track that when it is over, when there is a vaccine, and people begin to come back and our enrollments not only stabilize but increase, that we'll really have what I would think of as an opportunity for growth and for Gonzaga achieving a lot of the goals it has set up for itself, and there are some ambitious goals. I

mean the president laid out and had another ambitious plan like he did in his first ten years. He had an idea, and I think this is probably cutting into that and setting it back by at least a couple of years. But I figured that I know some of the players, I know the job, I think I know what some of the expectations are, probably I can continue to help the institution remain stable. I get upset that it's not what I wanted, it's unfair and all of those things, but I guess I also feel that in my thirty-seven years in this professoriate, I've seen a lot and I've also experienced setbacks and difficulties and challenges and so maybe I'm a little bit prepared for that in a way that can be helpful.

02-01:31:32

Holmes: Well, again, I'm glad you're doing it.

02-01:31:34

González: Yeah. [laughter]

02-01:31:36

Holmes: Well, it's unbelievable, and one of the things also I wanted to ask before I transition a little bit to ask a little bit more about your work. At Gonzaga, you were talking about goals and sets backs, but if we look at how far in those thirty-seven years things have come, when in some respects you're at UC Berkeley as a graduate student and saying there's only two women faculty in this right—

02-01:32:06

González: Yeah, at Pomona College, yeah.

02-01:32:07

Holmes: Yeah, or just the inequality across both scholars of color but also especially women of color.

02-01:32:16

González: Yeah.

02-01:32:16

Holmes: Then to have a woman of color as provost of one of the nation's top private universities—certainly one of the most popular basketball teams if we're going to honest, right?

02-01:32:26

González: [laughs] We're number one apparently this week. Kiss of death I'm sure the coach Mark Few is saying, "Oh, no, no, put us there," but, yeah, it's pretty stunning.

02-01:32:35

Holmes: Yeah. Discuss your observations on that, I mean in some ways you're talking about setbacks dealing with this COVID-19 but also in many respects, you've broken through a lot of ceilings.

02-01:32:48
González:

Yeah, yeah. I mean that's true, and I never think about. When I heard the whole glass ceiling that, well, with Hillary Clinton's nomination and then the campaign, but even before that, right, it had been discussed, I just—[sighs] I guess in the long run when you look at the *longue durée* I don't know what it is. If you think about historically, half of women over all of this age has been marching toward this, some sort of measure of equality, hope for a future that is more equitable and fair. I don't know. I mean I think so, I think so. I think that's what a lot of life has been about particularly for activists, you know. And there's been a lot of resilience needed in that work because setbacks come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. It can be a father who doesn't let his daughter go to school far away and so therefore she doesn't become a doctor because the local college or the place she has to go doesn't have the requisite science courses even though she's a stellar science student. Or it can be the person who married and had three, four children, right, and didn't plan out. I'm going to get a PhD, and that's going to be my ambition, that's what I'm going to do.

02-01:34:38

There are more options and choices today as you're saying, suggesting in the thirty-seven years than probably there were at any other time in history. I'm very aware of that kind of special moment that we're in, but I'm also aware of how long it's taken us to get here. And so what the future holds, rapid change, sudden equity, a woman president, a house of representatives or a Senate that is truly on parity or universities and colleges that reflect the demographics. I saw a statistic at the University of California—and this was back, what, twenty-five, maybe twenty-five years ago—that for the University of California to reach parity with its demography in the state, it would have to be 2065. I mean I'll be long gone, 2065. Anyone reading or seeing this interview in 2065, I hope so, but I'm not sure. I'm not sure because everything is in fits and starts, and I think that's one of the things that one reconciles probably with age. It isn't that you give up, it isn't that you have any less ambition or interest or investment. I really do, I still think I have enormous interest and investment. Otherwise I wouldn't have been at this wretched meeting I was in last evening where I felt like the mansplaining that was coming toward me was just utterly uncalled for. And I was back to being that grad student in the seminar room where I've just said something, and when the guy repeats it, the same exact point, the professor says, "I hadn't thought of it that way." And everyone turns and looks at you like, uh, did you catch that? I felt back in that space, so it doesn't stop. I think that the sexism, the misogyny, the fear, the hatred, those are things people have lived with for centuries and I think will continue.

02-01:36:52

Seventy million people voted for this person [President Donald Trump] that I think is just one of the most abominable human beings on the planet at this moment. I don't think I hate anyone. Boy if I did, I think that would be the person, and it just is that tearing and wrenching. And how in the world seventy million people could support this person and his ideas is beyond me,

but that is the reality. So if that's the case, and we know there are that many millions of people in the country holding those ideas, I think, yeah, 2065 we'll be lucky if we hit parity in California, and that will be the first place to do it we know. And I just keep thinking then that what is important about all of this work is to keep doing it, just keep doing it. My mother used to say, bless her, and she used to kind of cringe too when I'd say it back to her because she'd say, "Oh, no, what have I done?" But she'd say that she had eternity to sleep. When I'd say to her, "You're so tired, why don't you just rest, can't—sit, don't do it, don't do the dishes, don't do the this or the that, just sit down,"—that would be her response. And I think part of it is that she felt that the gaps were so huge and the work was so important that she was in a place to be able to do it and so she was going to. And I think that's part of it, that's part of what keeps me going.

02-01:38:39

The other piece besides kind of an internal compass and direction, I think it's really important that we have allies. We have a lot of allies in this project of Chicano and Chicana studies now in a way that we didn't, and one of them right now is my boss. Our president here took a risk, took a chance really because the Catholic church could be probably all over him on hiring. And because probably it's more comfortable for an institution, a predominately white institution like Gonzaga to continue with what is familiar and the voice they understand. So I think that opportunity has to be part of the strategy, and very few people are willing to take those sorts of risks. And I think that's the key is who is willing, what institution?

We're seeing more. At Pomona College, the president is an African American woman; Ithaca College, Afro-Latina woman; Oberlin, African American woman, over and over again. In the Cal State system, you see the number of women of color at least five, six, seven leading the twenty-some Cal states. People are taking these risks, and I think what's important is that again it's an opportunity and it's a way of our being able to have and make a difference and open the door to see if the people coming through will have, in fact, the same dedication, the same kind of measure of desire really to make a change in the country and to raise children who have hope and energy and fun and creativity and aren't just stymied or oppressed by systems that we invented. So those are some of the things I think about at night. Can I go to sleep tonight feeling like I did some good? I think most nights, most days, yeah. And I'll stay with this job and this work as long as I can and then when I can't, well, it's retirement and two books. Maria Francisca Baca who is just this incredible, young woman deserves an entire story to her and then my women's wills book. And I think I'd be very very happy, and hopefully, I'll have brain cells left you know when I get to that point. [laughs]

02-01:41:36

Holmes:

Well speaking of books, I wanted to transition a little bit and ask you about your further editing ventures with the book series of the University of Texas Press, *Chicana Matters*.

02-01:41:48

González:

Chicana Matters, that was so amazing. So that worked with my dear and best friend Antonia Castañeda arose because, again, a very inspiring, important voice at University of Texas Press, Theresa May had a vision. And her vision was that—she's married to a Chicano or Mexican American and so she wanted for her children to be able to see and say there's at least twenty-one volumes on a shelf. So she got us together, and we submitted a proposal, and we were able to encourage and read. We each read every one of the volumes ourselves. We didn't do an advisory or editorial board in the way that many series, book series do and again had some blockbuster publications out of that. Some of those books have sold well over 2000, 2500 copies, and they're very impressive. And a number of the scholars who were in there were, of course, a different generation, much younger than we are, received tenure because of those books, and they were incredibly favorably reviewed. We could've had another twenty easily. We had that many submissions all over the place.

Teatro Chicana is a really interesting book that Antonia especially was very devoted to because Antonia has always had community studies and community affairs and public history in her domain. She's always been a very enthusiastic mentor about that. And so this is a group of San Diego State students as undergraduates, who created a theater company and said—no training, no formal recognition by the university. They did scripts, and they were a group of women, and thirty years later, they were still meeting. Some of them have passed away. They meet, they have reunions, they talk about their work, and they put together this book with all of their scripts and all of their—and their reflections on each of the plays and each of the creative work that went into it. We thought that was incredibly important. Who else was going to take on such a thing? And then what they did is they promoted it all over the country. They went into bookstores, two of them and said, "We have a book, and we do book signing" or whatever. They'd advertise it, they went to conferences and so over 2500 copies of that book have sold around the country. Amazing. So we did things that were unusual, we did things that were traditional, but we also did some things that were creative and unusual. And I think that's what Chicana studies has to offer the country really is this ability to maybe cross these frontiers like Gloria Anzaldúa envisioned in border crossings that we can be adaptable and flexible in the work particularly because we tend to tackle the work not always as individuals but as a group.

02-01:45:08

Holmes:

Well, that really brings us to a point because we're here towards the end sadly. And you're probably saying, "Thank God—I'm ready for dinner, get Todd out of my house!"

02-01:45:19

González: [laughs] No, no—

02-01:45:20

Holmes:

But reflections on the field. I mean really to kind of just take a moment to look back before we conclude, and in your view, what have been really some of the major developments?

02-01:45:31

González:

Well, some of the things and I sometimes think about this as troubling me, and I probably shouldn't. And who knows if somebody ever sees this interview decades from now they'll say, "Oh my God, she was troubled by that." The Latinx and the Chicana-x or Chicano-x or whatever it is movement using the *x*, to my mind, again as a label, as a person who's fought hard for people to be called what they wished to be called, I think it's very important. But I also think that it has a downside, and that some of that downside is the lack of recognition of what has come before. It's kind of what older people always lament is, [laughs] "You don't know, you don't know what it was like, and let me tell you." And really you don't, you don't know, I don't know what it was like for the generation before me and everything they went through. They didn't get tenure for the most part; they were adjuncts for the most part. Major presses didn't come to them to say, "We want to publish this fine writing of yours, this great stuff you're doing." It was a whole different world, and I think that the world that's coming after ours, this newer millennial generation that tends to focus on all things being equally important, they're not; me being the center of the universe, I'm not. All of those things that run through especially social media, naming, the access to be able to get information out very quickly, and sometimes it's super inaccurate, fact checking is lost, a lost art. Those are the kind of things that worry me about what comes next in this scholarly development.

Will we let go of everything and not have any disciplines ever again? It's a real possibility that we'll be so interdisciplinary that we're transdisciplinary. Nothing, there's no history, it's all history or there's no art, it's all art. I don't know if that's where we're headed, but if we were, I would just want people to be very cognizant of the fact that it is not about a bunch of old fuddy-duddies stuck in the mud and wanting things to be exactly as they were because I do believe if anything historians recognize that change is—that's what we talk about, that's what we mark and trace and track.

02-01:48:05

There are also many things that don't change. Racism and sexism and homophobia and all these things change very slowly. And so if the concern is there, that's amazing to me, that's amazing. A generation devoted to that and to really taking people on for who they are and what they are is important, the humanity of people. But I worry that what in fact we're getting is almost the opposite of that. There's a kind of not only a fear but a neglect of difference

in—for the sake of just saying we all grew up with computers, we all grew up with social media, so we're all the same, I don't think so, I don't think so.

And then the final thing that really concerns I know senior leaders almost at every university that I'm a part—of every discussion I'm a part of is the wealth gap. The gap between haves and have-nots in the United States is something to be really, really worried about, and it's true in academe. Those who teach as adjuncts in community colleges, at very poor institutions versus those who are in elite environments where there are resources, I think those are things we need to be aware of and try to do something about.

02-01:49:39

Holmes:

What is your view because I know there's always a debate of should Chicana/o studies be its own standalone department, or should it just be a program? David Montejano for example, stated that it's not just the students who need to learn about Chicana/o studies, right. Colleagues in whatever department need to know about this. What is your view on this, and particularly as one who's been in the history department, who's also chaired a Chicana and Chicano studies department, who's also now at senior leadership of a university who has overseen discussion of "do we have this department or not?"

02-01:50:17

González:

It's a tough discussion and debate for sure. Places like Gonzaga probably will never have Chicana/o Studies. There's no other Chicano or Chicana on the campus but me who identifies. Now, there are Mexican—people of Mexican descent is how they identify themselves to me, but they don't use the word *Chicano* and *Chicana*. We have two Latina deans, one of them I've never heard her use the word *Chicana* except when she uses it in sort of familiar terms. I see her as Chicana, but I don't know that she sees or calls herself that necessarily. So you have this important debate, discussion going on, great need. We've never achieved parity; we're not there. Our PhD programs at number three are in Chicano and Chicana studies; although some of them like the Santa Barbara one has changed its name to Chicano/Chicana, Latina/Latino and soon it'll probably be Chicana-x, Latinx department, who knows? UCLA changed its name recently because they've got Central American Studies inside the department, so Leisy Abrego is there and so on. Northridge has always had a strong Central American presence, and they were talking about splitting off and forming a Central American Studies department because they now have sufficient numbers of students but also classes, curriculum, and interest in that, in that a subject area.

So sometimes my view is the more, the merrier. Other times, my view is really the study and interpretation of people of Mexican origin in this country who are the majority Latino, Latina population does not compare—Puerto Ricans next but does not compare to the numbers of Cubans or Central Americans. And likely never will because of policies that keep people out but

also because of the fertility and growth rates, just the sheer demographics, which means that we have to be sensitive to what it is people use as labels but then understand that in our own struggle as scholars of the Chicana and Chicano experience or of the Mexican American experience, we chose the name Chicano and Chicana because it was the most horrific term you could label someone. And we wanted people to understand that you can take something that was considered so pejorative and so derogatory and make it into something that's positive. That to me is the biggest lesson of all. And some people might say, "Yeah, but why you keeping up with that? That was the old days, this is now." Well, not really, not really.

02-01:53:20

Donald Trump labelled us racist and criminals and said that many, many immigrants and people from other countries are coming "shithole countries" is what he called it, just the most abusive, horrible language to me shows why we need the word *Chicano* and *Chicana* in the vocabulary. And so I stand by it. We developed the curriculum, we developed not only the courses and certified the degrees in it, created these PhD programs, advanced programs, MA programs. Eva Longoria has an MA in Chicano and Chicana studies. Do you ever see that, anyone ever reference that on television? And yet she knows her Chicano and Chicana history, she knows her Chicano and Chicana studies. And that's why she can get up in front of the Democratic National Convention and do what she does because she has that confidence and she has that ability to see the world I think expansively and in an interdisciplinary way. And we need more of that; we need a lot more of that.

02-01:54:33

Holmes:

Which almost took my next question out of my mouth because the field has in, many respects, really developed and taken its place within the larger academy. And here I want to ask what do you think were some of the biggest impacts? Well, you just named one where now we could have somebody on a national stage who, decades ago I feel, would not have ever have an advanced degree in this field and now who does.

02-01:55:05

González:

Yeah, and it means the staying power. When I think of all those Chicano and Chicana scholars, academics who didn't get tenure, they were thought not to be good enough, they were thought not to be smart enough, they spent all their time with students, they did the wrong things. That was a lot. Those were people giving up, in a way, a part of themselves for something bigger that would come, and I think honoring that—just like Dolores Huerta said, honoring those farmworkers is a key part of why we're here and why we do what we do. So I think more applause to those who take it up. And I see our young students in conferences saying, "I'm Chicano and Chicana, and I'm taking this up, I'm doing this," and I think the odds are stacked against somebody being that declarative and being successful, and yet they're doing it. So all the more.

02-01:56:12

Holmes:

Well, Deena, this has been so great and I really appreciate your time.

02-01:56:15

González:

Thank you, Todd.

02-01:56:16

Holmes:

To end, we all stand on the shoulders of others.

02-01:56:19

González:

Yes.

02-01:56:20

Holmes:

Are there any scholars who have passed that you would like to recognize?

02-01:56:25

González:

There are people like I think of Camille Guérin-Gonzales whose life ended at University of Michigan and a few years ago who had been at Colorado in Boulder and at UCLA as a founding member of the César Chávez interdisciplinary department. And Camille was a historian, twentieth century labor and working in her final project on a comparative study of workers in Wales, in Appalachia, and among Mexican communities in, I think, Arizona who worked in the mines, the mining communities. I think of Louise Año Nuevo Kerr. I was able to do a tribute to her in Illinois a couple of years ago; her family was all there. And Louise just influenced record numbers of students in her respective universities in Chicago, a very strong voice, very important voice. Before that, there were people like Magdalena Mora, a graduate student at UCLA who put together that book with Adelaida del Castillo I think of very fondly. And even more today I'm thinking of her because of the UCLA network and Juan Gómez-Quíñones's passing, a very big loss, a very deep loss for us. I'm trying to think of many of the others. Anna Macías was Spanish, identified as Latina in many respects, really helped move Latina and Latino historians. I don't know a lot about Anna Macías's last years, where she ended up, but she was instrumental and very helpful to me at certain points because she was one of the few Latina historians. Martha Cotera is another in Texas and then of course there also was Asunción Lavrin. Lavrin was a very important voice in Latin American Studies. I don't know if Asunción Lavrin is still alive, but she was important.

I'm trying to think of who some of the others are. Gosh, we've had so many that I think of. Gloria Anzaldúa, of course, very much influenced my thinking, spent a nice, month-long residency with us in Claremont. And I think Gloria had a real impact on people, continues to have an impact, her work and her writing certainly. And I'm sure I'm forgetting some that I'd like to name because I think that you're absolutely right, we have a lot of people who help us and help us move through and see things differently and support us. There are people I know I can call on, and that's what everyone in academe needs. At any moment of the night or day, if I pick up the phone and call Antonia and

say, "SOS, emergency, I need to talk" wherever she is, she'll get a message back to me saying, "Okay."

Last night in this meeting that I'm talking about that we had an intervention today this morning, someone at the meeting said, "I did not like the way that was done; I want you to know." And I thought, okay, there's an ally, there's a friend. So we have people like that, and those are the folks every day, every single day, so thank you to all. And to my mom and my grandmother because they're really the ones who I owe everything to and were there, a steady presence for so, so long and provided not only the safety, which is important but really provided kind of the brain power and the thinking power about how things are done, how to be a good person, and how to help others, so those are important.

02-02:01:00

Holmes:

Well, thank you, Deena. Any final thoughts before we sign off? [dog barks]

02-02:01:04

González:

Thank you, Todd. No. As my dog is barking, and Charlie, we do not want you barking, sweetheart, and he'll come up here, he'll get up here in just a minute. So I think that's it.

02-02:01:16

Holmes:

All right.

02-02:01:17

González:

I think we've covered everything, Todd. Thank you

02-02:01:20

Holmes:

Deena, thanks so much.

02-02:01:22

González:

You're welcome.

[End of Interview]