

The Sacramento Movimiento Chicano and Mexican American Education Oral History Project

Antonia Lopez

Oral History Memoir

Interviewed by Rhonda Rios Kravitz

[date of interview: July 31, 2023]

Unofficial transcript generated by Panopto captioning services; edited by Savannah Mitchell, California State University Library

[00:00:17]

Kravitz Hi, Antonia. This interview will be video audio recorded and will form part of the Sacramento, Chicano and Mexican-American Education Project Oral History, which is archived at the Donald and Beverly Gerth, Special Collections and University Archives at California State University, Sacramento. Do you agree to this recording?

[00:00:40]

Antonia Lopez Yes, I do.

[00:00:41]

Kravitz And today is July 31st, 2023. The time of the interview is 1:45 p.m. and the location of the interview is Sacramento, California. Can you please state your full name and spell it?

[00:00:59]

Lopez I'm Antonia Lopez. Antonia Lopez.

[00:01:05]

Kravitz And you provide your birth date?

[00:01:09]

Lopez May 10th, 1947.

[00:01:12]

Kravitz And where were you born?

[00:01:13]

Lopez Hanford, California.

[00:01:16]

Kravitz Where were you raised?

[00:01:17]

Lopez Farmersville, California. Meant Mid Valley.

[00:01:21],250 --> 00:01:27,080

Kravitz I know exactly.

[00:01:22]

Lopez You know exactly where it is.

[00:01:25]

Kravitz What did your parents do for a living?

[00:01:28]

Lopez We were migrant farmworkers, so we traveled from Farmersville all the way to Montana, picking orchard crops.

[00:01:36]

Kravitz And how many brothers and sisters do you have

[00:01:39]

Lopez I have four one brother and three sisters?

[00:01:42]

Kravitz And what did your parents both parents do for a living?

[00:01:46]

Lopez Both of them were farm workers.

[00:01:47]

Kravitz Mm hmm. And what was your primary language growing up?

[00:01:51]

Lopez We spoke Spanish exclusively at home. We learned English after we went to school.

[00:01:57]

Kravitz Can you describe your experiences as a child and the youth in your family and your neighborhood?

[00:02:06]

Lopez Well, we were, you know, as migrant farm workers were pretty much in a self-contained family. We when we were in our home base of Farmersville, we lived in kind of a like an enclave with uncles and aunts. We all lived in the same on the same grounds. So we had each other to be with and play with. So our neighborhood was really our cousins, you know, our uncles and aunts and cousins when we were traveling, which was about six months of the year, living in tents and and chicken coops and barns. We were pretty much always just our family, even when we worked, even when we lived in camps, we always maintained ourselves kind of separate because there was just really no privacy. And and it wasn't always safe environments. So I think I would experience it as being very safe, very cared for, very comfortable. The people who we are, cousins, the people we played with were people we really were close to, did everything together. So I think in some ways it sounded isolated, but it was really quite healthy.

[00:03:24]

Kravitz Did you or your family experience any discrimination when you were growing?

[00:03:31]

Lopez Well, I think it goes without saying that migrant farmworkers experience a lot of discrimination and stresses. I mean, the very fact that we were required to house next to pesticide dumps and that we lived in chicken coops and we lived went places without running water. You know, just the those are symptoms of the kind of discriminatory views that, you know, the farmers and the society had about farmworkers. We just weren't worth resources. So that and of course, language there was a large language bias. Some banks wouldn't cash our checks, you know, when we were traveling and get paid every couple of weeks at the end of a crop and go to a bank. And because we don't reside in Montana and Billings, we couldn't get checks, cash because we weren't considered, I don't know. Reputable. So there was I mean, I think we lived in. And under the kind of cloud of bias in all kinds of areas.

[00:04:43]

Kravitz What were your earliest memories of events that attracted you to a movie?

[00:04:51]

Lopez Well, my mother. I was kind of a nontraditional woman and that she she was born and raised in the United States. Actually, she was born and then raised till she was eight and then was deported. She was part of the repatriations are whole, her whole family. So she lived in Mexico until for about 15 years. She she was deported at age, age eight and then came back. So we I understood from the earliest you know, she they returned. She got married. It came here. We understood that things could be very. Dangerous. You know, not not you couldn't be security wasn't couldn't count on services and good treatment. My father was born in Mexico. He came here after the war when they got married. And he was very active in the United Farm Workers. So. And it was absolutely. In a part of our lifestyle that we knew that we had to. Attempt to make a better life through seeking it. You know, I mean, the fact that we're migrant workers moving here and there, that we were still always attempting to. To get due process. I'm not even sure how to say that. So I grew up with that kind of UFW. You can make a difference, kind of an expectation.

[00:06:37]

Kravitz How did other Mexicans Mexican-American originals react to the term Chicano?

[00:06:44]

Lopez With Chicano? Well, growing up in Columbia County and in Farmersville, it was a badge of honor to be a Chicana, to be Mexica. It wasn't about being Mexican or Chicano or being Mexican-American. We were all of those who are acceptable. There wasn't a, you know, looking down at one or the other. We were very proud of being Mexicanos, Mexicanos, Chicanos. It was a badge of courage, you know. It wasn't until I came to Sacramento in. In my mid-twenties that I realized that there was such disparate views about Chicanos. There was a lot more. Discord about what terms we used. There were attitudes about you're this or you're that. And if you're not this, you're not, you know, you don't belong. So I really didn't experience. Negative stuff about Chicanos more until I got here.

[00:07:55]

Kravitz Interesting. Yeah. Had you heard about the civil rights movement at that time? And if so, what were your thoughts about it? And could you really connect or identify any connections to.

[00:08:12]

Lopez Well, as I said, you know, I grew up with the UFW movement, the union native farmworkers movement. And of course, that really meant and perhaps it was because it was a small town that we were really aware of the Chicano, the walkouts, the L.A. walkouts, the moratorium. We were very proud of the fact that they that students were, you know, fighting for their rights, protesting for better education, because education we knew and my parents were clear education was a way to make progress. And so they were very proud of that going on. We were very proud in our communities about the anti war movement, because we did understand maybe because our parents had lived through World War Two, you know, or, you know, they had it was close enough to them that they realized that. Mexicanos and Chicanos and blacks were really being used as fodder and. So I think we had a much. Even though we were farm work, farmworkers and in farm communities. There was more conversation among us. It wasn't so disparate. It wasn't a conversation that was isolated to, you know, young people here or whatever. They were conversations that we had among us. You know, young people heard them, older people heard them.

[00:09:47]

Kravitz I think you. Were you in the Mexican-American Education Project?

[00:09:50]

Lopez No, I wasn't.

[00:09:53]

Kravitz Don't on me.

[00:09:55]

Lopez Can I say something more about the movement? We were. When we were in high. When I was in high school, we were experiencing that. anti-Mexican bias Stuck in my freshman class. There were 88 of us Chicanos, Chicanos that went into a freshman class and only eight of us graduated. We were Farmersville was my hometown, but we were bussed to Exeter in high school, so we really experienced. Seeing our friends, family or friends being pushed out. People thought of them as dropouts, but really it was very high. Schools were very discriminatory. I mean, we really got the worst of counseling, etcetera. And we we knew it. So. We that's, I think, why we were so proud of the fact that the moratorium in L.A. was happening. I ran for and was elected to the school board at 21. The W folks, the farmworkers were the ones who ran my campaign. So I was the youngest school board member in the state for a year or two. So the movement was how we grew up. It's it was part of our. Living, you know, expectation.

[00:11:30]

Kravitz Did your knowledge of cultural issues influence your involvement and participation in the Movimiento? And if you might have this in your participation?

[00:11:45]

Lopez Well, one of the markers that was used against us was that that our culture, you know, that we needed to be American in order to be assimilated. And some people accepted that and adopted that and and became Americanized and. With the movement. I think what it gave us the opportunity is to have pride in it, to not only to to be conscious of it and to explore it, but just to really assault with it. You know, just like I am who I am, like and and I'm proud of it. So I think culture allowed us to explore creativity and beauty and arts, whether it was dancing or singing or the way we fiestas or, hey, even funerals, all the ways that marked our culture really became. Shields almost. You know, we could press we could use them as to say, this is who I am, and I'm fiercely proud of it.

[00:13:05]

Kravitz Did your involvement in the movie ever change you personally? Yes. Explain.

[00:13:12]

Lopez Well, I think through the comments I've made so far. It, own it. It didn't change me like I wasn't, you know, blind. And now I can see it just it made me stronger because it allowed me to continue to. Experience the the. The power of self-respect. So and to wish to. Help other people overcome the doubt and self doubt. And and I used to call it self-hate. That was. Thrust upon us when people, you know, language loss, I mean, we, me included, went to school speaking only Spanish. And by the end of first grade, I didn't I spoke only English because of that, that kind of the anti language bias that we were surrounded by. Right. So overcoming that doubt, self doubt and not wanting to be a Spanish speaker, when I came when we came to realize how powerfully damaging that was and overcoming it was a struggle. But I think so the the movement didn't change me. I don't think I think it made me stronger. But I already that my family was or I already had the route.

[00:14:54]

Kravitz What role do you believe that you guys played in the movie?

[00:15:01]

Lopez The contrast again. When. In. In a farm community, a in a migrant farm worker, Everybody in a family, everybody pulls their weight. Every. Women work as hard as men. Men work as hard as women. Children work as hard as their parents. And grandparents work, too. You know, everybody the role roles, but not in the way that people think about Amazon like sex roles, stereotyped kind of gender roles. There's a collaborative community where people are expected to contribute and they're respected for their contributions, and they're taught to contribute. And they're taught to respect each other's strengths and weaknesses, you know? So very a very healthy way of living collaboratively, cooperatively. So that's how I grew up. So when you when I came to Sacramento and see, whoa, you know, a you know, a sassy, you know. The misogyny that raced that experience when I came. To see that. You know, women. Young women. Adopted meant not all of them, but many of them adopted the notion that they were here to serve the guys. You know, they were the princess or the or the mother. I don't know. There were terms for that back in those days. But they didn't see themselves as equal human beings. Now, did they think that that they they buy into that notion? I don't think you're thinking of yourself as an equal human being. No, I don't think they saw themselves. They just accepted older women, women who had status because of who they were married to. Maybe or maybe because of that, some other. Dawn Atheneum You know, I woke up to see that they often promoted that how to be a good woman is to do this good thing by standing by your guy and standing back. And you know, I'm like, Whoa, this is so. It was. Heart to heart. Well, hard to accept, but hard to understand. That women would allow themselves to be. Placed put in that position to play that role. Women who didn't, myself included, were really ostracized and beaten, literally physically beaten up. Called names. You're a feminist. I go, Yeah, I am. Feminism isn't a bad word. I don't even know what you mean by that. So. During the time that I was here as a student, I saw it. I mean, I was a school board member. Was that elected? I had no official job. I'd been a county office of education administrator. And then to be. Treated like I was second class was very. Troubling.

[00:18:47]

Lopez But did you personally initiate or help initiate in moving?

[00:18:56]

Lopez So I had been. A director of an early childhood program, an administrator in a county Office of Education, was a school board member serving on all kinds of county things. So I really understood. That to learn and develop skills and to serve community had to organize. Father UFW Right. Together we're stronger going to. So in as a student. I did all kinds of stuff. On the campus. I was very active on the campus. I became and maybe. I was adviser. To the. Associated student body president. I was also at the same time advisor to the Associated Student Body Senate chair. To complete these two roles, which were supposed to be in petition with each other and because I was advisor to each of them, we were able to do a lot of stuff. So I was

demonstrating that a Latina could have. Be heard by. The folks that we normally wouldn't talk to, Right? You know, the white guys. And, you know. I was also the student on the. President search committee. We were involved. So is a graduate student on the accreditation committee. So just by being vocal, how do you how do you how does a movement become integrated by being vocal and being heard and working hard and showing that you have something to say and something to offer and contributing. And that's how you begin to influence institutions, not by standing back and throwing rocks, but making becoming part of the solution and part of the. And then that way have your opinion heard, You know, so because I was always promoting Latinos and Asians and all the other students. But but from this way, that I was an ally. But that was in the student world, in the community world, I started. An organization with nine other young women who wanted to do something. We we couldn't be called ourselves a second line because the first line, the guys and older women that we wanted to participate in, an organization called a Consiglio and others, the Mexican-American organizations, we were all for serving coffee or making burritos or something, but we wanted to be engaged and we just didn't have openings. So we organized. We were like the second line, and we informally organized ourselves as Arco, Eddie's Rainbow, right? And Archimedes, we did things like. We we hosted. The you can make a difference. Moorhead is Career Symposium, which was a conference, a one day conference for 16 to 20 year olds. We were looking we many of us were. I was one of the oldest. I was like 25. But some of the other eight members of our coaches were younger. You know, they were in 19, 20, 22. What we were keenly aware of was that it had been very hard for us to get to college. It was very hard had been very hard for us to find support for seeking a life beyond, you know, kind of traditional. You don't have to go to college things. So we put together this one day conference with the help of one of your predecessors, I think Robert Acuna, who was the dean at SEC City College at the time. He provided the student center for us to be able to host this conference. A friend of mine, I had been to Washington, D.C. for a summer internship. The woman who ran that, Corina Sanchez, was the director of the Chicano Action Center in Los Angeles, a program that brought nontraditional women, women who had been in prison career career opportunities for them kind of transition program. She was a keynote speaker and we had 120 young people, 16 to 20 come to hear women Latinas in various careers. We wanted doctors to talk about medicine, careers in medicine, but there weren't any. So we had UC Davis medical students. We wanted a lawyers to talk about law and and there weren't any. So we had lost students. We had people who ran small businesses, you know, hair salons and and various stores and whatever. But we had probation officers and parole. What we were trying to do, we we couldn't bring in the people who had really arrived, but we but they were the next step and and. It was for us, a way of. Trying to relieve or provide information that had not been available to us. And so it was pretty successful. And then people complained to us about the fact that we hadn't done this for older women who themselves needed the same kind of opportunities. And when we're not, let's do it again. We had. Joaquin Fernandez, who had played at Carnegie Hall. He was a professor at SEC State. He was a magazine ladder expert. We can at this very same venue. Another time we put together La Notebook on Agustin Lara, you know, performed by Joaquin Fernandez Freed. We were targeted adult seniors, you know, from housing centers and such to the cabin in a schoolyard, La Musica de Joaquin La. It was a magnificent the day that that happened. We didn't know if anybody would show up. And by 5 minutes before the start of the concert, we had to we had to raise money to to get the piano, the grand piano and the

insurance and my God, all that stuff that goes along with that. And we had 300 seniors there. Yeah. Got on. We did canning workshops with UC Davis Cooperative Extension. Why canning workshops? Well. One of the women was into. You know, skills, skills building, you know, so that you could make your own food and you can can your own food. And so so we the AACo, it's our goal was to every one of us to do to get support, to do what we wanted to what we wanted to do to contribute to the community. So Carmen wanted to teach about canning workshops. Okay, we got stilts, middle school to let us use their kitchens. Acuna To let us use the campus. Joaquin Fernandez To play, you know, raise money to do do stuff. What we had we organized a group. We had the. They're both of society. Okay. We talked about how when we were growing up, we were ashamed of not all of us, but we were ashamed of being Mexican. And that that also had been a symbol of that shame. So we started at our most of society, and I actually broke my ribs. So maybe, Oh, no, you had my reverso that are also wooden when it was kind of our symbol, right? We. And this was Lucy Montoya's idea. I mean, I. I think I was the facilitator for ugly days, but it was all the individual leadership from different people to we everything we did everywhere we went. Any time we did something as a group afterwards, we were a reversal because we wanted to say, you know, we're proud of our culture and we honor our culture and this is our shield, This is our this is how we claim it. We claim our culture. And you, any one of us could honor another person and have them join that level of society. But we had to wear the rainbow so that we would give them. And then they so we had to wear it in battle. And the battle sometimes was testifying at the legislature on some bill or another or wearing it that the Canning workshop. So what we were trying to do is give people a symbol that they could hold on to that even if they weren't part of some activity or project, they could say so. Mexicana, so Chicana, I'm fighting for our people and they could gift that to someone else as long as they wore their symbol and said they went Drago, you know, you're, you're next in line, you know. The most important thing I think that I contributed in those few years was the founding of the Washington Barrio Education Center. That was a I was as a graduate student. That was my project, my project. I wanted to get an administrative credential, but I didn't want to do it in in K-12. I wanted to do it in adult ed. And so I was assigned to the dean of the Evening College, Dr. Blum. And so I asked Dr. Blum if I could take that. And I was his I was his intern, whatever. But I also was teaching a class at at. At Sex City adjunct faculty part time, you know. So I asked him if I could take the class out. We to the community at that time we were closing. A the walnut, a cannery and a walnut factory that employed 2000 people. And the 2000 people that worked there had become pretty middle class, you know, lifelong workers. They had homes, they had mortgages. They had kids. They were in their forties, in their fifties, and now their place of employment was going to be closed. So given I said, well, these 50 year olds go back to high school, a lot of them didn't have high school diplomas. Are they going to go back to college? So the project was about. Opening an outreach program in the neighborhood. It was in the Washington neighborhood where people could retool, where they could, you know, begin again in a place with other adults because they weren't going to go back to high school to get a GED or not. We started with 27 students, three of us, Armando said, Myself and Eleanor Aragon, the dean said, If you can get the students, you can take it. I don't know. He didn't think it would happen, but within a year we had a. The campus. Lucius had given us \$100,000 to pay for a facility because we had been working in little storefronts, taking our classes. Our first classes were at the Washington Neighborhood Center, where we had a cardboard box with a with. Light

bulbs and chalk because the light bulbs didn't always work and where. But within within a year. Within a year, we had written a proposal. Those rules had given us the money for a facility. We were running 21 classes every semester. That was a full time. Job by about three of us. You know, we really. We didn't have administration costs. We the school paid the facility and they paid the faculty. But we had to stop it, you know, So that. How did I contribute to the movement? That's that's what I did. I helped organize things that helped other people. Learn how to do it.

[00:32:55]

Kravitz Yeah, that's significant. To raise your consciousness regarding social, cultural, political issues. Yes. Describe how.

[00:33:06]

Lopez Well, I think. I think that's been my whole experience. I'm always I don't think I called it the movimiento. We, you know. It was. It was c i i, I'm not sure nobody's ever defined the movimiento to me, at least not in the stuff that I buried here. For me, it was. All of us seeking to improve our own lot and a lot of others. And the condition for the future by everything that we do. That was the movimiento. It wasn't this lot a la. I mean, okay, I ran for election. I was one. I guess that's a campaign, right? And we wrote proposals and got funded and that was. But, but it was more about this more fundamental view of everything that we do in the interests of progress and well-being for our our violent their current and future. So. I don't know how to answer that question to say it's just how you live.

[00:34:21]

Kravitz And how did these changes affect your personal relationships with family peers, with significant others?

[00:34:29]

Lopez Well, good and bad. You find, like people, you know, by doing these things, whether the loss of society or the Augustin Ladder concert or the Barrio Education Center, which affected hundreds and hundreds of people. You find people who are like minded, who share their commitment and their values and their courage, you know, and their hard work. So you find these people and you just love it. You know, the best friends forever. The bad news is that you find people who think you're a big threat. Who criticize you. Who somehow think that you are actually undermining, you know, the role of men that you're not. You're speaking out of turn in their careers. So so there's some people in that community just ostracized myself. We got our cars, no spray painted. We got physically beaten up, we got punched out, we got called names, all kinds of stuff that had to do with some kind of fear for what we were trying to do. And that was very hard. That was very hard.

[00:36:01]

Kravitz And what impact did the movement have on your career?

[00:36:05]

Lopez Oh, it it I did. I it was wonderful. One opportunity after another came on, you know, really everything. I did it all, every project that I was involved with. I say everything. Every time I say I feel really bad because it was us. As most of us, I think I was. I accept the role of facilitator. I helped make it happen because I knew how to make things happen from my previous work. But everything we did helped me understand something better. Helped me learn how to do something more efficiently, helped me understand what obstacles might lie ahead, how to brace myself, how to be able to take take the heat. So I think that I, from being a farm worker, I was a farm worker, a teacher, aide, headstart. I became an affirmative action officer for the Department of Education. Yeah, Employment Rights, a child development consultant. That was just a journey class for for in early education. I was the education director for a statewide bilingual early childhood program that was a national model. And people from Harvard and and New Zealand and Columbia and oh my goodness, places came to visit. We were. We started the first. A Spanish language Montessori teacher training program in the United States accredited by the American Montessori Society. Nobody thought it could be done, but we did so. But all of those. I was the national director for early Education for the National Council of La Raza. Yeah, it one thing built on the other. You know, I had I worked in five states for the Headstart Quality Improvement Center. But really. Every little success. Gave you an opportunity for another. Exploration. When people say, Well, you did that, how about this? What do you think of that? So I, I think. That's something that people need to understand. Taking risks is really good. You can, you know, try something and get beat up physically, try something and make a little bit of success, try something and and get allies to join together. Everything can built on the other if you're not afraid.

[00:38:54]

Kravitz Thank you. How did the movie impact your community like you were in Sacramento or wherever you went?

[00:39:00]

Lopez Well, like I said, it was good and bad. I had friends and detractors in Sacramento. My community life. I found like minded people who I enjoyed political activism with. Right. Promoting causes. Did that. For probably 25 years or so. Even though I lived in Sacramento, I pretty much worked across the state. The foundation center that I was a director for, we were in nine counties from Modoc County to San Diego County. So I was with 24 locations. So they started from one. But we grew. And so I was on the road all the time. So I, I lived here on weekends, you know, when I worked for the National Council of La Raza, I had I lived in Washington, D.C., I spent time in New York. You know, I was in Los Angeles. So. Honestly, I had more community in some of those other places than here. You know, I was invisible if you ask. I think you can ask people like David and others, you know, did you know Antonia during the eighties, you know, the eighties and 2016? And they were like, well, she still living here? I was I was doing my laundry here.

[00:40:36]

Kravitz Many activists have passed on. Mm. Can you identify an individual or individuals that you feel has impact on the romance or explain.

[00:40:49]

Lopez Well. Of the person that immediately comes to mind is my my daughter's dad, Armando, said, Armando. He was a feminist, and not everybody knew that because they thought he was macho dog and he called himself Macho Dog Mundo. He. He was. You remember the real Chicano Air Force? Some of those guys were real macho dogs. They kept women in their place. They're horrible. They were really hard to deal with. Mandel was part of the RCAF, but he was really a supporter of all artists young, old women. He really was a mentor to other artists. He was an activist. Everything that I mentioned doing except were in that role. So he supported. He was the guy behind the getting the. All the equipment stuff for. The. The concerts for the conference he support. He if we needed help, he got help. He did it. And he never and he got a lot of grief for it. But again, though, I last meuhedet, but not in the way that he would have been expected to be calling the shots, you know. He and I and Eleanor Aragon started the very first DIA de los Muertos procession at St Mary's. He. Was tireless. He cared about young people. He cared about community in a way that lots of people have lip service to. But he did you. He walked the walk. He didn't just paint the murals. He took it to schools. He paid out of his own pocket. Always, always did it. So I think he's really an unsung hero. I think he was classically trained, exquisite artist, well-known, did shows, won awards and all that. But he was a very humble man, I think. And another person that I and I wish had really been honored was ever Garcia, another artist. I don't know. Do you remember her?

[00:43:34]

Kravitz I do. And the gorilla.

[00:43:39]

Lopez Isn't she amazing? Wasn't she amazing? I'm so proud to have one of her pieces. If we just looked at her work. We could see what Chicanos were going through. Do you recall some of her pieces were so powerful, so powerful, and she and her. Artist Chicano community dismissed. Mr. What kind of it is that? Right? She died too young. Yeah, she died too young. Had she been supported, maybe she wouldn't have died so young. Yeah. What do you think? See some of the guys who were gone contributed to the. The gender bias. Shame on them. We know who they are, so I won't name their names. Little seen Bedouins us. You know, they took advantage of women and in. Many ways. ELASTOMER So what it would be nice to examine that those lives and say, how could they have been more egalitarian? How could they have used their fame and their. Visibility to really lift all boats. Not just their own or their own in the self aggrandizement approach. That is of them took Karachi. That we didn't. That they grabbed the light but didn't share it. You know, didn't grow it. People will, you know, if somebody some of the people you're this are going to come over and beat me up because they'll think that was really sacrilegious for me to say such a thing. But you have to examine the truth.

[00:45:54]

Kravitz And this is the last question. Looking back at your experience there, are there are any issues that were left unresolved and you're answering some of them?

[00:46:05]

Lopez Mm hmm.

[00:46:06]

Kravitz And what do you see as current or future challenges for the community?

[00:46:15]

Lopez When I read that question, I really didn't know what I would say because I'm here in in in Sacramento. I've been kind of invisible. I mean, it wasn't until I retired and left all that traveling that I began to become a part of the community again, right? Because now I'm home. Now I'm here now. But so I'm not sure what I based on my kind of experience in my work and having traveled. I think one of the things that is that we can still do that I wish we could find a way to do is there are a. Lots and lots of a growing number of young men and women. And when I'm young, I don't mean 17 or 18, I mean 30 and 40 and, you know, 50 like a friend over here who are developing in their fields, in their careers, in their communities, in their enterprise, whether they're businesspeople or professionals or, you know, that are seeking that are in their own ways and within their own families working to support our language and culture and our place in society. Right. Improving us. And I just really wish there was some way that we could convene them all and not one time only, but find a way to build networks. You know, there's the Latino educators and there's the peace officers and there's the environmentalists. There's there's a political activist. But then there's the, you know, the pharmacists and the medical, too. There are all these different in all areas of our life. There are young people, mid-career people who want to contribute, but they're not networking with each other, I don't think. I mean, what in my work in early childhood, the advocacy that one of our goal as a senior members, you know, as in your retirement, I mean, we're always trying to find ways of of identifying who we could mentor to move on, who so that they could become more skilled faster at that. That would be if I was going to suggest something, it would be let's not just think about what we used to do. How can we use our current, our current talent, energy commitment? How do we combine it? So they're not working in these isolated spheres so that we can support each other, so we can call on each other when we think when one needs the other?

[00:49:05]

Kravitz Yeah. And just as a follow up to that, do you see yourself as staying involved in meeting these challenges? And if so, how?

[00:49:13]

Lopez Well, I. I am. You know, retired. I do. I am currently the president of a. Spanish speaking senior social club monitors, and there's about 101 hundred members. We meet every Wednesday at the Heart Center. And my goal, you know, I took my mother when I retired. My mother had Alzheimer's. And so I used to take her there occasionally. And even though she was deep into the Alzheimer's going there among Spanish speaking, the singing, the music that the voices lifted her said some, you know, I'm isolating. So after after she died four years ago, I continued going. During the pandemic, we called each other on the phone. We had a telephone. Triste So in my senior moment, you know, I'm now looking at how to how to support and engage elders like myself. I mean, the average age of the group I'm involved with is 84, So I'm 76. I'm one of the

younger ones. So I'm still active and volunteer. So I do I don't do the kind of political work that I used to do, but I do what I can.

[00:50:45]

Kravitz That's wonderful. You know, I that was the last question. And I want to thank you for this recording will contribute to our efforts, as I said, to really document, to preserve and eventually archive these oral histories. And so I cannot tell you future generations will have an opportunity to see this hopefully grow with this experience. They fit into this giant puzzle. We're not the only one doing oral histories in San Diego and other cities want to do oral histories of this time period. So when we talk to each other, they often you will be from different communities and different places. And yet the similarity across all of our.

[00:51:37]

Lopez Yep. Well, that will be really interesting because because I've lived in other cities, right? I lived in New York and in Washington and Los Angeles, and it seem the Latina community is really different in each of those places. You know, Sacramento is very, very conservative, honest to goodness. I mean, the vibrancy, the vitality lost Plato's I mean, we never figured out how to resolve our own intergroup complex. So it kept us down in other communities like in, in, in L.A. is big. So lots of different L.A. communities. People lot lots of people learn how to fight and how to resolve things and how to support each other and how to, you know, make one plus one is three. So I think that Sacramento didn't figure it out. And I think that it will be helpful to to share different experiences and see the contrast and learn from each other and say, oh, you know, San Francisco, they were something, you know, okay, thank you.