

The Sacramento Movimiento Chicano and Mexican American Education
Oral History Project

Olga Cid

Oral History Memoir

Interviewed by Senon Valadez
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Transcription by Maria Elizarraras Santos and Technitype Transcripts

Valadez For the record, state your full name.

[00:00:09]

Cid Olga Cid.

Valadez Your birthdate?

[00:00:12]

Cid June 3rd, 1955.

Valadez Marital status?

[00:00:12]

Cid I'm single and divorced, I guess. Divorced or single.

Valadez Do you have children?

[00:00:22]

Cid I have two beautiful adult children, a son and a daughter. My son's an attorney, has his own law firm, and my daughter's a teacher.

Valadez Fantastic. Where were you born and raised?

[00:00:34]

Cid Sacramento, California.

Valadez What did your parents do?

[00:00:39]

Cid My dad was a laborer and my mother was a homemaker, very traditional, a very traditional marriage, Mexican Catholic family, very close-knit. I was the youngest of six, of four brothers and one sister. We'd go to church on Sundays to the Santuario Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe on T Street between the Guadalupe Church. Just a family—should I read this?

Valadez You can just talk, just share.

[00:01:26]

Cid When I was looking at your questions—at that time when I was growing up, my parents would always say that there wasn't a Mexican church in Sacramento, and so the Mexican community got together and raised funds to build that church. My earliest memories of being in Sacramento and being here was when my mother would wake up early in the morning and make *tortillas con el palote* on the table, and my dad would get ready for work. I could hear him showering and my mother making the coffee and the breakfast and all that. I'd wake up after my dad, would actually sneak into the kitchen after my dad would leave and go to work at 5:00 in the morning, and she would have the *gorditas con with mantequilla* and *avena* in a cup with lots of milk and sugar. It was delicious. [laughs] And I could hear my mother sing. I mean, I had good memories growing up. I can't say I didn't. My first language was Spanish.

Valadez What did your father do?

[00:02:39]

Cid He basically was a laborer. He did construction. He did whatever he found, whatever jobs that he could do. He was a World War II veteran. This was before I was born, but I think he worked for the SP, the railroad station, but then he worked basically in construction. Then he got hurt in construction. I think a big beam fell on him, and he ended up taking odd jobs, whatever he could do. His last career, he ended up working in a park helping them.

Valadez Where did you go to junior college?

[00:03:21]

Cid I went to Sacramento City College here.

Valadez City College right here.

[00:03:25]

Cid Right here in Sacramento, born and raised. [laughs]

Valadez And then from here you went to Sacramento State?

[00:03:32]

Cid No. Let me just go back. I went to Sacramento High School, and that's where I really started, and I got involved with the MAYA Club. That was my first initiation of being aware of what it meant to be Chicano and who we were. I remember that vividly because we had our first Mexican teacher, Mr. Gonzales. We didn't have any Mexican teachers at that time. It was a class called Spanish for Spanish Speakers, but it was mainly more a class for Chicano awareness, what was included in the area, what we did. Then we had our first Chicano vice principal, Mr. Cuña.

At that time in Sacramento High School, there were a lot of riots. First it was the Blacks against the Whites, and then it became the Mexicans against the Blacks. It wasn't a very conducive high school to learn. I knew I just wanted to get out, but at that time, too, we had the Brown Berets and we had the first Cinco de Mayo assemblies. We would do the fundraisers, and that was the first time we ever really heard Malo and all the Santana music. It was a fun time. It was a fun time that I felt that I could go on to college and I could go toward and achieve something. My parents always said to go to college, because my dad would tell us about the hardship that he had in Nebraska growing up working in the fields.

Valadez About what year was that when you were in Sac High?

[00:05:18]

Cid I graduated '74. I graduated a year early, so I graduated in '74, and so it must have been like '72, '73,'74. Is that about the time?

Valadez There was a lot of things going on.

[00:05:34]

Cid Let's see. We had a lot of things were going on. We had the Brown Berets, and I remember the assemblies, the young Chicanos there. I call them Chicanos now. They were young high school students, really. They lined up against the walls of the assemblies and they had their brown berets and their brown jackets and their brown—and it was cool, you know. It was very cool.

Valadez Those were students from the high school?

[00:06:08]

Cid From the high school.

Valadez So they were Junior Berets.

[00:06:09]

Cid Yeah, they were students from the high school.

Valadez The Junior Berets and Brown Berets. The Senior Berets, the Brown Berets, and the Junior Berets, they were at the high school level. That's great. Those are good memories.

[00:06:25]

Cid I believe they did bring on Richard Soto. He was like an assistant in the school, and I think he was supposed to—he probably did—help organize a lot of the events there. But a lot of the students there that took Mr. Gonzales' class really became aware of what the possibilities were. Everyone was talking about going to college and being involved in the community.

Valadez Is this Rick Gonzales? What is his first name?

[00:06:57]

Cid The teacher? I don't remember. I don't know. I know he passed away, though, he passed away. He was from Texas. I'll have to find out. Amador, Amador Gonzales.

Valadez Amador Gonzales.

[00:07:14]

Cid He passed away. Mr. Cuña, I don't remember his first name. It'll come to me. And then we had Mr. McGee too.

Right there in the classroom, it was basically survival. I'd go to school and the teachers were scared. There was a lot of contention at that time, the teachers. I

remember going into the English classes. The teachers would not read to us. I mean, the teachers would read to us. We wouldn't have an assignment. So the kids, of course, loved it. I said, "Well, we're not learning anything here."

I remember one kid took somebody's watch off this other kid, and the kid that lost his watch got up, threw a desk across the room and took off. [laughs] They were violent times, but we survived.

Then we moved on to City College. [laughs] I couldn't wait to get out of that. In fact, I would sit by the door to be able to run out whenever there was fights, because the teachers were scared, everybody was scared. I had to take an algebra class and the teacher would just read to us or she would show videos of her travels to Europe. I mean, it was fun to see that, but weren't learning anything, I didn't think. Really we weren't really learning anything.

We did have a very smart Mexican young man come from Mexico. His problem was he didn't know English. So I was one of the few that could speak Spanish in that classroom, and the teacher asked me to translate. [laughs] That didn't go very well, because not knowing math, he goes, "*Asi es*," so he would have these formulas down, and I'd look at him, I said, "*Yo creo*." [laughter] I don't know how he did. I was lucky I graduated and survived that high school.

Valadez So you went to City. Then from City?

[00:09:27]

Cid From City College, I went to San Francisco State. I really got involved. The best time in my school years was really City College. I got involved

with the MEChA Club and we did fundraisers. It was a lot of fun. We really became aware of who we were.

The question that you had here on what programs—let me just go back. I'm sorry. The way the Chicano Movimiento impacted me was that it opened doors for me to think and believe that I could go to college. I went through EOP because that's what we could afford to go through college, and it was fine. I mean, the school was open to having more diversity on campus.

I remember taking a class, it was a college preparation class on what to have and stuff. When I say what to have, what types of book to have, papers to be prepared to go to school and to succeed. It was only one class, but it was fine.

I don't know if I'm jumping around here.

Because of Chicano Movement, I just want to make sure that I emphasize that. Because of that, it did open doors for me to go to school, and it gave me pride to be able to think that I can go to school, and that, I think, has influenced me throughout my entire life. It influenced me on who I married and what my husband could do and what my children could do, and even today what I could do at work, on how I expect to be treated, because sometimes people at work don't treat you so well because of who you are. So I defend myself. [laughs]

Valadez Let me go to the third of those questions, just because it's part of the formality. You were not a Fellow or Felito?

[00:11:40]

Cid No, I was not a Fellow.

Valadez Going to San Francisco State, did you take cultural classes there? Or how did you become more culturally more aware?

[00:11:57]

Cid My idea was to be a CEO in a penthouse in Chicago, New York, somewhere, somewhere high up, right? But I ended up becoming a theatre arts major and I got involved with La Raza Studies. It was like La MEChA Club, but it was La Raza Club over there. It incorporated everyone, Latinos. I was a lecturer and I taught Chicano theatre there for a semester, and I got involved with some of the underground—I say underground movements, because at that time I believe Pinochet was in power and he was doing a lot of atrocities, so I'd go to some of these—I don't know if they were secret meetings, but they were meetings from Latinos.

It just fascinated me to see that there was a movement of people wanting to overcome and do good things, overcome the dictatorship. I mean, it was different. I come from a Mexican traditional background, and going to that big conglomerate and then plus I couldn't go out anywhere, I was in a very—not sequestered lifestyle, but a protected lifestyle, and then when I went to the big city, it was just so totally different. It was just like, oh my goodness. It was fun, but I wasn't prepared. I wasn't prepared to succeed in a big city, given my background and given the university. Luckily, I did have a good counselor.

That's where I met my ex-husband too. He was going to school there. He was *mexicano* and he came from traditional Mexicans, so it was like, "Oh!" There was somebody that I could relate to. But I think I influenced him in going to school. I felt good. I mean, there was somebody that could understand me.

Valadez So between the two of you, you have a broader cultural picture, cultural understanding of what was going on.

[00:14:19]

Cid Yes. At City, going back, I was really involved in the UFW. Well, even then, too, I was involved. That was more in San Francisco, but when I was involved with UFW in Sacramento, I was in City College and I did participate in picketing the Safeway market on Sutterville Road that's closed now, and that was to boycott grapes.

I did get to go to Delano and I did meet Cesar Chavez. Let's see what else I did. I did a lot of things When I was in City College, we participated in a group called the Suspiro del Barrio. I don't know if you remember that here in Sacramento. It was, I think, David Rasul, Quirros [phonetic], my sister, Frank Morales [phonetic], a couple of other people. The theatre was based on just two skits we did, and it represented the Mexican community. A couple of other people I don't remember.

Valadez Suspiro del Barrio?

[00:15:45]

Cid Suspiro del Barrio. Do you remember that?

Valadez Just vaguely.

[00:15:49]

Cid It was under the Centro Chicanos.

Valadez I seem to bring it back a little bit. I hadn't thought of that one in a long time.

[00:15:57]

Cid Suspiro del Barrio. That was way back. Suspiro del Barrio.

Valadez When I came to Sacramento we did *con* Olivia Castellano a play called *El Color de Nuestra Piel*, and she was in charge of that. That was before Manuel Pequeta [phonetic].

[00:16:27]

Cid Vallejos? *Suspiro del Palomar*?

Valadez That was another one that was during that time period also, *Recuerdos de Palomar*. I think that might have come first, then the one that we did is '68.

[00:16:43]

Cid So then mine was before that, the Suspiro del Barrio.

Valadez So that's good to know.

[00:16:48]

Cid There's probably posters around.

Valadez Who was directing it, do you remember?

[00:16:57]

Cid I'll have to find out and give you the information, but I remember that it was at the Centro Chicano Artistas and it was a storefront. It was a big thing because it was like a *centro*. It was called El Centro Chicanos.

Valadez Was it behind the Lady of Guadalupe Church now?

[00:17:26]

Cid No, no.

Valadez No? Not there yet?

[00:17:27]

Cid No, weren't even there yet. It was more Midtown. I don't know exactly. Maybe on Alhambra Boulevard. I don't remember exactly where it was.

Valadez David was in it too?

[00:17:47]

Cid David Rasul. Rosemary would remember. I'm trying to think of who else. Enrique [unclear]. He's now a Ph.D., a professor in the Midwest somewhere, Enrique. I can't remember. I'll have to get those names and phone numbers, and I will get back to you or give them to Lorena.

Valadez Let's go on then to the question that says what are your earliest memories that attracted you to the Chicano Movement? Those would be related to Sacramento City?

[00:18:31]

Cid Right. Actually, to Sacramento High School. I remember, actually, my mom, because we celebrated all the Mexican holidays, it was easy, it was easy to get involved. I felt comfortable and connected and I felt welcomed at that time. I remember participating in the Cinco de Mayo and the Dieciséis de Septiembre Festivals at Southside Park, and I believe that was the first time, in fact, the RCAF was the one that started the whole *Chicanada* at that time when they had a couple of classrooms behind the Guadalupe Church. They had the Cinco de Mayo Festivals there, and they opened the booths up and they got the permit. That was a lot of fun.

I remember my dad telling us stories when he was growing up about the Midwest and Nebraska and how awful the Mexicans were treated there, and I remember being in an American Legion Elementary School and how most of them

were African American, and there just a handful of *mexicanos*. And I remember a lot of things from just how the Chicano Movement really impacted my thinking, is because of the experiences that I had in my past. I remember at the American Legion Elementary School, I in a large class of Blacks and a handful of Hispanics, but there was a small classroom of Caucasian kids, and I wanted to be in that class. I knew they were reading, and I wasn't reading in that class, and I would tell the teacher, "I want to be in that class," until finally they put me in that class. It was in fourth grade.

I was so shy and nervous that I couldn't read. Nothing came out of my mouth, so they put me back in the other class, which was fine. I mean, oh well, at least I was there. I could see who was in that class, and I knew then that there was something different. There was something different.

I remember Open House in fifth grade where only one teacher at that school, American Legion, the one teacher told my mom, because she was the only Spanish speaker, and I was always embarrassed when she went to school to my class, she'd speak Spanish, and then the teacher would say, "That's good. Keep speaking Spanish to her, because one day you can work in the United Nations. It's good to know Spanish." And that was the first time in my entire life that somebody, an adult said that, "Hey, you could do something with your Spanish." Even though I didn't believe it at that time, but I didn't feel embarrassed.

Then at that time during the sixth grade, I guess that was when we were being bused. There was the Civil Rights Movement. Everybody was being bused into desegregation, and I was bused to another school, and that was the first time I was called a "dirty Mexican" in the playground. I don't know what for, I don't know why,

but I know were playing kickball and a little kid, a little girl, little White girl called me—I didn't say anything. I didn't beat her up. I didn't do anything. I didn't know what to do. Some of the other friends who were Black, they said, "You should have beat her up." I didn't know. I just withdrew within myself. Because of my background and who I was, we were not supposed to speak. We're just to be there.

[laughs]

Valadez *Mejor un loco que dos.* [laughter]

[00:22:15]

Cid So that preceded me to remember to think. That's what pushed me to become involved with the Chicano Movement. So then you had Mr. Gonzales, Amador Gonzales, you had the whole Cinco de Mayo, my brother Armando, and we had even these talks, and the whole thing.

I guess one of the questions here was the term *Chicano*, was it negative. We had our discussions at home, and my mother was always adamant being *mexicano*, so I didn't have a problem with that. My dad was American because he was born here, but in his heart he was Mexican because all he'd would do was Mexican stuff. He'd be trying to defend Mexican people, he'd be involved with the Club Alegre, the Mexican Center. Armando considered himself Chicano, and I know we were told not to say that were Chicano because that was a derogatory word at that time. But nobody wanted to be called Mexican American. [laughs] Nobody liked that name. So we kind of like just would talk about it and leave it alone.

But I remember in schools it was a big thing. Even today it's still a big thing. People don't want to be called Chicano. Now I do consider myself that because I'm an American, I'm born here, but sometimes it's just different. It's just different.

Valadez Our identity.

[00:23:50]

Cid Our identity. Exactly.

Did you did your involvement in the *Movimiento Mexicano* change you personally? Yes, it did, and how it changed me is that I mentioned it maybe, that I attended college and I wanted a good-paying job. I wanted to be somebody. I never thought that I could. And then with this, it pushed me to think, "Yeah, I can be somebody." At that time, we had a lot of stereotypes, you know, the Mexican sleeping against the cactus with a big hat, you know, we're sneaky, we're slow, we're sly, and all this stuff. Then we had to look like we were on TV, like we were White and blue-eyed, and I didn't really fit that bill.

Valadez How about the role of women in the Movement or the role of young Mexican American girls who come into the campus and seeing a whole thing go on, all the changes that were being pressed? From your point of view, did they assume those roles that were available, or did they shy back and not get in them?

[00:25:17]

Cid Well, both, because being part of the Chicano Movement meant letting the men take the lead, and if you did take the lead, you were a *feminista*. You were a women libber, which was a bad thing, and you didn't want to be a women libber, because then you were more with the White girls, not with the *mexicanos*. [laughs] So

that was a big struggle, and I think we're still struggling with that a little bit. Now it's not so much. Now we have a lot more equality, but at that time, because there was so much oppression for everyone, especially the men, they felt that, okay, if the women, and even the women, if the women go the other way, you know, saying that they were going to take the lead, then what would be the role of the men? Like they're overstepping their bounds. But the role of the *mexicanas* I think was really pivotal, in that we supported the men in being able to be take leadership roles. We did a lot of the cooking, we did a lot of the organizing, the planning, the picketing. We did everything. Even though we may not have taken leadership role right away and being face front, but we were right there next to them. Of course, we have our culture ingrained in us with the music and the food and our *cultura*, which is a good thing.

Valadez Do you think it's changed since then, that more women are—

[00:27:04]

Cid Oh, yeah, it's changed. Yeah, it's more open. People are more open and more accepting. I mean, we have to evolve. Our children are not going to sit back. But at the same time, yeah, it's changing, evolved. Yeah, it's changing and that's a good thing.

Valadez Yes. What did you personally initiate or help initiate during this time of the Movement or as you consciously became aware that there were things that needed to be done and you had a place in it?

[00:27:48]

Cid One, I got involved with the MAYA Club. I helped organize the fundraisers. I was involved with the Suspiros Del Barrio, the *teatro* company, and I

was able to participate. The first time that my parents allowed me to go, the Suspiro Del Barrio Teatro Company didn't go to the Mexican—in Mexico, the DF, when they had the first conference, I think of the radical theatre. So it was composed of all groups not only from South America, Central America, and the United States, but it was composed of everyone. It was called radical theatre, I guess, or underground theatre.

I got involved with the Alkali Flat Project Area Committee, and that was led by actually *quinteros* [phonetic] neighborhood that was mostly composed of the Hispanic community, and that community was changing rapidly, so that money was federal money. I got involved with the Bilingual/Bicultural Head Start Program for Spanish speakers, Project Maestra. It was already established, but it wasn't really focusing on Hispanics, or I should say Spanish-speaking *familias*. Because at that time, I mean, growing up in schools, my friends would tell me that their parents didn't want them to speak Spanish, and so that focus wasn't for the kids to speak Spanish. So when I got involved, I did change it around. We did bring in a bilingual curriculum, so we did bring in more of an awareness of what the community could provide. We did bring in parent participation. It was a little program, but we did a lot of things. We participated in—and I encouraged it—participated in some of the festivals that were held around Sacramento.

Valadez What was the program called?

[00:29:48]

Cid Project Maestra, Maestra Head Start Program. I got involved as a lecturer at San Francisco State for the *teatro* company, and that was a fun time. That

did involve a lot of Latinos, not just *mexicanos*, and that was even contentious because the Latinos didn't like the *mexicanos*, and *mexicanos* didn't like the Latinos. [laughs] I mean, you know, somebody's got to not like someone. So that was really interesting.

But the thing is, is that if it wasn't for the Chicano Movement, I don't think we would have the opportunities that we have today. It was basically the groundwork. We set the groundwork for other groups, for other Latinos, for everyone else to be able to come and move and have things. When I say have things, organized like we have the Fiesta en la Calle. Joe Serna came in with the Fiesta de la Familia in April, because we would have Cinco de Mayo on Cinco de Mayo. We'd have a number of things. I mean, even the Guadalupe Church, when they'd have their *kermes* or their fall festival, instead of having it on the church grounds, they would now have it at Southside Park.

Valadez How long did that program go, that education program for children?

[00:31:41]

Cid I was there for three years, and then I left and I went on to get a master's in Public Administration at the National Urban Fellows. That was based in New York. First it was under Cornell University. Then when I went, it was under the City University of New York, and I did receive a master's degree.

Valadez And then what happens after that?

[00:32:13]

Cid After I received the master's? I came home. I was married and I had my two children. I came home and I looked for a job. [laughs] I was unemployed for

a year, and I was lucky enough to get a job with the state. Actually, I did have a job interview to work as a planner for a small city in the Valley, and because my ex-husband was working in Sacramento, we weren't going to relocate, so we ended up here. We ended up staying here. We had a home already.

Valadez What did you do for the state?

[00:32:47]

Cid Well, I started out as a staff service analyst for the Health Services Department, and then from there I moved on. I was looking to move up, because I didn't see any opportunities there where I was. I did hear a lot of racial jokes from the management, and I figured, "Well, they're not going to help me here," which is kind of pretty bad.

I ended up going to the Department of Housing and Community Development, and then I moved on to the California Department of Education, where I am now and hopefully I'll finish my ten years out through there.

Valadez What you learned once upon a time in the Movement has been there for you to work with, your understanding, your consciousness in the jobs that you have had since?

[00:33:49]

Cid Right. It's helped me survive some of the—how can I say it—the internal politics, office politics, and the strength and the confidence to be able to connect with others. At the time, there was CAFE. But I think when I got in the state service, that was kind of already dwindling, but connect with other Chicanos in the state service and learn office politics, basically, that was it, and survive office politics.

Even though it was the state, it's not a piece of cake that people think. It can be very political, and, god willing, I'm able to survive until I retire. [laughs]

Valadez Well, CAFE is still in existence.

[00:34:57]

Cid Oh, is it?

Valadez It's still in existence. We had Neptaly Aguilera come by, and he was talking a little bit about CAFE and the sort of networking that was attempted to help people find entries into other levels of state.

[00:35:18]

Cid Well, those programs are really important, because, otherwise, people don't know how to get involved. They don't get hired. Even though they may be on the top, they will not get hired; they'll be passed over. What happens—and this what I've seen—is that the managers will bring in their sons or their daughters or their nephews or their wives or somebody, their neighbors or their—I don't know. So that's one thing that I see, that those doors are not open. I mean, we have to find a way to open those doors.

Valadez I think that was something that he was sharing as well, that there's this network that's already there and it's very hard to buck. You have to really gather your strengths in numbers and find ways to break through and get in there. Otherwise, you hit that glass ceiling and you can't go through there.

Would you say that your experiences during that time period influenced your career and your life's work?

[00:36:30]

Cid Yes, it has. I mean, I'm proud. When people bring things, I'll bring my Mexican dish. I'm not scared to apply for jobs. I'll apply for them just because, and I'll know I won't get it, because I'll apply for them anyway, for management jobs. And the reason why I say I know I won't get it, because those are very political positions and you do have to contribute to an elected official. You do have to contribute, and that's big money, and I'm not in that position to. And I really don't want to contribute a lot of money to someone's political campaign.

So it's helped me to defend myself, especially when they've asked me to translate documents in Spanish. I say, "Am I going to get paid for it?" [laughs]

They say, "What?"

I said, "Well, yeah. Bilingual, it's a skill."

So they said, "Oh, well, okay."

If someone else is a bilingual, if they're hired as a bilingual person, they can—and I've said that. I say, "Well, pay me for it."

Valadez That's good. It doesn't work for us sometimes, but it'll work for somebody else. Maybe if they pay attention, they'll hire someone else.

[00:38:06]

Cid Right.

Valadez Do you think that life in Sacramento is different today as a consequence of those events?

[00:38:15]

Cid Yes, it is, big time. What I see now is that we have young people in my own family that have gone on and become professionals because of that, because

of the strength and the roots that we have that we created, that *si se puede* mentality that, yes, we can go on. My son's an attorney, my daughter's a teacher. I have nieces who's a physicist, who's a planner, and who's a historian, who's an artist, an archivist. And from where my parents were, yes.

Valadez Big change.

[00:38:59]

Cid Big change.

Valadez I met your mother several times when she was doing her poems, when she was reading her poems for Día de las Madres, a very, very strong woman. I saw her the last time when she was in the hospital. [unclear] come and gone, and she didn't recognize me anymore, but it had been a long a long time since the last time that I was there.

[00:39:32]

Cid Oh, my god.

Valadez But she was she was still a fighter. She was still good.

[00:39:38]

Cid *Ay, yi, yi*, my mother, yes.

Valadez You had very strong people who guided you and made it possible for you to learn from all the things that you went through. I mean, you couldn't fail. You had to go through, and the proof is in your children, that they have gone on and become far, far greater than your mom and dad probably thought possible at that time.

[00:40:05]

Cid Right.

Valadez So things are changing. Individually, one by one, people are making a big difference.

[00:40:12]

Cid We are making a big difference. They are.

Valadez A lot of people have come and gone now, have passed on. Are there some people that you remember and that you'd like to give some remembrances to?

[00:40:28]

Cid Sure, sure. Well, one is my brother Armando R. Cid. He was the artist. He was the one that really was the catalyst in our family, even my mother, my father there, but he was more of an extroverted type of person and he'd like to go out and party and be involved, and was very proud of his artistic ability, and that comes from my mother. She was the artist. He was the one that brought the Chicano Movimiento to my family. He brought the community to my family. He was the one that agitated everybody's thinking. My oldest brother, he went on, he moved on, but he thought more mainstream, and my brother Armando Cid brought all his younger siblings, my sister, me, my brother Alfredo, Manuel, all involved with the Movement. We had our own contentions within ourselves, but he brought that and he gave us the awareness that there is a Chicano Movement.

He started or was one of the first ones, I'm sure, along with others, the Día de los Muertos a long time ago at the *panteon* at St. Mary's, and so now, to this day, it continues and other community members have continued that.

Also Richard Favela, my brother-in-law, he was really involved and he's from Fresno area in Yuba. He was really involved with the Chicano Movement and

brought the consciousness of caring for one another and being part of the family. He brought that. He has children that are artists.

Then José Montoya, you know, he was very big in this community, a big artist not only here, but throughout California.

Of course, Cesar Chavez, we were all supporting Cesar Chavez and his nonviolent movement to help the migrant workers, and that's all because we have that background because my dad was a migrant. He was a sharecropper back in Nebraska and he would talk about the short-handle hold. That was backbreaking. I think a lot of us had some similar type of experience. So those people were instrumental to us.

Valadez What do you see as current or future challenges to our community?
[00:43:23]

Cid Oh, my god. I was looking at this, and really what affects me is the crime, the crime rate, and the gangs, and the elderly. I think we have an illusion that our young people are going to take care of us when we're older, but that's not true. Because the push is so much toward the American society of the U.S. that we have now housed our old folks in in convalescent homes, and we're all Baby Boomers. We're all getting there. But are we having the children, the number of children that we had? I mean, I took care of my mom, all of us, my brothers and my sister took care of my mom. Are we going to have someone like that? I have two children, and my son's really focusing on his law firm and my daughter's a teacher, and they live in Los Angeles and they're doing well. Am I going to have them come over here and take care of me? Okay, if not, who is? Is it going to be a low-paying person?

As I go to work sometimes on the light rail, I see gang bangers beating each other up. And then I see, okay, we're going to get old and they're going to get the low-paying jobs that are going to be the home health care person. Are they going to really take care of us? So I'm looking at that, one, because I'm getting older, and, two, is because the young people, are they getting into drugs?

I mean, we have our governor talking about the environment, but what about the people here? I mean, are there opportunities there for the young people to get involved with those very high-level intellectual and educated positions? Are they going to be involved? We're having the really high pay, but then these people that are going to take care of us are going to be low paid. And what kind of culture are they bringing? Are they going to be able to go to the state service, go to City College, go to any regular government job and be able to survive in that job? I don't think so because sometimes those jobs are very insulting, they're very degrading, they're disrespectful to people. If it's hard for me to survive in an environment like that, are they going to be able to survive when they don't have those skills?

So we need, one, we need mentors to be able to say, "Okay, you can work in an office job. You don't just have to work at a lawn mowing job, lawn service job, or be a painter, contractor, construction worker. You can work in the office. You can do that, but you have to be able to bring those social skills with you," and not beat up the supervisor who says something that they may think is derogatory to you, that's disrespectful, because the supervisor is under pressure from their supervisor or because somebody called the governor and said, "Hey what are you doing?"

So I think we really need to be able to teach those social skills to be able to work in a situation that young people I don't think have, and I think that would be better for everyone, especially as we get older. They will have a little bit more conscientiousness or, I don't know, social skills or sensitivity to others, instead of always beating each other up. I don't know what that's called, but I think that's a big impact that we need to really look at.

Valadez It seems like there's a need for networking. The generation like us that are retired now and stepping away from the world of work, there is a need that is being expressed by all the kids that are getting into trouble and they're failing out of school all over again and in high numbers. It's like there's a disconnect between our generation and theirs, and it's almost like pushing us into having to deal with how do we network? How do we create organizations where we can have that dialogue with them?

[00:47:47]

Cid And that they even want to.

Valadez Because I remember when the artists would get together and Montoya was having those classes with the high schools. In that interaction, the kids were doing artwork, but they were also hearing and being involved in something that was far greater and important as well. When you were working with the parents in the preschool program, you were bringing out a level of awareness to people who didn't have that awareness about new aspirations that they could have. I think that relationship needs to be recreated again, and we need to be involved in it somehow so that we don't lose hope and, at the same time, we assure ourselves that the people that

we count on being there and being trained and being competent are going to be there. But we've got to do that. I don't think anybody—

[00:48:48]

Cid How can we do that? Other than trying to get funding, I don't know. I mean, I don't know how we could. Either agencies, through the schools? I don't know how we could do that.

Valadez It seems like there's no organization out there right now. It seems like we have to dream it. We have to create it.

[00:49:07]

Cid Right. It's very important because it's for our future, not only *our* future as we get older, but *their* future because they're going to have children and then they're going to have the same situation as they grow older, and they may not survive. They may die. That's the way things are going, They may not be able to survive. It's really a dance to be able to live this long. I mean, getting old is not for the weak.

Valadez No. Is there anything else you would like to bring up that you've thought about? This is Olga Cid making her last commentary to us here.

[00:49:59]

Cid We need mentors. And like I said, that's, I think, a gap there.

Let's see. I talked a little bit about my early memories. We talked about the Chicano Movement. We talked about La Raza Galeria. Well, I'm sure something's going to come up.

I would like to express my gratitude that you're leading this and heading this up, because it's important. I would like to see that we have some sort of archive library either at Sac State or somewhere, even at the Crocker Art Gallery, somewhere that can house this. It's our history. I mean, we are part of history. We shouldn't be hidden. Other cultures, other nationalities, other races, they have their history projects and it's well received. Why not us? I mean, I think it's important for our children and for others to understand that we're here and *no nos vamos*. That's it.

Valdez That's great. That's great.

[End of interview]