

The Sacramento Movimiento Chicano and Mexican American Education  
Oral History Project

**Joaquín Domingo Galván**

Oral History Memoir

Interviewed by David Rasul  
September 15, 2015

Transcription by Regina Hernández and Technitype Transcripts

**Rasul** Joaquín, could you please state your full name?

[00:00:10]

**Galván** My full name is Joaquín Domingo Galván.

**Rasul** And your birthdate?

[00:00:15]

**Galván** I was born December 6, 1955.

**Rasul** And your marital status?

[00:00:20]

**Galván** I was married once, a long time ago; been divorced a long time ago.

**Rasul** Do you have any children, Joaquín?

[00:00:27]

**Galván** I do. They're grown. I have a forty-year-old son and a thirty-six-year-old daughter. I have six grandchildren and I have five great-grandchildren.

**Rasul** Oh, congratulations.

[00:00:36]

**Galván** Thank you.

**Rasul** I only have one. [laughs] Where were you born and raised, Joaquín?

[00:00:41]

**Galván** I was a migrant farmworker. My parents are *Tejanos*, and I was born in Phoenix, Arizona, during the cotton season.

**Rasul** And what did your parents do for a living?

[00:00:52]

**Galván** They were *campesinos*.

**Rasul** Throughout Texas and when you moved over here too?

[00:00:58]

**Galván** Yes, yes. When they got married, they stabilized and settled just in Arizona and California.

**Rasul** So they traveled mainly through Texas and Arizona and California?

[00:01:08]

**Galván** Texas, Arizona, Washington, Oregon, but once they got married and started having kids, they just centralized in Arizona and California. We stabilized in California. My father found year-round work probably in about 1965 in California.

**Rasul** How many brothers and sisters did you have?

[00:01:32]

**Galván** I'm the oldest of eight. I have six sisters and a brother.

**Rasul** And they're—

[00:01:39]

**Galván** They're all over.

**Rasul** Could you tell me a little bit about their education?

[00:01:44]

**Galván** Okay. The ones that follow me are twins, [Spanish]. One lives in Washington State, the other in Arizona. They didn't go to college, but one works with seniors' health, and the other one works with youth health.

The one that follows that is my brother, he's got job training as a machinist and now he has his own company for the past twenty years. He [unclear] flywheels. He's got a good reputation with that.

The one that follows that him is my sister, was a hair cutter, beautician, but she got retrained as a nurse, so she's a nurse now. So she went back to school for that in her older age. And my other sisters, the one that follows her works at a store, grocery store. The other one that follows works at UC Davis as a student affairs person, and then the one that follows her is disabled.

**Rasul** Can you please describe your youth, your neighborhood that you lived in, your activities you did while you were growing up?

[00:03:11]

**Galván** We were migrants, so half of the year we spent here in California, and then when it started raining here, we went to Arizona and we continued school over there because there was more work there for my parents, so typical youth. My parents had limited education. My father says he went up to the first grade, because his family took him out to work, but he did know how to read, and write, limited math, no multiplication or division, just regular addition and subtraction. My mother went up to the sixth grade, so she was a little bit more. I was sort of homeschooled back then, for various reasons, when I turned five. So education was very important to

them, so they didn't want us to be in the fields when school was on, but as soon as school was out, we were out in the fields. So school was important, but we had to work too.

**Rasul** Can you say a little about your early education in the education system, maybe your experiences in that?

[00:04:20]

**Galván** Sure. I started school at five years old in Arizona, but then we moved over here to California, and they wouldn't allow me to be in school because I was born in December. I had to wait another year, and that's where the homeschooling came in. So by the time I started regular school here, I already knew my alphabets, I already knew the numbers, I already knew the concept of zero. That was the homeschooling early days, so that gave me an advantage when school did begin, because I was already reading limited at that level, but still reading and understanding it, while most people were still learning their alphabet, so that gave me sort of an interest in education at an early age.

**Rasul** Were you a Fellow, Felito, or were you actually involved in the Mexican American Education Project?

[00:05:12]

**Galván** I was not.

**Rasul** Were you aware of anyone that was involved in that project?

[00:05:17]

**Galván** I was not, am not.

**Rasul** Did your study of cultural anthropology or your knowledge of cultural issues influence your involvement and participation in the Movimiento Chicano?

[00:05:32]

**Galván** I'm sure it did, because I knew about culture before I went to college, and anthropology I learned during college. Putting the two together, I realized, well, I'm a living example of it, so, yeah, of course, it shared with me a perspective of history. At the time when I became conscious, it must have been, oh, in the mid-sixties because of the Civil Rights Movement, the Music Movement, Motown, and the Vietnam thing in the later sixties, and Cesar Chavez and the boycotts. We were *campesinos*, so that was a direct link to me as to this whole concept of culture.

**Rasul** So you were able to embrace all of those issues behind your knowledge of culture and your history.

[00:06:21]

**Galván** Yes. Yes, of course, because I was part of the *familia*, and being the oldest, I always hung out with the adults as they were talking about different things.

**Rasul** What are your earliest memories of events that attracted you to the Chicano Movement?

[00:06:35]

**Galván** Well, it would probably have to be the UFW, because we were farmworkers, we were migrant farmworkers, we lived in the camps in different places, so we had that background. In the early days here in California, to give an example, we used to pick tomatoes, tomatoes by hand, in boxes and there might have been 200 people out there, families like our family, just 200 people, and it was a

whole culture on the weekends where we would go out there and work. And we would work because we needed money for school, school clothes and food for the year. The more kids you had, the more hands you had, so we were able to contribute at that point.

Then later on, they developed the machines, the tomato machines, and we were part of that movement, I guess in the late sixties, early seventies, where now it wasn't 200 people and now maybe it was 50 people and three machines.

Then in the later seventies, they had the electronic-eye picking machines, where now you only needed like five people to do the job of 100 people.

So I was exposed to the Movement through agriculture. The lettuce boycott, the grape boycott, Cesar Chavez in the news, all that in the sixties was the talk of all us *campesinos*, so that sort of says "Hey, we're represented. That's us. He's helping us."

**Rasul** During that whole movement with the *campesinos*, *mexicano*, Mexican American, the term *Chicano* arose during that whole period.

[00:08:27]

**Galván** Yes.

**Rasul** How did our *gente*, our people you came into contact, the elder, the youth react to the term *Chicano*?

[00:08:33]

**Galván** Well, I asked my father way back when we started using the word *Chicano*, and he says that they'd been using the word *Chicano* since the 1940s, so it wasn't nothing new of the sixties, and it was just the distinction that we were from the

United States. And that surprised me back then. They didn't call themselves Chicanos because my father was a *Tejano*, and *Tejanos* claim *Tejano*, okay, so he was a *Tejano*. My mom *era Tejana*. My father *era del valle* Rio Grande, the mission, McAllen, Reynosa, and my mother was from the Panhandle, what they call *el west*, West Texas over there in Lubbock and Hartford and that area. So the terminology for me started maybe in about 1971, '72, when I started calling myself a Chicano.

**Rasul** And why did you feel you could call yourself a Chicano?

[00:09:35]

**Galván** At that point I was starting to get educated. There was a lot of publications coming out. There was a magazine I remember out of L.A. that came up here, was *La Raza*, and it was just a little magazine about *raza* and it started sharing little stories about stuff.

Also, in 1971, I was a *campesino*, I was in high school, I was invited to participate in the Upward Bound program at UC Davis. It was probably their second year it was there at Davis, and they invited us people with potential, I guess was what they called it, people off the street, and say, "You want to go to college?"

"I got to work."

He says, "Well, you know, this is only six weeks."

And I asked my parents. My parents were always pro-education. They said, "Yeah, you can do six weeks, but you got to come back and work once you're done."

So that exposed me to another world. I was at UC Davis for six weeks. I was a teenager. 1971, you can imagine the music, the drugs, the sex, the whole environment anti-social, the hippies. So it was a prime time for mind-awakening, and the Chicano

Movement was part of that, because at that time also it was the Black Panthers, the Brown Berets that were also anti-social, I guess.

I guess around that time I also became aware that in 1964 and '65, before then, we were discriminated against, and we knew that, because when I was a kid as a farmworker traveling from California to Texas, because my father and mother's family were in Texas, there would be restaurants that they still had signs "No niggers, no Mexicans, no dogs allowed." And at that time, I didn't really make the connection, but say, "Hey, there's a hamburger place.

"No, we can't stop there."

Okay, so we'd go to another place. In those days, you could get like ten hamburgers for a dollar, but they were little hamburgers, right? And there was a whole bunch of us. So we were we looked at that,

But it was that awakening when I started this Upward Bound and started taking one of these classes on culture that they gave us, that I became aware of the pre-'64, '65 when it was okay to discriminate against anybody that was not White, and that's, I guess, when the rage began, saying, "What the heck, man?" That's only a few years ago.

**Rasul** And you mentioned in your description about how you weren't allowed to go to different places, so how much of the Civil Rights Movement were you aware of before the Chicano Movement?

[00:12:27]

**Galván** Well, like I said, I wasn't really aware of it until then, because it was just part of life. We couldn't go certain places. And I would always hear the family



members talking about my mother's father *era guero* and he could go into restaurants, and one of his sons, *un tío, era guero* so they could go into restaurants and pass as White, but anybody *qué tenia color*, said, "No, we can't serve you here." So even then, those stories were from the beginning. *Y luego los pleitos*, you know, there's always *pleitos* at the cantinas and at the movie theatres, at the swimming pools. "What do you mean we can't?" So *los pleitos* in Texas, I always heard about those as a kid.

**Rasul** Before we move on from the term *Chicano*, I'm curious how do you think the term *Chicano* is accepted now.

[00:13:19]

**Galván** Well, this is the problem. It is a big problem because our students do not know the word *Chicano* now. They were domesticated with *Hispanic* and *Latino*, so they really are not part of that Chicano Movement. So those of us that were, we're like Chicanos for life and we try to give it to our kids, but this is a different generation and they didn't have the struggles that we did. They didn't have all the marches and the pickets and the boycotts, so they really don't have a history of it. And even in my class, I get surprised. And they want more, they want more information on it, so I try to make some lectures specifically on some of the things that have passed and why we feel that we are still Chicanos.

**Rasul** Absolutely. Did your involvement in the Movimiento Chicano change you personally?

[00:14:13]

**Galván** Of course, of course. It was that time period of social change. I was a *campesino*. If the Chicano Movement had not arrived, I would've remained a *campesino*, but because of the Movements, I was able to go to Upward Bound at UC Davis that introduced me to a whole different grouping of people.

At that time, the first Chicanos at UC Davis came in 1968, and there were twenty of them, so there were 100 non-White students at UC Davis as a pilot program under the War on Poverty. So there were, like, twenty Chicanos, twenty Blacks, twenty Indians, Native Americans, twenty Chinese Americans, and twenty something else. I forget what that was; might have been Filipino. But there were 100, and from that, '69, there was a few more, and in '70 a few more, so by '71 when I got introduced to that, there was already a little grouping there. That's how I got introduced to the Movimiento. So it changed me, yeah.

**Rasul** With your other peers who were non-Chicano, how was that relationship?

[00:15:33]

**Galván** Well, when I went back to high school after that summer Upward Bound program in '71, I was different, and my classmates, my peers, had noticed the difference, because I had been exposed to a lot of other things and I was talking things that they had not been exposed to. Some wanted to know more and some didn't want to hear anything about it because it was too uncomfortable.

So after that, there was a group of us that would start different things in the high school, cultural events, bringing speakers. I remember I think it was in '73, one of our family members there sent from the *familia* Polindos, they lived in Dixon and

there was four of them that were in high school at the same time: Gracie, Hector, “Lolly,” and Alma. They had an older sister and older brothers, and Juanita was very active with UFW before they moved to Sacramento, but she brought into our high school, three—I believe two for sure, I think it was three, José Montoya and Estaban Villa to our high school at a school assembly, and that just woke everybody up, because they were talking Chicano, they were talking our level, and I know that it made the administration very uncomfortable.

**Rasul**           What role do you believe that Chicanas played in the Movimiento?

[00:17:13]

**Galván**           I think they’ve been underestimated because of the double standards and the *machismo* and all that. The *mujer* had a very strong role in it. They tried to look at it, *los hombres*, as *los mujeres de support*, but in reality, *la mujer* was the backbone, in my book, only because I was raised with strong females in my family, *la jefita era trabajadora*, she wanted us educated, she wanted the best out of all of us, her sisters, her friends. So I was raised with strong women, and in the Movimiento we would see that as well, but because of the politics, there were also women that were playing the game. They were looking for husbands. It was the sexual revolution, right? So there was a lot of sex going on, lot of drugs. So it was a time of transformation, but *la mujer* was never given in the early days the opportunities to be an equal, and I think it wasn’t until the later seventies where they say, “Hey, stop this shit. I’m your equal.” And I think it started being noticed more and more. It was probably all along, but at some point it reached a critical mass where as a group they say “Hey, that’s it. I’m not gonna get your coffee.” [laughter]

**Rasul** Can you name one or two Chicanas during that period that you remember who were forceful in the Movement?

[00:18:45]

**Galván** Well, I remember Juanita Polindo because she was part of the neighborhood and they were *campesinos* also. They had a large family. Our family was large, so many of their siblings were in school with our siblings. So she was always active with the UFW, social justice, so that was very important back then in the early, early days.

**Rasul** She hasn't stopped yet. [laughs]

[00:19:18]

**Galván** She still hasn't stopped. She continues, yes. And, her sister Oralea, Lolly, also became very active. She was more my age. She was involved with the Teatro Campesino; she went on tour with them. She was a very, very powerful young woman as well, back then, as a family.

And then there were also community members. My mother was a good example, because in the early days, in the mid-sixties, we came to California, and in the school system, very few *mujeres* knew English, and my mom was bilingual, *era Tejana*, so she would help the school and help the mothers and help them communicate. So there was other *Tejanas* that was part of that circle and there were people from California that were also bilingual, Latinas, Mexicanas, Chicanas, depending on their position at the time, but they were very powerful in helping with the school. I think they continue to be, you know, because of their kids.

**Rasul**            Joaquín, what did you personally initiate or help initiate in this Movimiento Chicano?

[00:20:35]

**Galván**            Well, I guess it would all start back in the seventies, I guess, because I became involved with the UC Davis and I got hired on to UC Davis after I did my bachelor's and my master's there at Davis. I worked for thirty years there. I was hired on as the retention coordinator for the Chicano/Latino community. At the time, it was something different, something new, but it was too overwhelming because it wasn't just that community, I was also in retention for the African American community, the Native American community, the poor Asian community. And at some point, I said, "This is, too, much. I need more help." So they found more money and eventually they hired three more people to those communities, so I was able to concentrate on the Chicano/Latino community at UC Davis.

So I was involved with a lot of stuff from here in Sacramento because it was a linkage between Sac State and UC Davis. There would always be cooperation, especially in the seventies when the UFW came to the area and tried to unionize. Davis being the Ag school, issues arose, so my role was to help the students feel comfortable being in college. Many times they would come to me because I would look like their relative, *un primo, un tío*, somebody in the neighborhood, and they would feel comfortable with me instead of going to a White woman or a White man for advice.

So based on that, I was able to create the Chicano/Latino welcome for all the new students that continues today. I was able to create Casa Cuauhtémoc, which is

the Chicano/Latino theme house on campus. That was a struggle unto itself, similar to Casa Zapata at Stanford, which was private, but this was the UC, so we were the first UC to do a theme house like that. I also started the Chicano/Latino graduation at UC Davis, which is now over thirty years old.

I saw a lot of students, a lot of students one-on-one. I saw an average of, let's say—Davis is on a ten-week system, so in that ten-week system, if I saw, let's say, ten students a week, just for instance, or let's just say half of that, let's say twenty students a week, about twenty a week, so that's 200 students a quarter one-on-one, not counting the groups, because I helped create a lot of the student groups. So in three quarters, that's 600 students. In one year, that's 6,000. In ten years, in twenty years, in thirty years, so I saw a lot of students, and I think that's my biggest contribution. I was trying to maintain my integrity and trying to help.

**Rasul** During your involvement with that, what significant organizations did you work with that helped in that effort?

[00:24:08]

**Galván** Well, all the ones on the campus, of course, and then all the students, because they're all leaders, they didn't want to stay within one. They created their own. So in the early, early days, you had the MEChA and then you had the CHE, Chicanos in Health Education, and then you had the engineers, their [Spanish]. So those are the three main ones, and then more developed from that.

Then in the eighties, *lo que pasó* was we started getting this phenomena of the Chicano/Latino fraternities and sororities, and I had a *hard* time adjusting to that, a *really* hard time. I tried to educate them, but it was critical mass at that point; it was

national. So I ended up being the staff advisor to just about the first half dozen of them because I was the only Chicano on campus that was willing. *Y ahora*, it's out of control.

**Rasul** So you just mentioned something about the only Chicano on campus that was willing, so *que pasó con los otros?*

[00:25:14]

**Galván** There was a lot of us at one time, but because of the *politica*—this is UC Davis, this is the University of California—we had at one point enough power. We had a person in charge of admissions in the UC system [Spanish] at UC Berkeley, the main headquarters, and he created—eventually it ended up being a convocation of all UCs, so the *raza*, all the outreach and admissions. How can we improve all that? So it was back in the eighties.

So we all got together and that gave us an opportunity to compare notes—“What are you doing? What works? What doesn't work? Who's the allies and who's the enemies?”—from all the UCs. So we did that for a couple of years and we divided up into different groups and did reports and did reports, one report. The faculty, the administration, the staff, the students, we all broke up and had our reports and put it together and sent it to the Office of the President, “There's a lack of—here, so what are we going to do?”

They didn't like that, so they fired him. So I think it was the third or fourth year, they fired him because it was just exposing all these gaps in the UC. It was *raza*. So he went over to—I think it was San Francisco State, and he did the same thing, but now he created it for not only the UC, but the CSUs, and now we called it an

intersegmental convocation. You probably remember. You probably attended some of those. So we also included the community colleges, the high schools, and community members, so now it became this *big* thing.

So we did that for two or three years, and as you can imagine, he got fired for that, too, and he ended up going out of state, going to Texas, and we were never able to—the person that followed up with him, his name was, Mike Hadaco, and after a year or two, he got fired as well. So that’s what happened to all our activists. We all got displaced, we got fired, and some of us stayed, but the majority of us didn’t.

**Rasul** So some of the rest of the faculty who didn’t, they got—

[00:27:51]

**Galván** They didn’t get tenure.

**Rasul** And they got subdued by this whole effort.

[00:27:55]

**Galván** Right. The way that the system works at the UC and the CSUs, you have to have tenure in order to become an activist. Here, too, at the community college. If you don’t have tenure, you’re not going to get full-time employment, so newcomers really have to be *really* careful. They might come at the *corazón*, but they have to take care of their business first.

At the UC, the motto is “Publish or Perish,” because they don’t teach us much, but they do a lot more research. So the way the UC handled the activist is they would say, “That community work is not going to work for your tenure. That’s fine on your own time, but that’s not going to get you published in the journals that we need you to be published in.” So we lost a lot of people that way.



**Rasul** You somewhat answered this next one. Did the Movimiento Chicano raise your consciousness along social, cultural, political lines?

[00:28:50]

**Galván** Yeah, of course. Everything that I've been saying has. If not, it's to be a *campesino* out there just working all day and having my beer after work, *la cena y a dormir* y do it all over again, you know. I did that for a long time. I was a *campesino*. I drove tractors, Caterpillar, you know, the Caterpillar, yeah, and did that stuff. I was an irrigator. I had the *pipas*, you know. I was a *campesino*. That's what my parents knew. That's what I was taught. So, yeah, the consciousness got me out of that and says there's something more.

**Rasul** I know it takes a lot of work to be involved and be an activist, so how did that activism and involvement affect your personal relationships?

[00:29:32]

**Galván** Well, everybody that I knew was an activist because that's sort of the circles that you run with, and that's how I got to meet a lot of the Sacramento people like you and many of the RCAF people in the early days, because we were all doing the same thing in different fronts. The Sacramento group was the city. Davis was more rural, so we were working with communities like Dixon and Woodland and Vacaville and Winters, Esparto, little towns, same thing but a different focus. So the majority of the people that were my friends were other activists, and it did take a toll because I would be gone a lot for different things. I was married; I had kids; I was a student; I was employed. I got divorced. That's a biggie. That's probably a primary one, divorce.

**Rasul** And also the relationships in meetings with non-Chicanos, how does that relationship go?

[00:30:37]

**Galván** Well, you know, we were always looked up as troublemakers. We had a lot of meetings specifically in Dixon because I lived in Dixon for a good chunk of time, different times. I've lived in Dixon, West Sac, Davis, Woodland, Winters. I've lived there since I moved out of my parents' house, and we always were dealing with school boards, the police departments, the city councils, so whenever two or three of us would arrive, they would already expect issues because we wouldn't show up unless there was something going on. They didn't want us to be around.

**Rasul** So how do you think that this affected your career, your involvement with the Chicano Movement?

[00:31:27]

**Galván** Well, my career, I could have gone a lot of different directions, but because of my political stance, I was also that glass ceiling, you know. I was pretty much told, "You're not going to go any higher, because we need a team player." And a team player is one of those people that goes along with the company line, and because of the role that I was in helping with students, at Davis I was given various internships so I can be mentored by administrators to be an administrator, but I would say things in these meetings that were considered inappropriate.

I remember one meeting specifically. They were talking about people of color, people of color. And I was the only person of color in that room, okay, because I was an intern with the administration. And I had raised the question, "Well,

wait a minute. White is a color too.” And everybody got uncomfortable, because that opened the curtain. Instead of saying “White” and “non-White,” “people of color.” But white is a color. So they didn’t want to say “White” and “non-White,” because that became too obvious. At one time was very derogatory, “colored people.” “You colored people,” and it became “people of color.” But white is a color. So that wasn’t viewed upon very good.

Another time in those meetings when I was doing an internship again, management, they wanted to see if I fit the qualifications. I said something again about the demographic shift that was happening and how at this rate the Chicano population was going to outnumber the White population in California. Everybody got nervous. I was pointing out the Department of Finance has these records that shows who’s being born. And people got really nervous when I started talking about that.

I talked with some person afterwards, and I said, “I don’t understand what was everybody nervous about.”

He was a friend of mine. He says, “You don’t understand. You’re talking about these people’s daughters.”

I said, “No, I wasn’t talking about their daughters.”

“Yeah, you’re talking about 50 percent of the high school class is going to be Latino and 50 percent are going to graduate. That means that their daughters, they have a 50 percent chance of marrying a Latino, which means that they have a 50 percent chance of having dark babies. That made them nervous.”

I said, “I didn’t know that! I didn’t even think about that!”

But White people have this fear, this White supremacy, White dominance that I wasn't aware of at the time, and now it's turned true. In 2001, my understanding going on the demographics, that's when 50 percent of the babies born in California were Latino. That means that this fall, right *now*, 50 percent of the freshman class in high school are Latino. That's not counting the undocumented students, the Dreamers; that's another 12 to 14 percent. So you're now looking at 65 percent of the freshman class is Latino in high school, and people knew this in the nineties.

The people in power, that's why they had all these propositions against us. And after the nineties, as you remember, we were all beat up, man, 227, 209, all the way up to 21, where you can charge youth as adults. So every two years there was a proposition against Latinos. We got all beat up, because they saw the numbers. And in 2001, *es cuando pasó*, and now this past July, I understand that the White population in the United States is under 50 percent, not just Latino, but all other ethnicities. So that's making people even more nervous. So that's what the Chicano Movement did to me: it made me conscious.

**Rasul** Do you feel there's any issues left unresolved from the time period of the Chicano Movement?

[00:36:13]

**Galván** Of course there is. There's so many, so many, because it's not just ethnic. This whole concept of race, trying to separate people as race, as dehumanizing, some are more human than others, you know, that's totally part of that colonialism of conquest, that they're so much percent human and so much blood

human. It's making them dehumanized. So we have to work on that quite a bit before we change as a world.

Especially right now what's happening with the migrants and refugees going into Europe, it's a good example. It's even worse there than the Mexican problem in the United States and the South American problem coming in to Mexico, this whole migration issue. I think that really needs to be looked at, because we're human, you know. We have one planet. And the young people know that. They're trying to not separate and realize that. Now with social media, the Internet, the young people are connected like we could not even imagine. YouTube, anything you want on YouTube, you know, probably even brain surgery. I don't know. But they have *everything* on YouTube. They'll have a lot of movies, Chicano movies, old movies, documentaries.

I think the big thing is just the term *Chicano*. The young people are hungry for culture, just like we were in the early days. We knew we were not White. We knew we didn't *want* to be White. We like our *frijoles* and *tortillas* and *chilito*, you know. We knew that just like today's youth know that.

But we have this big struggle now with Ethnic Studies, especially the thing that happened with Arizona, where they created laws to outlaw Ethnic Studies, but not just Ethnic Studies, Mexican American Studies, because the other Ethnic Studies still are intact. They never took them out. I think here in California we're starting that movement again. In Woodland, for instance, their school board, very interesting the way they did that. They have been dominated by the *rancheros*, school

boards, so what they did is they broke it up by districts, so now this district votes for their person, their person, their person, their person, their person. It's not just an open.

So what happened, you have three Chicanos on the school board, very progressive. One of them is a former professor, Cirenio [Rodriguez] from Sac State school board. So what did they do? They put in place an Ethnic Studies requirement for graduation in Woodland. So that's what's happening more and more.

So once that got off, Woodland again saw this district, district, district, and other communities were being sued because of that process of general, so this past year they also did it by district for the city council. So we'll see how that turns up at the next elections. We have one Chicano now on the city council. There may be more. So I think that's a trend that's going to continue.

The problem is that everything is institutionalized. It's ingrained in the system. It's all about that manifest destiny from way back when. The court system, it's institutionalized racism. They work within to block out all the non-White populations, and I think that's the biggest obstacle. It's engrained. [Barack] Obama, good example, half Black half White. Everybody thought he's going to save it, but the whole system is so engrained, the capitalism, the corporations, that he could do what he could do, but the monster is *so* entrenched. It's too big to die or whatever, to fail. It's a *big* problem because now it really is like back 500 years ago before the conquest. It's those that have money and those that don't. There's very few, that 1 percent, and the 99 percent. Very true, big problem.

**Rasul**            Joaquín, looking back in the sixties, seventies, the Chicano/Latino community, their psyche, their feelings, emotions, looking now, how did the Chicano Movement change that community, the psyche, their feelings, their sentiments, etc.?  
[00:41:20]

**Galván**            Well, those that were active I think will be Chicanos for life, like me and probably most of the people you are interviewing. We're Chicanos for lifers. We don't consider ourselves Latinos or Hispanics; we're Chicanos. And I think that sends a message, because we fought, we marched, we picketed, we did sit-ins, you know. We challenged the system, so we know that it's doable. But the system fought back, and the way they fought back was through the laws. They created gang enhancements, so if somebody creates a burglary but they're associated with somebody that's involved in a gang, that's an additional ten years *in prison*. So they're still doing this *mass* incarceration of our youth, not just Chicanos, but African Americans, Filipinos, Cambodians, Vietnamese. It's mass incarceration. That's a big problem.

                          The other issue that they're addressing now is drugs. They infiltrated drugs into our community to neutralize our young people, they targeted our young people, and that's how they neutralized us. You know people, I know people that that's happened to in the neighborhood, in our families, where the young people get caught up into the drugs, the gangs, the neighborhood, and all a sudden they're labeled. So that's how they began neutralizing us.

                          And then the next phase was limiting education, because we *had* education. When I went to school at UC Davis, I had a pretty good financial aid package. I could

*not* have gone to school without financial aid. I was a *campesino*. But now our young people are coming out with *huge* bills for education, and some of them are wondering is this even worth going. Of course it is, because it's a consciousness-raising.

So the sixties and seventies would be that, raising consciousness of we are human. Like the whole thing of civil rights when the boycotts happened, when that African American man was put into the dumpster and killed and everybody boycotted, they had the signs, "We are men. We are men." Because they were treating people like if we were animals, dehumanizing us. The same thing now that happened this past year with the videotaping. Everybody has a camera on their phone, so now they're capturing what we've been talking about all these decades. The police are after us, they're after us, they've been after us. That's why we have so many and all the numbers are popping up and coming up. So they're neutralizing us because they realized we had some power. So we remember that they neutralized us and continue to.

**Rasul**        Joaquín, what impact do you think the arts had on our community, art, the dance, *musica*? What kind of impact, do you think?

[00:44:52]

**Galván**        I think it had a huge for us, because the *musica*, there was the hippie-type music, but then there was the counterculture music. For us, in the early days there was Santana, the Woodstock, *un Chicano* doing Woodstock, and all of a sudden you have the Bay Area crowd and then the L.A. crowd and then the *Tejano* crowd. So the music now came over the airways. I remember my *jefita*, I'd ask her, "What kind of music you like? Because I'm a music collector."



And she said, "I like country music." In Tejas, that's all they played, so that's what I grew up with, some Hank Williams and that kind of stuff.

So our generation grew up with Motown in the sixties, right? That was, like, cutting-edge at the time, all the hippie music, right? And then we came up with all the Chicano music, you know, *el Chicano*, Azteca, Malo, Santana, and then it continued evolving from that. The L.A. group, of course, they had The Midnighters and The Premiers and all those groups, the oldies but goodies.

But then when the drug scene came, like in Sacramento, we had Freddy's band, and Freddy's band was like a history unto itself, and I'm sure they've already covered a lot of that, but they were always at all the events, and if they found other musicians, "Hey, come on, come on, join us, man." The problem with that was it was during that time when there was a lot of drugs and we had a lot of casualties because of the drugs.

The art scene, we're all familiar what the RCAF did up here, with *los cuatro* down in L.A., with Magu and them, with the Bay Area group over there with Malaquias [phonetic] and them, so there was always the posters, the Chicano art, the archive *está*. I'm sorry that he passed away, that you couldn't interview him, was Favela [phonetic], because he had the whole collection. Fortunately, he passed them on for different collections. But he was the archivist for the posters. I remember that from the early, early days, you know, I would see these posters all over the place. I said, "Man, this is art!" And it was just on a post or a store window or something, announcing some event.

**Rasul**           What do you think that art did for, like, the average Chicano, Mexicano, Latino that wasn't an activist, but just a regular community member?

[00:47:42]

**Galván**           I think they identified with it because it was *raza*-centered, it was *raza*-themed, and that was the difference, you know. Early days here in Sacramento, you had Armando and Rosie on television speaking English and Spanish simultaneously in these different programs that were on TV, and people listened to them, even though it was early in the mornings on Sundays and stuff. [laughter] I think anything that was *raza*-themed, one could identify with because we *knew* that we were not White. They *wanted* to make us White. They would change our names. There's a lot of Es in the changing. There's a Bobbie, a Robbie, a Debbie, you know. [laughter] They changed all our names, right, to make us as Americanized as possible, when we knew we weren't and we tried to ride both lines.

So the music, the, art, and even movies later on, like *El Norte* was very popular at the time. Later, it was *Mi Familia*, *raza*-themed, *La Bamba* and now, talking of *La Bamba*, we have *Los Lobos*. I think they're completing forty years, forty *years* of playing together. There's a book that just came out on them, to share that part of it, but it was very important. Anything that gave pride to the young people about themselves, saying we have a history.

When I teach in some of my classes, I try to tell the young *raza*, "Hey, we have a huge history that they haven't been telling you about: the concept of zero, the pyramids, the astrology, medicine, food. Three-fifths of the food in the world

came from the Americas. So there's a lot of things that aren't told, and that's all because of the conquest." So anything *raza*-themed, we'll eat it up, man.

**Rasul** Time has passed and we have lost some of our activists. Can you mention one or two activists that you recall, that has passed away, that had a role in the Chicano Movement here in Sacramento and Davis, etc.?

[00:50:10]

**Galván** Sure, of course. There's been several. A couple of my mentors was Jesus Leyva out of UC Davis. He was the first Chicano at Davis that was hired as Special Assistant to the Chancellor on Chicano Affairs. This was in the early seventies, because of the shift. He became one of my mentors. He passed—I think it was in 2002, but he was very influential there at UC Davis and the UC system.

Here in Sacramento, José Montoya, without a doubt. He was the point person. He was so humorous, he had a great personality, very creative. He was a militant, but he had a way about him. He did so many things. Locally, I would say those are the two.

Politically, it would be Joe Serna. People probably already talked about him because he was so influential in Sacramento specifically, did so many things to Sac State—he was a professor there—but also in the community. His wife also, Isabel, she was very active from that perspective. I'm glad you're doing this before we all disappear. [laughter]

**Rasul** Any future challenges you see for the Chicano Movement? I'm sure you see many, and you mentioned some. And also any final words you have for us?

[00:51:57]

**Galván** Well, of course, the challenges are nonending. I think the biggest challenge that we as a humanity are going to have are with the capitalists and the corporations, the 1 percent versus the 99 percent. Us, *lo de abajo*, we're always going to be at a disadvantage because those that have the money make the rules and make the laws. They've been doing that a long time.

I think the climate change is undeniable now. I think people are going to have to deal with that at some point or another, come to the realization that we have to do things differently. We have to go solar, because the grid is just not going to be able to support so many people. I think the drought here in California specifically is going to have an impact on everyone. It is already. It's going to continue. I still see the people watering their grass. I think that's a shame. They don't understand. They don't get it. The golf courses, of course, they're always green, and then we're over here struggling just to feed our tomatoes and our *chiles* with water because we're challenged with this drought.

Socially, I think our young people are challenged because we've been targeted through the institutionalized criminal system. We are targets, easy targets. It's surfacing more and more that we're being incarcerated at a disproportionate rate similar to Vietnam back in the sixties where the non-White population was disproportionately being drafted and killed, where the White people could find deferments.

And our *raza*, our young *raza* are having such a hard time just surviving financially. Our students here that I teach here at Sac City, I would say 90 percent of them work and they have to work. It's not that they want; they have to work. And

they're trying to fit in the school along with their work, and I think that's going to be a challenge for a lot of our young people.

And then finding their self-identity. We're still underrepresented in the media, in television, in the movies, and that's where our young people are looking at.

They're saying, "Where's our role models? Who do we follow?"

Closing words? A couple of things, I guess. The young people, our generation kept saying, "Where's our next leadership coming from? Where's our next 'Corky' Gonzalez? Where's our next Cesar Chavez?" And people have been waiting. So us older people tell them, "We *are* the ones we've been waiting for. So there is nobody. It's *us*. We have to move. We have to help those that come after us. We have to learn from those that came before us, because we're here now. So we're just part of a link in this chain."

Parting words. Because our population is based on spiritualism, I'll leave you with this. We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we're spiritual beings having a human experience. We're just passing through. *Aquí estamos y nos vamos. Gracias.*

**Rasul**        Joaquín, I want to thank you for participating here and I also want to personally thank you. I think your best achievement, if we can mention, was the one-to-one counseling you did with our Chicano students. *Gracias.*

[00:55:54]

**Galván**        You're very welcome. If I can just add this, there's a lot of new people coming in, there's a lot of us that are retiring, and they ask, "What can I do?" And I always tell them that you have to personalize it. You can't just tell the young people,

“Oh, go to the financial aid department and they’ll help you.” You have to direct them to somebody *in* those departments. It has to be that personal contact that we need. Just like we have done, it has to be personal because it’s a bureaucracy. All right? *Gracias*.

**Rasul**            *Gracias*.

[End of interview]