

Race and Oral History in San Diego, UC San Diego

Narrator: Mario Chacón

Interviewer: Noemí Rodríguez

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**Noemí:** I'm going to start by saying hi.

**Mario:** Okay [laughter]

**Noemí:** And I'll mention the release form so, this interview is conducted in accordance with the goals and course description of Ethnic 120D, Race and Oral History in San Diego under the direction of Yen Espiritu. In consideration of the recording and preservation of this oral history by students of the University of California, San Diego, the interviewee, Mario Chacón, and I the interviewer Noemí Rodríguez, hereby transfer to the University the rights to publish, duplicate, or otherwise use the recording and transcribed interview and any photographs or videotapes footage taken during the interview. This includes publication rights in print and electronic form such as on the Internet, the right to rebroadcast the interview or portions thereof, and permission to transfer the interview to future media. The University of California, San Diego hereby agrees to preserve the products of this oral history interview according to accepted professional standards and agree to provide the narrator and interviewer with access to the taped interview.

**Noemí:** And then I'm just going to start with the regular questions that I sent you such as the personal questions, about where did you grow up?

**Mario:** I grew up in Boyle Heights in LA (Los Angeles), I was born in '54 so through the latter part of the fifties, sixties, seventies, and then I left LA in 1981, I moved here to San Diego

**Noemí:** And just out of curiosity what part of San Diego did you end up moving to?

**Mario:** I moved, originally I moved to North Park back when it was a mostly working-class community, the rents were still affordable. That's all changed now and then from there I moved to San Carlos and then to Barrio Logan

**Noemí:** Oh I know those areas even though I didn't visit them as much growing up, but definitely know about them. And then, is there anything significant about where you grew up or significantly help shape the current version of you?

- From 2:26-2:33 (repeat question, couldn't hear well)

**Mario:** Oh yea I was just talking to somebody about it yesterday. When I went to high school it was kind of the flashpoint of the Chicano movement with the high school walkouts, I went to Roosevelt High School during the high school walkouts and that was probably the most formative experience for me, politically, socially, literarily, you know, it really formed a lot of the opinions I still hold today. It did dispel a lot of the myths of North American society it exposed the racism, the brutality, the hatred for our people, the excesses that police will take even on children who are protesting for a better education. And so it was very instrumental in me forming my opinions as well as my career goals and my artistic visions, and you know just, it was a foundation for so much. I was only fifteen years old at the time but throughout that period that was followed by the Chicano Moratorium which was an enormous national protest against the Vietnam war because of the disproportionate numbers of the brown and black people that were dying in that war and so it continued and it built off from one issue to another. Recognizing the hypocrisy of our system, of our government and this ongoing, not neglect, but denial of equality and justice to our people

**Noemí:** Definitely yeah. I have a friend that went to Garfield and then when I tell that to my dad because my dad went to Roosevelt,

**Mario:** Oh so did I!

**Noemí:** Yeah because I know you mentioned Roosevelt! My dad also mentioned the LA riots and my friend also taking part of the walkouts.

**Mario:** What year did your father graduate?

**Noemí:** He didn't finish actually, but I remember the stories he'd tell me like he'd always go to the events like the football games, and he always puts the emphasis on the football games and the events between Roosevelt and Garfield and he's like "oh yeah the rivalry!" Like I think because of him not being able to finish high school really shapes the way he understands Boyle Heights because he also grew up in Boyle Heights.

**Mario:** How old is he?

**Noemí:** My friend right now she's twenty, but my dad, he was born in '68. So, once he moved to the US he went there for a little bit like a year or two but he wasn't able to finish because he had to send money to his family in Guadalajara.

**Mario:** He's a little bit younger than I am but that's awesome.

**Noemí:** And the next question is going to be, tell me one of your favorite childhood memories. It could be one, it could be many.

**Mario:** Memories, it was probably to play with my early friends. In my childhood, it was kind of like an age of innocence. I think everyone was working at the time, we had decent housing and food to eat, and our summers were filled with joyful play in the neighborhood with no fears of, really of much of anything, unlike today where you don't even want to let your kids out because of the predators, and the gangs. You know those things existed back then but in my little neighborhood, it was a very different situation. We're talking late 50s my first friends were Japanese and whose parents had been in the concentration camps during world war II. So I had a lot of diversity in my community but those are the childhood memories that are very dear. Of course family gatherings and birthday parties, those sorts of things.

**Noemí:** Definitely missing that right now.

**Mario:** Yeah, and so then here comes my teen years and all that just explodes. The economy shifted, there was massive unemployment in LA (Los Angeles) because all the factories that employed all the people all the working-class people closed down and moved overseas and so everything from Bethlehem steel to Ford Motors, Alcoa Aluminum. Its huge companies that employed thousands of people all over LA, mostly brown and black people, just closed down and left people without resources. People lost their homes families broke up and people resorted to criminality and you know i just witnessed the whole crumbling of the American dream right there during that period the Vietnam war was going on, and the world was on fire and in ways that you see a glimpse even now but back then it was a whole different experience. And again the news media surprisingly back then was not as controlled by the government in regards to recording the Vietnam war, for instance, every night for instance. Every night, for instance, we'd watch TV and at the end of the news a scroll would come down the screen with all the names of those who died that day. Every other last name was a Spanish last name. I was just a really different level of exposure to what was going on in the world. Everything seems to be controlled and very monitored and limited and it was different in some ways.

**Noemí:** I can definitely see that right now yea, media right now is not as filtered

**Mario:** yeah well you know

**Noemí:** It is and it isn't a little bit of both, it really depends on which outlets you choose, but the next couple of questions are going to be focusing on Anastacio Hernandez Rojas and his story

and the impact. So it's going to be, when learning about the story of Anastacio Hernandez Rojas, what most impacted you about what you learned of what happened to Anastacio and what his family has lived through for the past ten years?

**Mario:** Well when I first saw the reports on television including the video, I was beside myself. I was outraged because of the brutality that was exhibited. You have this poor man screaming for mercy handcuffed on the ground kicked and tased over and over by a dozen border agents with people screaming and yelling for them to stop and it was just, it was, I had seen things like that before but not to that degree. I mean they killed him, they murdered him. And to follow the story and find that the agents were never charged with any crime, it's just again the blatant blatant hypocrisy and the blatant racism that permeates our system, our judicial system. And the permissiveness of our society to allow for this to happen. Everyone's responsible and those who don't take action are equally responsible because we give permission passively to those who create those types of problems. Everything from that, to the children in cages, to me its an atrocity, it's a crime against humanity that is not being judged through that lens right now but these are things that are happening that are, among the most heinous crimes in the history of mankind, of humankind. To me, you know I'm completely outraged by all of this.

**Noemí:** That's valid I definitely agree with that. The whole blatant hypocrisy and racism, it's just out of this world, like you can't expect it but at the same time when you look at it you're like "-oh.". The next question is, were there any aspects of Anastacio's story that you found related to your own personal history or events in your life?

**Mario:** well you know as a man, as a man of Mexican heritage from the working-class origins, I identified with him. That could've been me that could've been my brothers that could've been relatives that could've been neighbors, it was very personal. You know this is our brother this is our relative. On a very personal visceral, I was able to relate to him and to hear interviews with his family, his wife in particular who I've met now and we've worked with her and his[Anastacio's] brothers in the development of the concept of this mural. The being somebody who places a very high value on family including my own family especially my own children to understand that someone's father, the breadwinner, the male in the house was murdered by authorities by seemingly no reason. It hurts on a personal level, it chokes you up sometimes.

**Noemí:** I definitely agree with you, it hurts. Seeing it as that could've been my dad because everyday he crosses the border to go to work and one-time the border patrol stopped him because they had someone on their most wanted list with the exact same name as my dad. Jose Martin Rodriguez. Specifically a Mexican name

**Mario:** Oh man.

**Noemí:** He was there for like a day and a half. It was so scary and learning about that it just reminds me and really triggers that memory of that really could've been my dad. It really resonates with so many family narratives so I think it's very powerful to share that too.

**Mario:** I was just gonna say that in my lifetime I've been harassed and pushed around by police and had police guns at my head with their hands shaking. There's a very thin line between what I experience and what could've happened. Had the wrong cop initiated it, because once they start it's like a group of thugs, they all want a piece of the action like sharks in a blood frenzy you know? I think many of us have been close to that

**Noemí:** It's not something to even brag about but it's something worth sharing and telling people hey this happened, be aware. And then, what is it about Chicano Park that makes it an appropriate place for Anastacio's mural to live and how does it contribute to the overall narrative about the history of Chicano Park and how does it complement other murals?

**Mario:** Well you know Chicano Park history is a history of struggle and social justice and human rights against racism and all of the issues that brought that park to be creates the perfect cradle for a mural on that topic. Its the appropriate place, that park is an open history book, a visual history book of our culture, the issues that have affected our people, the oppression, the celebration, the unity, the causes, and of course immigration rights movement and ---- being very prominent throughout the history of the park. The park is appropriate and the right place for that its also the place that accessible to the people, to the very people. Just an aside, when we started working on that mural, there was a homeless fella (person), watching us work and the guys couldn't figure out how to work the large air paint machines we were going to use to prime the mural. This guy was sitting there watching us and approached us saying "Hey I'm a painter I know how to work this machine I'll set it up for you" and sure enough he worked with us for days, he volunteered he didn't want any money he didn't want anything he just wanted an opportunity to be helpful. When we told him what the mural was about low and behold he was a friend of Anastacio. He shared with us the day he and his brother watched the report on the TV of Anastacio being murdered and he had bought a refrigerator or a stove from his just days prior to the incident. That coincidence was amazing and I say this to illustrate how important it is for that park to be accessible to the people him being an actual associate of Anastacio and for others to have access to that story. What we do is to memorialize the level of injustice. We're a counter-narrative to the official story of law enforcement agencies being there to protect and to serve. Indeed that's their stated mission but their reality in communities of color, they are there to regulate, to enforce the racist status quo. Those of us who know the difference have a role to tell that counter-narrative and so this mural is a permanent reminder of what has happened in the area of immigration in this country since its inception. So we tell a more contemporary story

about Anastacio and the ratcheting up of injustice against immigrants in recent years particularly under Trump but you know these issues existed prior to Trump as well. We are weaving these stories into this mural, its seven stories, very tall, and a lot can be said there.

**Noemí:** Yeah I was seeing the flyer for it and some of the things that resonated a lot with me was like having the Xolo dog, having Anastasio's family there, and having the phone there because definitely nowadays having a phone recording symbolizes so much without yet again, displaying so much. That phone can literally be a weapon to be able to give us a narrative and put other people in check. In contributing to the Anastasio Hernández Rojas mural, what do you hope for would be an end result? What would you hope people would take away from this mural?

**Mario:** That they never forget, that they never forget how much work we still have to do to address these issues and possibly even make meaningful change in the area of immigration rights and human rights. We're far far far from attaining social justice in this country particularly in our community and it's important for that to be present in people's minds, especially the young people. I say especially the young people because they're growing up and they're the subjects of mass brainwashing through the education system and through the media and nowadays end up believing these stories are fake news. We have that responsibility to do that and I hope that outcome will always trigger action. The art a lot of us do, those of us who consider ourselves art-ivists, is for that purpose. It's not to match someone's furniture in their home, it's to tell a story and to trigger action and that's what we do.

**Noemí:** How does this mural contribute to collective, community healing? Is this a form of public justice, or do you think it's a form of justice? Why or why not?

**Mario:** Absolutely, there was no true justice obtained from the following years in terms of holding the agents accountable for a murder. In some ways, it's a different form of obtaining justice when you keep present in the mind of people that justice still needs to be served here. For the family, we talked about the healing outcome of this and for the family to get some semblance of justice through this format of creating a mural, they feel that, they sense that, they realize that. That although true justice is never served, here's another form of justice that the people are providing. Something that we do, is we always beg for justice from the perpetrator and sometimes we're never going to get that but we still need justice and we still need to heal and sometimes it's incumbent upon our own to find ways to have our people heal from the injustices and to become empowered, to not sit down and to stand up to these issues and to be vocal and be artistically expressive and to remind people and to not be complacent.

**Noemí:** That whole community healing is very big I feel, like they don't get that individual healing, but the community is there for them.

**Mario:** There's a certain and powerful validation when you go through each day not seeing the truth in the media and when you go through a lifetime not seeing the truth in the media about what is happening about your experience, and then to walk up to a monumental mural that tells that story, it's a physical visual, counterbalance to the absence of truth in the media and in education, so it's a very powerful undertaking and I'm very proud to be part of it very fortunate to be proud of it.

**Noemí:** I can only imagine the way the family feels when they walk through and think, yes, that is my story, my narrative being displayed in the correct way not the way that the media portrays it, because I was reading the reports and they don't frame it the way it should be.

**Mario:** No, they don't. There's always an emphasis on the fact that they found a trace of methamphetamine

**Noemí:** That's the first thing that I saw on there.

**Mario:** Yeah and the real accounts of that, the coroner said that there was not enough evidence of methamphetamine in his system to make the claims that the authorities made. And so any combination of chemicals can create what appears to be a trace of something. Anyways, that seems to dominate the reports rather than the brutality that everyone witnessed and that's that form of brainwashing and twisting the narrative that's so hazardous to our people.

**Noemí:** Yeah usually the first thing people see is the one they want to believe and not the actual story.

**Mario:** I had a personal friend and I shared with a group that I was involved in the mural memorializing Anastacio and the guy said "Ah he was a tweaker". You know and even our own people buy that, are not critical and conscious enough to analyze these things and to pair with what they hear in the media and in my opinion, even if somebody is a tweaker, or a drug addict or an alcoholic or a homeless person, they don't deserve to be murdered in cold blood by a dozen police. That doesn't justify it, so anyways that's just an aside.

**Noemí:** definitely yeah, the small things of someone's life are not a justification for someone's murder. And I'm going to shift the focus from Anastacio to the current COVID-19 situation and how it connects. First COVID-19 situation, to bring a little bit of light, what's one of the things you miss the most since starting quarantine?

**Mario:** Well one of the things that should be obvious is that we had to stop working on the mural, so we had to leave the premise because the park was essentially closed and no activity

was permitted on San Diego city parks. So we had to lock up and drive away, so its been, how long has it been? Seven weeks?

**Noemí:** Yeah like a month and a half or so

**Mario:** Seven weeks that we have not been able to complete what we started and it's been... you know when you engage in the creation of a project like that, there's a stream of consciousness, of awareness of creative energy that's been interrupted. It's not just that we had to leave the job, we were going to have to re-engage all of our senses and pick up where we left off. That's one of the immediate things that COVID brought on. I miss being able to be with my family, I've only seen my kids twice in the past seven weeks for only a couple days you know, finding ways to make a living is another piece. It's been a very mysterious occurrence and I think we're all experiencing and nobody really knows the truth about it, nobody really knows whether the government is truly looking for an answer, a way to remedy this, it's pretty obvious that the Trump administration doesn't have a clue. There's so much intrigue involved and now there's been murders of individuals working on vaccines. The chief medical person who is not allowed to testify to congress. What are they hiding, what is really going on here? So I don't really blame the conspiracy theorists, because a lot of the stuff is fertile and I tend not to go there. I prefer to work with the norm and go from there. But damn it's a strange strange time like I've never experienced in my life and I've been through different diseases like I grew up with the chickenpox, the mumps, the measles and I've had my own health issues and there's been so much that people my age have experienced. From wars to civil unrest, you name it but nothing as weird as this, it really is a strange strange phenomenon seeing everyone wearing masks and gloves and standing six feet apart, and complying with it and being amenable with it for the most part to doing their part to reduce the risk which is good, that's still unbelievable. If I wasn't seeing it with my own eyes I would think it's a movie. It is what it is we have to deal with it in the best way that we can, and maybe they'll be some positive outcomes in terms of people appreciating one another more in prior to this and people appreciating their families more, nature more, the benefits that have come from slowing down the engines of society to the point where nature is bouncing back. These sorts of things are very interesting byproducts of something very negative and so we'll see what happens. It's a mystery and we don't know where this is going to end up, or the ultimate impact this will have on the economy on employment, on people's personal lives, their houses their ability to sustain their families, it's all up in the air and I think the immediate impact on everybody is a constant level of stress. Everybody's experiencing it, it's affecting people's dreams, it's affecting people's eating habits, it's affecting people's relationships. That part is very unhealthy, and that'll take its toll as well. The stresses and its damaging phenomenon to the human body to psychology, and you know the long term impact of it. This isn't going to end overnight. This is going to keep going on, and people will eventually break from it, those that are weaker, those that are resilient, there will be a dire effect on them, i think about all that. You cant



do anything about it much other than take care of yourself and your own, and we'll see where this ends up.

**Noemí:** For a society that's so centered on knowing everything, it's such a different complete focus on not knowing anything

**Mario:** Right

**Noemí:** Like we know some but knowing a limited amount of things, a very different shift. And what, if anything, has this pandemic revealed about our socio-economic problems that you've seen?

**Mario:** well, the ones i just mentioned. People are desperate looking for aid for resistance for support. From my understanding, the government was not ready, they have been very slow responding to unemployment applications, just arrogant, and setting up of things. Blaming the poor people, it is bizarre, so socio-economically people are hurting, people are feeling it. It's probably going to get worse before it gets better. Children, in particular, I was listening to this report about educational psychologists and the role, the many roles that school plays in children's lives, in adolescent lives, the socialization, the play that's necessary for children to thrive, the interaction with their peers. The coming of age things for adolescents, that first date, that first kiss, that first going out with somebody, graduating, all of these things are interrupted. Those things are also going to have an impact on the development of younger human beings. There's so much that will be the outcome, hopefully there will be many people focusing on what they can do to assist many professionals, focusing on what they can do to assist the children, in particular, I don't know, maybe sometimes what you don't know hurts you. For sure the things that they're supposed to experience developmentally are being interrupted earlier

**Noemí:** It'll be a weird thing to see how it later plays out later on in their lives developmentally. What's something that makes you happy or brings you joy during these difficult times?

**Mario:** What is something that makes me happy during these times? Well you know I still have my art studio here, I can come any day and paint and create, and I shifted, I teach art classes here two times a week, I shifted to Zoom classroom experience. Definitely not the same, it's an experiment and in some ways it's fun and I know my students are really grateful that I'm continuing doing that because the students the type of students that I took on were students whose, using this term interrupted again, whose creative energies and activities have been interrupted by life. These are people who have dreamed of being artists who have natural artistic skills, who had to not do it or stop doing it to go to work or to raise families to make money or for whatever other reasons they were discouraged from being creative people, so to have

something in their life continuing even if it's on Zoom. They're very grateful to have that opportunity and to continue creating that creative energy and making things that are beautiful and meaningful, I get joy out of that. Of course, seeing my children when I can, there's a heightened awareness of their beauty, of their preciousness. I think that's kind of generalized for me when I happen to have interactions with friends and loved ones, it just seems much more intense, so much more beautiful and I'm just so much more grateful for them in my life and to be able to share this lifetime with these very precious people. These things are interesting in this COVID year but those are some of the positives that come out of living in a crisis.

**Noemí:** You mentioned Zoom classes on painting, I thought that was very cool like how does it work? Or what do y'all normally do during those classes?

**Mario:** Well what we try, what we used to do in the class is, I would give a series of assignments and the students would begin to paint and work on it and I'm in the room to help them process their process and help them with some techniques and encourage them and mostly providing the space needed to come together which creates this energy. It creates a special energy of people creating in the same space. We managed to transfer that to the Zoom classroom, except what people do is they set up their easel or canvas at home and they direct their phone camera or their computer camera to what they're working on and I'm doing the same thing and I have them each show their piece to the camera, what they're working on how they're progressing maybe ask "I'm stuck with a question that's been resolved" or a problem that they're having that they're trying to achieve, and the others chime in and it's different when you have everybody's face in front of you facing you and everybody's talking to you, it's different from when you're sitting in a circle and you're looking to the right or to the left and nobody's directly facing you. It's a different modality of communication it's very interesting, so you have that going which is very cool and it works. I didn't rescue all my students, all of them aren't computer savvy or are kind of threatened by the electronic media, but a core of them are there continuing. You know we're open to new students if you're interested or know anybody who is interested and I can just give you the Zoom meeting. At this time I'm not even charging for it, but once the classes begin again I'll begin to charge a little bit for it. It's open the more the merrier.

**Noemí:** That sounds really fun, because I've been really trying to get into my creative side, and right now I've been reflecting and making things with strings such as embroidery, bracelets, stuff like that. Whenever I paint I get so frustrated and I gotta breathe.

**Mario:** All you need is a surface to paint on, whether that be a canvas or a board or cardboard and some paint and brushes and a phone or a laptop to do this, you're welcome to join.

**Noemí:** I'll probably ask you for the Zoom link

**Mario:** We're doing it tonight in fact, it's Tuesday and Thursdays

**Noemí:** Sounds very fun and so welcoming.

**Mario:** Yeah

**Noemí:** And did you do this through a school outlet or on your own?

**Mario:** On my own, it's an independent class.

**Noemí:** It's probably very empowering for your students

**Mario:** Yeah it is, and for me too, it's something that I always wanted to do. I never formally studied art with the exception of a handful of classes I took, so I don't have a degree in art or anything like that, but I am a practicing artist who worked over thirty years in this field. In addition to my role as an educator when I was working in the colleges and universities. I never taught art, I exhibited art, but I never actually had the opportunity to teach which I always kind of regretted that I never got a degree in art so that I could teach at a college I could've been very very fulfilled rather than the years of the bureaucratic bullshit I had to deal with [laughs]. But I'm doing it now,

**Noemí:** I feel like sometimes when you're in college things are always pushed to you like "take this take this take this" and it's kind of alienating and it doesn't allow people to experience things that they want to experience.

**Mario:** Yeah and in the class, we spend a lot of time debriefing and talking about things like artistic blocks and what causes these blocks, how do you get over these things. What affects our creativity when we're in an emotional state or in a negative emotional state, how do we use our tools to heal past that, to get through that to be an expression to get things out. So it's kind of a blend of art and counseling and I do have a degree in counseling so I feel comfortable using that opportunity in our human interactions when necessary.

**Noemí:** I think that's very valuable having that perspective for counseling. Another question that I got is, how did your organization react to the sudden changes and uncertainty brought by the situation? That could either be the painting wise how you had to stop everything or even with AFSC.

**Mario:** Well, we met pretty regularly with the AFSC a lot in San Diego. Well not as frequently but still we were constantly in the loop, we still have a messenger, a Facebook messenger group that we communicate on but I miss those guys. I miss everybody on a personal level, the artists for sure are wonderful people, Victor Ochoa, Cindy Cohen, Gloria Fabela Rocha, Graham Hajosy, so yeah I miss them, the reports of resuming the project of getting it done. I forgot what the question was.

**Noemí:** It's how did they react?

**Mario:** I mean frustration, frustration. I know Victor who's the lead artist was trying to find ways around it but as he realized how serious this problem was, he sort of acquiesced and it's just waiting to see when we can get back up there. I'm convinced that we can, we can complete this mural social distancing. We're on different levels, there are seven levels and we can have one person on each level, there never really has to be an opportunity to be within six feet of one another, but we are surrounded by a pretty active homeless encampment that's there at the cite, that's a concern, not so much because of the personalities of the individuals, we're all mostly people who keep to themselves. In fact, we've made friends with a couple of them, but because of the lack of sanitation and information to protect themselves it creates a level of additional exposure in the vicinity of the mural and that's a concern, but I still think we can manage it.

**Noemí:** Definitely yeah I'm just hoping this calms down soon because I miss going there, I remember the first time that I went there because my mom wouldn't let me go as a kid, she'd say "no I don't know it over there it's a new place and I don't know it" because we used to rely so much on the trolley and the busses and it was her worry of not knowing that area of town so she wouldn't take me there but once I was able to take myself there, It's a whole different level of community that you felt even if there's nobody around you.

**Mario:** Yeah, it's true

**Noemí:** And the last question that I have is from his interview, what's the main thing that you want readers or those watching to take away.

**Mario:** Good question, I think the knowledge that this sort of activity exists, that there is ways to obtain justice through the arts. There is a way to heal a community, a family, that they're individual. That there are individuals who give a damn so profoundly, that they sacrifice a lot to make this happen. It's not easy for a sixty-five-year-old man like myself to go up and down seven stories. To paint here paint that, you know do this bend over pick this up you know drop that, and Victor's seventy-two, Victor's older than I am, there is a level of sacrifice to fulfill our passion and our socio political mission. It's important for people to know that we're out there

that there are people out there like that. That we're open to them joining us, to coming, especially the younger generation coming and helping and we're getting a good response. You know that hopefully, this will always exist, that park is there for a very important reason, it's a permanent museum of murals that tell stories that are very enlightening and empowering.

**Noemí:** Yeah, the story of Chicano covers a big narrative that a lot of people relate to. Do you have any other questions for me?

**Mario:** Not not really, I really want to thank you for doing this. I think to me, it's always very meaningful when I see people from the younger generation taking interest and action, and pursuing an education, and appreciating their education. Working with somebody like professor Yen, and there are other students and professors who are very appreciative of the work. It's always a wonderful experience, I remember my best college and university professors and the things I imparted especially those as congenial and supportive as Yen Espiritu. So yeah I'm appreciative to you.

**Noemí:** I appreciate you too, thank you so much for doing the interview.

**Mario:** You're very welcome

**Noemí:** If it wasn't for people being able to do the remote learning, I probably wouldn't even be taking the class, and it hurts thinking that, from the perspective, I have now, Profe Yen's class is one of the nicest classes I've had and one of the things I look forward to during this remote learning.

**Mario:** Please send her my best regards

**Noemí:** I will definitely!

**Mario:** You take care

**Noemí:** You too thank you so much.