

Ofilia Ramos Oral History Interview Transcript

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

idaho, worked, brothers, dad, mom, idaho falls, mexican americans, sisters, people, mexican, call, family, parents, school, boys, remember, texas, growing, born, ophelia

00:00

Hi. This is Rosa Rodriguez and I will be interviewing Ofilia Ramos in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Ophelia, where were you born?

00:15

I was born in Spofford, Texas, February 9, 1943.

00:21

And how did your family come to this country?

00:26

My father was here sometime in around 1910. And then he married my mom in 1929.

00:35

Where did he marry her?

00:37

He married her in (unintelligible), Mexico. And then they just came across.

00:47

So he first was here in 1910. Where did he go when he arrived in the United States?

00:54

He worked on the railroad. So he had different areas that he worked along the train line. But he settled in in Spofford, Texas where I was born.

01:06

When was the first time that he came to Idaho?

01:13

I believe it was 1947. It was between 1947 and 1948.

01:19

And what was the reason they came to Idaho?

01:22

Because the family was growing. Were Young men then. And he wanted to have more for his family than than what was offered in Spofford. There there wasn't any jobs, that were the jobs were just railroading. And he didn't want the boys to do that.

01:45

What did he do when he came to Idaho? Where did he find work? And where did he go? First go? What place in Idaho?

01:53

He came here to Idaho Falls. And he worked for the sugar factory. As a laborer, you know, working in the fields. And he he worked for a farmer in the little town we call Lincoln right now.

02:14

And were they? How many children were born in Idaho Falls?

02:24

Uh, the two youngest. The girl Mary was born in 1948. And, and the boy was Bill was born in 1950.

02:35

So you and your other brothers and sisters went to school here?

02:42

Just myself. The, let's see the four youngest went to school. And we completed our school. But a couple of the older ones started school but they they dropped out because of work. They have to work.

03:00

And they work there in the sugar factory with your dad.

03:04

Yes, they did. Well in the fields. We worked on fields.

03:11

Did you speak English when you first started going to school here?

03:18

No. And I remember the first grade I didn't speak English. The only language Spanish was spoken at home. And the older brothers and sisters that did spend a little bit of time in school. They knew English, but I didn't. I learned just by being around other kids.

03:40

Was there other children in the area where you lived that were also Mexican Americans?

03:52

I don't remember now. I think there was. But we were a family unit. And so we stayed just just just with ourselves.

04:07

What do you remember about your teachers in Idaho? Do you have good thoughts about going into the Idaho schools?

04:19

I I was probably one maybe one of the luckiest because I the teachers treated me real good. And I started school in first grade in Parker, Idaho. And then I came to Lincoln and go into school and most of the school. Most of my education this was in Idaho Falls schools. And I never saw any of the discrimination. I maybe it was there. I just didn't see it.

04:54

Where's Parker, Idaho and why were you there?

04:58

Parker is close. St. Anthony's about oh, 10 miles. I'm not sure north or east of St. Anthony and my dad worked for, for a farmer there, working in the in the potato houses.

05:16

And how about your other brothers and sisters? How do they feel about going to school?

05:26

The older brothers and sisters spent well, their schooling was in Spofford. And their schooling was not a good experience at all. The teachers there were very prejudiced. And this, I'm just repeating what I heard, my sisters say, and they would get beat very often. But as far as the Idaho schools when they came to, you know, Idaho Falls in 1948. A couple of them did go to school a little bit, and I, I don't remember them saying anything bad. That happened to them.

06:08

What do you remember of the house where you used to live in the Lincoln area? Was it a big house, a small house?

06:17

The little house in Lincoln was, if you're familiar at all with that Idaho Falls, right now, it's on the corner, it was on the corner of Woodruff, and Lincoln. And there's a service station there now. But back, you know, when I was a little kid, I think there was two rooms, the kitchen and one room for Well, there was, I think eight of us now by then, they were all born by then. And I remember my dad during the wintertime it's cold here. And we have to put paper on the walls and my dad put paper on the walls use the flour, you know, for the paste in that and but it was a happy time. I at least as a child. I felt like it was a happy time.

07:14

Did your dad work all year round?

07:17

Yes, he did. He worked for, Carlisle schaffan. And he owned a lot of property there on Lincoln and WOODRUFF And that area right there. And we worked full time we just, we didn't go outside of the farm. He kept us busy. And with everything, he had the boys drove trucks and whatever else was needed.

07:48

What kind of food did your mom make for you? And did she have a hard time finding the ingredients she needed for her cooking? And Idaho Falls at that time?

08:04

I don't know it was all about the food. It was pretty frijoles, beans, tortillas and rice. Very just very basic food that we ate a for meat also. And the farmer always gave my dad a pig to raise and slaughter when it was you know, big enough. And he had sheep on the ranch on the farm too. So we always had a pick of a lamb. And but as far as the ingredients, I don't know I was kind of young you know when they first came? And so I'm not sure about the ingredients.

08:52

Do you remember when you first came to Idaho? Was it in the summer? Or the spring?

09:02

Most of this is just by what that I'm telling you is, is by memories of what my father used to talk about. Because I was only about three or four years old at the at the very start. And

09:18

let me let me interrupt and ask you what year your father was born?

09:30

it was late 1800s

09:33

I know he lived a long life. How old was he when he passed away?

09:37

He was 108 when he passed away in 1988.

09:41

He passed away here in Idaho falls?

09:42

Yes he did.

09:47

Did he? Did he live with one of your another brother of yours or did he live? on his the last year? Did live somewhere in the form of Are you more comfortable living in like a farming area?

10:05

Yeah, he he lived with my brother Bill in Osgood, which is a farming little farming community. And yes, he liked to live out on the farm. And he'd go camping with us and he enjoyed that. And but he lived with my brother until he passed away.

10:31

Does he ever did he ever talk to you about the times that he worked in the railroad? Was there other Mexican people, Mexican men working there?

10:46

Yeah, in nine, I think it was by 1910 when he crossed over to the United States, because the revolution was going on in Mexico. So he crossed over, and there was all the Changqing chain gang or whatever they call it, the railroad gang. They were all Mexican. The way he tells it, they were all Mexican. And they have families with them. They were men with their families. And they move from camp to camp on the railroad side, Laying track. And he said, he said the foremans were real mean, of course, that's the kind of labor but usually was white for months, and all the laborers were Mexican.

11:36

What does what do you remember about your mom and how she felt when she first came into the United States with your dad? How did she feel about leaving? Mexico?

11:52

I think she was probably like any new bride. She was probably scared. She never been in the United States. And she was only 16 years old. But dad had already everything arranged for her she was, they had a home. And the other people that lived in the little community were all well, not all of them. But probably 80% were, were of Mexican descent. So they didn't have any problem with the language because the the judges spoke Excellent. Spanish, the doctors, the policeman or whatever, you know, all the all of the people spoke Spanish.

12:40

And that was in Texas. Yes. Did your brothers ever serve in in a war?

12:51

My oldest brother Ted. He served in the Korean War in 1950. And whatever he served his time, whatever it was. And he Oh, and then the youngest brother. Bill. He was during the Vietnam he served quite, about nine years total in the air force between the Air Force and the Army.

13:21

Did Ted ever talk to you about the Korean war with their other Hispanics with him on his unit?

13:31

Yes, he did. He has taught that one of his best buddies and also Bill when his best buddies were Hispanic. And I'm sure there was a lot of them.

13:50

So Ted was one of your older brothers that didn't continue his schooling in Idaho?

13:55

That's correct. Yes.

13:59

Can you remember looking back at your education in Idaho Falls? Can you remember of a teacher that stands out in your mind that helped you?

14:15

Well, probably the one at Parker because I don't know. She's stands in my mind because she gave me a little a little golden book. And I've had that was the best thing that ever happened. And then I did learn to read it. And I think I was only in the first grade then. And that was really neat. That was for me.

14:39

How did you feel when you came into the Idaho falls schools then you didn't know any English?

14:48

I the only thing I remember. I remember two occasions one I was sitting in a circle. And now I know why or why it was the probably the reading the reading time. I didn't know what was going on. But I was sitting in a circle and listening to the other people read. And then another time at the same school at Emerson, I'm pretty sure it's on Third Street, Emerson. And there was this little girl and I. And there was a little boy, you know, all the same age. And I said something and she giggled, the other little girl giggled, and the teacher was standing. It was just there close by that she could hear what I said to this day. I don't know what I said. But I got reprimanded for whatever I said. I didn't know what. And she didn't take time. The only thing the teacher told me was, little girls shouldn't say that. Well, that's great. But I don't know what I said wrong.

16:02

How do you think education opportunities for Mexican Americans in Idaho, changed in your lifetime?

16:13

Well, when I first graduated in 1961, from Idaho Falls High. I don't think it probably was, overall, I don't think there was a lot of government grants. And the only way you could go, if you go to college, I wanted to go to college. But the only way you could go was either your parents paid for you, of course, they needed to have money, or you got scholarships, and the only the only thing with scholarships is that you have to be I mean, real smart, or at least your grades have to reflect that you're real smart. And mine weren't that that great. But I still wanted to go to school. And then later on. 15, maybe later on, it did get better. And I think it is better. Because I myself went to school under a grant. And I really

appreciate that. And I try to work with other young people when I do have the opportunity or the time to work with him.

17:27

Do you think that Idaho's Mexican Americans do well in school?

17:38

Oh, I by the reports I see and I hear they're not doing too well yet. It's, I think the odds, the figures have improved. I think more kids more Hispanic kids, Mexican Americans are staying in school because their parents are educated of the ones that are educated. They are staying in school, and I think it's improved. But you're you still have the problem with the with the laborers with the migrant workers. And that hasn't, I don't think that has improved yet. Too much.

18:20

Describe your first job that you had out of working with at the farmers. When you were here in Idaho Falls?

18:31

My first job out of high school. Up until high school, I worked in the fields and later I still continued off and on work in the fields. But my first job nonrelated was at a hospital at the LDS hospital here in town. And I was in the kitchen. And I thought hey, I'm doing really good. And I was going to secretarial school at night. So I'm rolling. And they treated me good there. I worked all maybe six, seven months.

19:11

How did your parents feel about you graduating from high school and getting a job and going to Secretary school at the same time?

19:19

Well, they thought that was pretty neat. They really, my father, both my father and mother wanted us, the children to be educated because they knew that without education without knowing the language. Well, you know, it just doesn't hold your future doesn't look too good. And so they really, they they really pushed for the education. My father learned to read and write by himself. Like a lot of people probably back in the old west, how you call it. They learn by themselves. And my mom also could read a little bit she didn't know how to write. But she did know how to read a little bit.

20:06

What other kinds of jobs did you have?

20:09

Well, I've been.. I've held a lot of dishwashing of all times. And I've also been a secretary for many, many years. And I've worked for the Nampa school district as a teacher's aide and also a teacher. And I have a degree in bilingual education that I'm very proud of. At the present, I'm working at the INEL side as a technician. And that doesn't seem very related to teaching but but I do occasionally tutor on the side.

20:57

Are you happy there working as a technician?

21:02

Yeah. Teaching I think is my would be my the ideal. But because of financial reasons. That technician job holds a little more promise financially. But my love, I think is teaching.

21:25

Do you think of the idea that Mexican Americans in the workplace are treated fairly, here in Idaho?

21:36

Pro..., I think it probably makes a difference where you're working. Now, for I work for EG and G. And that's a very, it's a big company. And they have all kinds of methods to make it make sure that your rights are protected. They have an EEO office, and it's it's quite good. And, but there are less fortunate people. I know. I don't know of any incidents myself, but I'm sure... that they are treated fairly. But since I've worked for the school district and for the and for now for this company. I haven't had that problem.

22:32

Why did you choose to come back to Idaho Falls? You said you lived in Nampa and you came back to Idaho Falls?

22:44

Well, I think what brought me back home was my folks. No, first my mom passed away. And then my dad moved back to Idaho Falls for the main family for where most of the family were, are here. And then just other things in my own private life that happened to me that I decided I I tried, tried working at for the INEL. And it's been very good to me. I've, I've had I've been treated well there.

23:20

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

23:24

Um I have four brothers, three sisters, and one that's living and one that's passed away and myself.

23:46

In comparing Nampa and Idaho Falls, where would you rather live? And I'm not. You can just imagine that you don't have your nice stuff and (unintelligible). But in comparison with the community, where would be a more comfortable place for you to live?

24:06

Well, I'll try. It was hard for me to get used to Idaho Falls, because I was used to seeing a lot of brown faces, and a lot of and hearing the music and it just different. It's a different world from Nampa. And but the opportunity are better here. There's more work here. There's just a better opportunity. And I wish I had done it a long, earlier than then than what I did.

24:45

Did your parents ever talk to you about your grandparents or did you ever know your grandparents?

24:52

No, I never... Well, I'm sure I did when I was a baby. But I don't remember my grandparents. Uh, they died. I was. I just found out not too long last year matter of fact, that one of my grandmother's died in 1954. And that would have made me 10 or 11 years old, at least.

25:17

Was she in Mexico when she died?

25:20

Yes, they were

They never came here. No, they never came to the United States.

25:30

Let's talk about a little bit about your mom and dad. Did they ever go out anywhere? Like on Saturday? Do you remember there was dances you were they used to go to? Church on Sunday?

25:45

Well, the only thing I remember one of my sisters, the older sister saying that they like my mom liked the movies. My dad was very not standoffish in a bad way. But I think because he didn't know the language, he rather stay home. But my mom was different. She was very outgoing. And as a family, we would, they would get us all kids in the pickup, bring us into town. And this you have to think was 40 years ago or so. And probably one movie house. And we'd all go to the movies. Sunday or Saturday, matinee. And the, my mom like Westerns a lot. And so that's what they did. There wasn't as far as dances. There wasn't any music, Mexican music in the area or whatever you happen, you know, if you had records that you brought from Texas, or wherever. And because of the language there was, we stuck together and at that time, there wasn't very many families here. There was maybe another a couple more families that when you will. And when we baptize kids, you know, the kids. We'd all baptize each other kids, because we we needed first to be Catholics and then to be friends.

27:17

So when you went to the movie house on Saturday or Sunday it was it always packed with people?

27:27

Yeah, yeah. They said it was, but it was all English as far as far as I know. Because like I said, That was back in 48, or something like that. There was always people here, migrant people, but not people that stayed. And we stayed. The Garcias and the Perez and us the, Ramos we stayed. And that I think that's the big difference.

27:59

Do you remember the first time that you stayed the winter?

28:06

Yeah, it was. It was a hard winter. Like I said, I was little but yeah, it was a pretty hard winter because Texas doesn't have all the snow in the ice and everything.

28:21

How did your parents survive that? How did they put clothing on you?

28:28

Well, I think they had all my mom was very frugal with her money. Of course, my dad too. But when we first came, one thing that my dad did say when we first first came here, we went to (unintelligible). And that's that's the farmer and and so we don't have any money. You know, we haven't worked or nothing. But Chaffin said, Oh, they just go to the little store Lincoln. They know me and I told them, and he opened an account for us. You wouldn't do that nowadays for nobody. But he opened an account. And of course, my mom was very frugal, and she said, you know, she only got the necessities. But they provided us with blankets and so forth.

29:19

So this was this was your dad's first encounter in Idaho Falls with this man. Mr. Chapman. That's right. So he trusted your dad to go in to the store and get all everything he needed.

29:35

Yeah, I knew it is it. It was very unusual. Because he just told my my mom and sister just go and tell them who you are and, and the accounts. They're open for you.

29:49

Did your mom grow a garden?

29:51

Yes, they did provide them garden, with we had a little garden space. And then also the farmer said They had grain. They used to have those grain bins, whatever they call them. And so he could fatten the pig, or a hog, I guess it's called fatten the hog. And then, of course, he could have a lamb, a pick of the Lamb. So we were doing pretty good,

30:21

What kinds of things would they grow in the garden?

30:25

Oh, carrots and probably lettuce and she lives and that kind of corn. My dad could plan real good corn

30:39

What is a typical day of your career was a typical day in your family. Way back when you were little?

30:48

Well, if it was a workday, which most of them were. Four or five o'clock in the morning, my dad would get up my mom, and she would cook breakfast, you know, a good breakfast. And then she would call the boys whoever was working, she would call them and, and they'd go up to work. They go out to work. And of course at noon, they'd have their meal. And then at night, they would come home. And when I was going to school by the time I was, you know six years old or whenever I started to school, and then of course I go to school, they pick me, either the bus came for me or somebody walked me to school.

31:35

This is the end of Part One of Ophelia Ramos's interview

31:47

This is part two of a Ofilia Ramos's interview.

Ofilia, what kind of social life did your two older brothers have when they had some time that they could go out?

32:07

Well, I don't, don't remember that. My brother Ted was about 18 or so when he was here. And he had a girlfriend back in Texas, which he later married. And the younger brother, not the younger, but the next brother. He liked to socialize. So he did have girlfriends. And I think he probably dated some girls, some Mexican girls, and he also dated the Anglo girls. And later he married in 1954-55. They both married then

32:51

Going back on the dating, where would they go? On a date?

32:56

The only thing that I can think of is that when we have family gathering, social gatherings among the families, that's probably where they met the girls.

that like baptism?

A baptism a wedding, something some get together. But I don't think there was much dating at in those days later. There. They were.

33:27

But tell me about you. When did you first start dating?

33:32

I didn't date much in high school. I might I wasn't allowed. My my folks are real strict.

And how about your other sisters?

None of them. They did? The my. Let's see my world. The oldest sister was already married. And then the other sister. She did date but she was 1819 I think when she started dating.

34:06

And how did your parents feel about her dating?

34:10

My, they never liked it. They wanted a I don't know, if just a good old Mexican boy. To fight, you know, among the families, I think they would have been. But my brother in law is a wonderful guy. And so that turned out real good. Both of them were.

34:35

When your younger sister would date would... Would the young men come to the house and pick her up?

34:46

Yes. They had to even myself when I started dating my, my husband. He had to come to the house and pick me up and also we were chaperoned by his younger brother or sister, or my younger brother, or sister, or

Your parents never let you go by yourself?

No, we were never allowed alone.

35:09

And how did you meet your, your husband?

35:14

It was also one of those family gatherings and by that time the community had grown. And this was in the early 60s. So the community had grown and we were having there was some dances and the Lewisville and menin area. And a couple of guys that knew how to play accordions or guitars or something. And so that's what we needed. We need an accordion and a guitar. And, and we got out there our dancing shoes.

35:45

And how did your parents feel about you dating your husband? Did they like him?

35:55

Um, my dad liked him, like my husband, but my mom then never didn't care for him. You know, he grew on them after a while.

36:12

So then, your parents didn't allow the girls to go on date. But, but your brothers could go anytime they wanted to?

36:23

Yes, the brothers were allowed to go. They, they weren't questioned for as long as they come home at a decent hour, and they didn't come home drunk. That was okay. But the women, the girls were well protected. And not only by my parents, but my brothers too.

36:43

When you are growing up, and you're a teenager, and you're a girl, did you feel that your parents treated your brothers more fairly than they treated you as far as responsibilities around the house?

37:04

My brothers were my mom's favorite. As far as I mean, you know, I'm sure she loved all of us. But definitely she showed favoritism towards the boys and you ask my other sisters and know, they'll say the same thing

37:21

Was it because you told the brothers work and they have to drop out of school to go to help the family with the income. Maybe?

37:31

No, the I don't. I don't believe that was the reason it was just that. I don't know if it's true. With all Mexican women, or men... I'm not sure if men, but but I think a lot of the Mexican women for some reason have hold the son more. With higher regard. I don't know why. But but they do.

37:58

So around the house, the girls did the housework. Would you help your mom with a cooking?

38:04

I... In my particular house? Not home. No. But I did all the I did do the tortillas a big stack of tortillas. I wash dishes on Saturdays it was routine that I didn't go anywhere until I cleaned the house, you know the VA not vacuum because back in those days, it was mostly polish the floors, you know, mop them and then put a polish on them. That kind of thing. But my brothers didn't have to do that at all.

38:41

Even the ones that weren't working?

38:43

That's right. The boys never washed dishes never didn't. Nothing.

38:48

What did your dad do on a day off like on a friend or did he work? Seven days a week?

38:54

Oh, I think Sunday. He didn't work. I'm pretty sure he worked all the other days. But he worked. By the time I was in high school. He was still working in the potato house. But, and very little money. I remember there was just very little money. But he worked and he was very conscientious about working and getting to work. But on his day off, he loved to work out in the yard. You think he'd be tired but no, he'd come and he mowed the lawn. And he helped mom with the flower garden. She loved flowers, so there was always plenty of flowers. But he was a very active man as he can himself. No, he was always out and about busy.

39:46

And I know he had a green thumb, grew beautiful plants even up to when he passed away. Yeah, beautiful plants.

40:04

Tell me about your sister, your older sister, you said that she, she, she lives here. And she still lives on that property where you grew up.

40:14

That's my sister Carmen. When we came to Idaho Falls back 1948 or 47, whatever it was, she was newlywed. And they followed, her husband, her and her husband followed my, followed us here. And, and my brother in law have worked for, for Carlisle up until he passed away. He never left the farm. He, um he learned to do all kinds of things that you know, they they do. And during the wintertime, he would just fix the machinery and put it in order for the summertime. And, and even, the boys were all born there, her sons and daughters were all born there.

41:06

And how old is her oldest?

41:09

Her oldest son must be about 41. I think now, something like that. 4142.

41:16

That would be her oldest child? Yes. That's her oldest. And they eventually bought that property where they are living.

41:24

Yes, before my brother in law passed away. He had bought a house. And while he bought the property from Carlisle, and he said he moved the house onto it. And they remodeled the house. And it's a really nice home now.

41:43

Their house where they used to live when they first moved here?

41:46

No, this is another house, but it's on the same property that they were living.

41:54

And why? Why is it that your brother in law decided to move here with your family? Bring his bride over. Why didn't he keep her in Texas?

42:10

Probably the probably the same thing. The only thing going right there in Texas was the railroad. And I guess somebody saw that it might be going out, you know, it will become obsolete soon. And, and his my brother in law's brothers and dad and so forth. They all worked in the on the railroad. And my dad really didn't encourage them. I mean, you know, and to come down, but he says no, I want to go. I want to go to see, your dad says it's pretty nice. And so they moved down here.

42:56

And your dad worked in the railroad in Texas. Did you work in the railroad at all here in Idaho?

43:02

Know he didn't. He worked. I think he worked 30 years or something a long time. But he was tired of working on the railroad. So when he came to Idaho, which, we just worked on the farm in the fields.

43:22

So what do you call yourself a Ofilia, to call yourself a Mexican a Mexican American, Hispanic Latina?

43:32

Or do you call yourself Ofilia? Yeah. Yeah, mostly they're mostly, a Mexican American. If I if I'm to choose one of those, I would I do call myself Mexican American.

43:49

What do you value most about being a Mexican American?

43:54

My heritage, I have a rich heritage. And I'm very proud of. My folks taught me a lot of things, a lot of good things.

44:12

Did your parents ever talk to you about or did they ever tell you cuentos or tell you about Mexico and how they were when they were growing up?

44:27

My dad was a real good storyteller. So I got all my I got all the cuentos the stories from him. And my mom said they weren't true but that's. That's okay.

44:44

Do you remember a cuento that you that your dad used to tell you when you were little?

44:50

No, not really offhand. It just uh.. A lot of folklore has to do with the way With God with God and devil, you know fighting for people. And a lot of my dad's a lot there was a lot of spiritualism involved in his stories. I think the fight between good and evil a lot of his stories told them

45:22

When you were little and you're growing up here, did you do you remember them talking about good (curanderos) was there any here in Idaho?

45:34

I don't think there was any here in Idaho Falls curanderos. But yes, definitely my my dad did believe believed in that both my mom and dad and that's what I couldn't remember. But what a lot of His stories were based on that on what they believed in of what the curanderos did, and you know, the healers, and some are good and some are bad and know

46:09

When you would get sick what whichever mom? Would she pray over you and go out there with the egg?

46:25

Yeah, yeah, that's a favorite one. When you have the Eve somebody has given you the evil eye. They my mom would rub us with an egg. And then and then when and say prayers, okay. And then she get a little, a little cup or something to put the egg get crack the egg and, and, you know, crack it in the bowl in the little bowl. And then if the egg would turn white, then that means that you're cured that somebody had given you the evil eye. And

47:03

once you've brushed it with a tree branch, also.

47:09

Yeah, and then when the tree branch, that's all that's called espanto, fright. So if you're scared, really scared, okay. And you start having nightmares. And anyway, they would take it to some old lady to, to read prayers over you and and then they would brush you with branches from, I think, months or near some kind of a bush that would grow or mint, mint that that was a good one, too.

47:46

And did your parents do that to you?

47:49

They would know that ojo. My mom would do that. And the other one, it's a little more expertise for that one. So they would find some old lady that knew how to do how to do

48:01

it. So in essence, maybe that little old lady with a little bit of a curandera?

48:07

I think so. Yeah.

She knew how to do it.

She knew how to do it. Yeah. And yeah.

48:14

When you were sick are your brothers and sisters? Do you remember them ever been really sick? Any of them? Did they take you to the doctor or get your mom tried to have the remedies at home?

48:30

No, I think I remember I well, I don't remember but I remember them telling me I was about six weeks, six months old. And that was back in Spofford. And I had pneumonia really, I mean, I was pretty close to dying. And she did take me to the doctor. So they did believe in, if the doctor was where they could get to, they will take us to the doctor. And but she did do home remedies. You know for a sore throat or a stomach ache. She'd give us tea to drink and you know just the acid stomach or upset stomach and

49:12

yeah

49:16

Is the ability to speak Spanish important to you?

49:20

It is very important to me and I I don't know whether it's an individual thing. But I always kept, maybe because I was the oldest of the four younger ones that were left that I had to take my mom you know, I went to the doctor with her I went to the groceries I kept her bank account until I got married. And but I've always loved my language. I've always been. I've never said Viva La Raza all the time. But I've always been proud to be who I am. Even back when it wasn't cool to be that but and also, since I was the oldest and my mom cannot read or write. In order to keep communications with Mexico with a family she did have in Mexico, somebody had to read and write for her in Spanish. And that's why I've I learned young how to read and write. And then I, I improved it when I went to school when I went to college.

50:37

So it was important for your parents to teach you how strong the culture of your Mexican culture is?

50:43

yes, that they didn't want to want us to forget where we came from, it didn't mean that we couldn't go ahead. You know, they wanted us to progress ahead. But they also wanted to know where we came from.

51:03

Has any member of your family experienced racial discrimination or sexual discrimination? Here in Idaho?

51:15

Um... Not that I know of. Personally, I haven't know my brothers and sisters if they have I don't know of

51:33

How do Anglos see Mexican Americans?

51:42

I don't know if I can answer, know how to answer that.

51:53

Do you want me to explain?

51:54

Yes, please. You're gonna ask again. Okay. The stereotype of who Mexican is or is not. And it hasn't probably hasn't changed too much. They still

52:24

assume that you know, we carry knives and all this and, and the woman is Yes, honey, and no honey and whatever. But we have changed. And, and sometimes when there's an end, we're not old. People forget that we're not all the same. We have degrees, different degrees of education. And not only education, but who we are. Some of us have morals and some don't. And but a lot of people just you know, they say oh, you know, he made us you know, he got busted last night for for having cocaine or something. And then makes me feel bad because other people are gonna say, Well, maybe you do the same thing. And that's not that's not true. But the stereotypes are still there

53:35

Are there major events in your life that have a lasting impression, for example? You know, the Vietnam War, the Korean War when your brother went to the Korean War and civil rights movement?

53:55

In regards to being Mexican or being...?

Regards to you, being who you are in your life?

54:16

don't the Vietnam War? Yeah, I think so. I might. The Vietnam War was, I don't know what was political and what happened or anything, but I have a brother that went and he was 18. He's the youngest one. But you know, I couldn't believe, because we were taught to be very patriotic. I mean, the flag you know, the country. And my my dad's stressed that to us, he says you you young people are the people

from here, even the the Anglo people don't know how good they have it. Because you can say anything you want and nobody says nothing to you. I mean, you might get slapped on the hand, you know, but you're not in prison. You're not thrown in jail. You're not. Nothing happens to you, bad. And but when I was a young... Well, I've 20 I don't know how old I was, but Vietnam, and that's the word that I remember most. And, and I just couldn't. I didn't know why the young men didn't want to go and fight that role. I think later, I learned some of the things that happened that why they didn't want to fight. But

55:39

But your parents express how important it was to be to love your country?

55:45

Oh, yes. And that's why my brother enlisted. And both, both of my brothers in the Korean War, Ted enlisted, and then Bill enlisted. And

55:57

So your dad had a big influence on their loyalty to the United States?

56:03

Yeah, he sure did. Because he taught us from when we were just little kids, how wonderful it was to live here. And I do believe that.

56:16

What is the single most important thing to you?

56:21

My family,

56:24

Your family, meaning your son or your family meaning?

56:29

Well, my well, both my son and my brothers and sisters. Yeah. We have, I think an extended family that I shouldn't say a lot of the Anglos don't have, maybe they do some, but we have a very extended family and we might not see eye to eye on a lot of things. But if something's happened in the family, we are there for each other. And that's a very strong tie. A very strong bond that we have.

57:09

This is the end of a Ofilia Ramos's interview.