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Allfred Plazzo

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South Colton Oral History Project

Interview Summary

Interviewee:

Allfred Plazzo

Interviewer:

Tom Rivera

Interview Date:

August 18, 2018

Interview Location:

N/A

Length:

01:51:24

Interview Summary completed by:

M. Camacho Nuno, 2024

Description:

Tom Rivera interviews Allfred Plazzo, a businessman with an extensive family history in South Colton. He begins with the earliest of his family, the Castorenas and the Colungas, and their connections to many families in South Colton. He also mentions his time living as a youth in San Bernardino. Palazzo goes on to speak about people in his family, such as his uncle Gabe, and their achievements from having jobs in education to being in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Palazzo, while discussing his memories of visiting his close family in Colton, speaks of the struggles of having a mother who tried to make ends meet, the de facto segregation in South Colton, and then his interest in studying history. Often through tears, he also goes further into the struggle of being a student, the support his family and people of South Colton had for each other, and Mexican heritage. Palazzo explains his role in appraising land and businesses and how it also connects to his view of the housing and financial crisis in San Bernardino. Palazzo ends with interview images of his family and one of himself at his graduation.

Subject Topic: (6-8 total)

- South Colton
- Mexican Heritage
- History
- Mexican Civil War
- The Great Depression
- Education/College
- De Facto Segregation
- San Bernardino's Housing and Financial Crisis

Spatial Coverage:

Name of Site (if relevant)	General Location/Address
South Colton	California
California State University San Bernardino	5500 University Pkwy, San Bernardino, CA 92407
Havard University	Massachusetts Hall, Cambridge, MA 02138
University of California, Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA 90095
University of California, Davis	1 Shields Ave, Davis, CA 95616

Temporal Coverage:

Early 1900s - 2018

Key Events: (5-6 keywords)

- Allfred Plazzo's maternal grandparents escaped into Colton from Mexican Civil War.
- Plazzo's family, the Castoneras as well as the Colunga's ties to South Colton.
- Family (past and future generations) that had achievements in education, baseball, and business.
- Plazzo talks about how education was seen in his family and his trials during college.
- The death of his mother and wanting to connect more to his ancestors and history.
- San Bernardino and the injustices in housing and finance.

Key Organizations:

- Keywords
- California State University San Bernardino
- San Bernardino County
- Havard University
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of California, Davis

Interview Index:

Media Format	Time (hh:mm:ss)	Topic Discussed
Digital Video	00:00:28 - 00:07:37	The earliest mention of the Castorenas and the Colunga family in the interview and further family history.
Digital Video	00:32:56 - 00:34:04	Aunt Connie's experience in a movie theater during de facto segregation and other related information.

Digital Video	01:01:18 - 01:05:49	Allfred Plazzo's time on a waiting list for Harvard and later his mother's death.
Digital Video	01:07:10 - 01:09:16	Plazzo's explanation as to why he chose his major to be history.
Digital Video	01:38:21 - 01:39:56	Plazzo meeting a Cal State graduate and his view on San Bernardino.
Digital Video	01:42:06 - 01:51:20	Family pictures as shown by Plazzo.

Related Materials

Additional oral history interviews are available from the South Colton Oral History Project at CSUSB, <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/colton-history/>

Full interview transcript can be found below.

Interview Transcript

Start of Interview:

[00:00:00]

TOM RIVERA: Good afternoon. I'm Tom Rivera and welcome to our South Colton Oral History Project. My -- our colleagues that are working with the project are Mr. Henry Vasquez and Mr. Frank Acosta, and Frank is behind the camera, and our guest this afternoon is Mister --

ALLFRED PLAZZO:-- Allfred Plazzo.

TOM RIVERA: -- Allfred Plazzo. And Allfred, thank you very much for being with us this afternoon. Truly appreciate you taking time off on a Saturday afternoon to be with us. I'd like to start our interview and talk about, well, your connection with the Castorenas and the Colunga family in Colton because the Castorenas were very -- not only active in music and sports, but many, many other activities in the Colton community. So we appreciate you sharing some of the lives and activities [00:01:00] that you experienced with them as you were growing up in South Colton, when you visited South Colton. Now, tell me, you mentioned that your mom was a Castorena.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Can you tell us about your -- a little bit about your mom? Well, first of all, your grandma and grandpa.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:My grandparents, the parents of my mother, were [Sebastian?] Castorena. He was the oldest of the original Castorena clan, and my mother's mother was [Maria?] -- [Terones?], I believe, was her maiden name -- and she was the youngest of four sisters, and they were brought from Mexico with an uncle that brought two daughters, and his name was [Theo Simon?]. And I can give more detail on the brothers and sisters of the [00:02:00] Castorenas. In fact, I knew the

sisters well into my age of 35. They attended my wedding, and -- but the brothers, I didn't know that well. My mother was raised by her aunt, [Ines?] and [Dorotheo?] Colunga. Her aunt was the biological sister to her mother. Both my mother's father and mother died within one year of the Spanish influenza. They were the only members of their family to become sick. My mother was five years old. She was the oldest of three children. Her younger sister in the middle was [Sophie?] and her younger brother [00:03:00] was [Gabriel?] Castorena.

TOM RIVERA: You mentioned that Grandpa [Sylvestiar?] came from Mexico early in the 1900s, 1910, 1912. And he had also brothers that came to Colton. Who were --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: The brothers -- I hope I get the order correct -- but they were [Sal?], [Porfidio?], [Arturo?], [Pio?], and then he had two younger sisters, [Lena?] and [Maria?], yeah.

TOM RIVERA: And these are really -- these really people, the Castorenas, that settled in Colton.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: These are the original -- all the Castorenas in Colton are related, and they are the branches or generations that followed these particular people, except for the [00:04:00] women who, of course, married. But their children and grandchildren were still Castorenas, yeah.

TOM RIVERA: And your mom, Maria Terones, married Sebastian Castorena, and they had three children? Who were the children?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: My mother's name is [Nasaria?], but she went by [Chayo?], and when she became an adult in the Anglo workplace, she started using the name [Nancy?]. She was bilingual and she spoke Spanish in the home. Her sister was Sophie [Martinez?]. She married [Paul?] Martinez. Well, Martinez became her married name. But she was raised in East Highlands when her parents passed

away. But her cousins were in East Highlands. They were from a branch of another sister [00:05:00] of her mother, and they were -- she was a sister of [Ines?] Colunga. And then the fourth sister was the mother of [Chole?]. Her married name was [Armenta?]. And she was a whole generation older than my mother, and when my mother's parents died, Chole, who had no children, took in [Gabriel?] Castorena, my uncle, who was my mother's youngest brother, and raised him. And he probably is the one that was the most distinguished in our family because he's in the Hall of Fame. He started the early Latino baseball teams and he was a musician and played with [Sal Vasquez?]. He had two sets of families. They were all from his only wife, Aunt [Connie?]. His first children were [Gabe?] Senior, [00:06:00] [Robert?] Castorena, and then a daughter, [Mary Helen?]. She died at 15 from meningitis, and then [Mario?] is only six months older than I am, and we were close growing up, and we still are today. Then after many years, my uncle Gabe and his wife had another group of children, and the oldest was [Olivia?], and then [Veronica?] and [Fernando?], and then [Cecilia?]. Fernando passed away as - - oh, he was quite young -- but he did have a family before and children, and they were about the age of my children.

TOM RIVERA: You've mentioned that your uncle Gabe was very actively involved in Colton. All there is of [00:07:00] not only sports, but also music, and he was one of the few people that worked with the city of Colton.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: He worked over 50 years. I don't think there was ever an employee in Colton that had worked that many years. In fact, he started in the parks and he worked his way up to superintendent. He also had a furniture store, and -- when, I think -- I believe his daughter died, he lost the store. But he later had a second job, and again, he was selling furniture.

TOM RIVERA: Mm-hmm. Now, you've mentioned that he had a band.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Can you tell us about his band?

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Oh. (laughs) Well, I know he played at my sister's wedding. In fact, my older sister, who still is alive today, she is -- [00:08:00] was born in 1933 here in South Colton, and he was a great musician. He gave my sister away because my oldest brother and sister for a time, when my mother had to leave South Colton during the Depression to find work, they were also being raised by [Solidar Armenta?], and they were very close to my uncle Gabe.

TOM RIVERA: The Depression was during the '30s.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Okay. You've mentioned that Gabe lived on the corner of N Street and 5th Street in South Colton. And then after he moved, he moved to a new house [00:09:00] in North Colton.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:I very much would like to share about where he lived because when I was young -- very, very young -- my mother sent me to -- one summer -- I must've been about eight years old -- to stay with Ines Colunga, her aunt. I would call her Grandma, and I stayed with her, and next door lived her daughter, [Ada?], and she also had her other son in the area, [Eddie?]. The other Colunga children -- they were first biological cousins to my mother -- were [Ray?], but we called him Uncle Ray, and then there was [Fidel?], and he died [00:10:00] young. But his wife married [Jedemias Perez?], who was, I believe, the first Latino councilman --

TOM RIVERA: -- in 1948?

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Yes.

TOM RIVERA: He was elected councilman (inaudible).

ALLFRED PLAZZO:And also a boxer. He's in the Hall of Fame along with my uncle because of his coaching and founding the Latino baseball teams in the '40s.

TOM RIVERA: But before we leave that --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: But I want to go back to my uncle's homes. When I was a teenager, my mother said, "You must know my family, so I'm sending you to stay with --" Mama Chole, we would call her.

TOM RIVERA: Now, where did you live?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Well, I lived in San Bernardino.

TOM RIVERA: Okay.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Okay. So I could've been about 13 years old. My mother said, "Now, remember, you have to visit all your relatives in Colton. That includes your uncle and [Maude Ramos?], because Maude Ramos [00:11:00] was like a sister to my mother. She was the adopted first child of the Colungas, and then the Colungas had their biological children, Ray, Ada, Fidel, Allfred -- who was closer to my mother in age. His son is that artist --

TOM RIVERA: -- Ernie Colunga.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yes. And then there was the youngest, Eddie. By the time Eddie came along, I believe my mother had already --

TOM RIVERA: -- and Eddie was very much involved with Fidel Hernandez' veterans (inaudible) group.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yes. Uh-huh. I went to his services. Before he passed away, he lived in Texas for a while, but they -- he's buried over here at the Hermosa Cemetery where all the Colungas are. (laughs) It's a spot. And then Maude Ramos was the godmother of three of my mother's children, and so I was probably closest to [00:12:00] her and Auntie Ada as a teenager and the rest of my life. And I have many stories to share about them. But back to my uncle Gabe who lived on N Street. I remember visiting him as a child and his house was very modest. There were two little wooden cabins. In the back lived his parents, Solidar and [Luz?].

They were up in age now. And in the front lived his first group of kids, and in the back was an outhouse, and when they had to take a bath, they used a large tina, I guess, and they would just get privacy by putting blankets on the clothesline. The reason I share this because that [00:13:00] group of kids really struggled. And then when they built that underpass, his was the house that was in the middle that they took, and he moved to Redlands Avenue at the corner of Redlands and Lemon. And this is where I would visit him as a young man. He got two houses that the -- I guess CALTRANS got from -- right away, for freeway, and he put them on the lot, and in the middle he built this huge, humongous family room. It was really large because they had a big family -- not only his side, but my aunt [Connie's?] side, the [Rosas?]. Because I was tall and they were doing the construction, they called me over and they said, "Freddy --" Everybody in the family calls me Freddy. Nobody calls me Allfred or Al. [00:14:00] I was the one that put the glitter on the ceiling. (laughs) So I remember that. But I would love going over because my aunt Connie was such a great cook. But this next group of kids, [Olivia?], [Veronica?], Fernando, and Cecilia, they probably don't remember that first house on N Street. But I would also visit my Mama Chole well into the time that I was -- after college because when I went to see her, she was so kind when we were little. And the reason we went to see her, because my older brother and sister were so attached to her because during the Depression, my mother couldn't find work here in Colton, and she was now divorced. And as an aside, I might add, she opened up a Mexican restaurant on Mount Vernon before [Myla's?]. [00:15:00] But it didn't make it. So when Myla's started, I think, in 1939 -- they're about 80 years old -- her restaurant had already failed. But -- so she went to work in Palm Springs, my mother, for wealthy, wealthy people, the descendants of the people that built the railroads of the United States. And they would come out from I guess Newport,

Rhode Island, and spend the winter here. This story, I must share. They told my mother, "We're too old to be coming out anymore. We want to take you back for us to become a permanent staff -- household staff -- and we will send your children to the best schools in the country, to the Ivy League schools -- Harvard, Yale." And my mother was just overwhelmed, and that night, when her [00:16:00] coworker cook, who was probably 35, 40 years older sat her down -- an African American cook -- and she said, "I want to share a story with you. They made the same offer to me when I was young and my son became a doctor, a graduate of Harvard, but he's ashamed of me because he's never known me, and all I get is a Christmas card once a year." That night, my mother packed her bags, left Palm Springs, and came back to Colton, and said, "If my children have to eat beans, we will not be separated." I just think that's a wonderful story because my mother later, when she met my dad in the mid-'40s, he was a character and he had vices -- gambling and other -- he was a ladies man. So he left my mom when I was nine years old, and so [00:17:00] she started working at [Tops?], a graveyard shift, on Route 66 -- Mount Vernon -- and then later went to Myla's, and she was still working there when I was in college, until she became ill with cancer. So she worked two jobs.

TOM RIVERA: And tried to maintain the family.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah, and during the day, she worked in the Valencia area of San Bernardino. All those lawyers and judges and wealthy people who were the prominent people in San Bernardino lived in that area. But I'd like to get back to South Colton and the Colunga family and stories about that.

TOM RIVERA: Well, before we get there, because we started off -- we're talking about your --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: And the Ramos family. I don't want to leave them out.

TOM RIVERA: We were talking about your uncle Gabe. Your mom was very religious, and I would imagine that also, Gabe was also --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, absolutely, very, very religious, that family. [00:18:00] (laughs) Yeah, that's the one thing I think they -- was instilled in them when they were children. In fact, Mama Chole, I remember as a teenager, people would go from Colton -- they would take pilgrimages to this church in Altadena. Some of -- I think it was Lady of Lords or something and it had a grotto. (laughs) I remember the stories from my cousin [Mario?], the older people in the community who would go on the bus was a lady named [Toula?].

TOM RIVERA: Yeah, [Maria?] Toula.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah, and Mario would tease her. (laughs) And she would say, "Mario, I'm going to get after you." And -- but, see, I was always sent to Colton to keep in touch with the family, with the Colunga family when I was little, and [00:19:00] I can share stories that touched my mother's heart when I was growing up. Well, and the Ramos family -- Maude Ramos. There were times when my mother was really struggling between jobs, and -- but she was proud, and somehow through the grapevine, friends tell friends, and both of the families -- the Colunga family and the Ramos family -- came to the house with bags of groceries. My mother had not been working -- and things for the house. And when they left, I saw my mother crying. (crying) And this was the first time I saw my mother cry. And I was so mad, but I was so immature. My mother pointed out, she said, "This is my family in Colton. This is all I have. [00:20:00] Don't ever begrudge anything that family does for you." In fact, when I was a teenager and I came to visit Colton with Mama Chole and then I went to see my Nina Maude, she sent her children to buy me school clothes because she was my godmother and she wanted to give me a gift, and they took me to [Robert Hall?] on La Cadena -- [Rudy?] and [Esther?]

Ramos -- and when we walked into the store, they said, (crying) "Freddy, you could have anything you want." Never in my life had anybody ever said to me, "You could have anything you want." When I was growing up as a kid, because my mother was a single mother, I didn't ask for anything. [00:21:00] I didn't want to burden her. When I came home with the packages, my Nina Maude looked at what they bought -- pants and shirts -- and then she said, "And you didn't buy him underwear and t-shirts and socks?" She chewed out her adult children and she told my cousin [Rudy?], "After work, you're going to go back and buy him that underwear, and before he leaves Colton, he will have the underclothing." (laughs) I was so embarrassed, and my mother would say, "Your nina wants to see you." And I said, "Oh, if I go there, I know she's going to give me money. I feel so embarrassed." But my mother would say, "But that's my only family. (crying) That's my only family."

TOM RIVERA: So you were el consentido.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: I guess. (laughter) I guess, because they didn't have grandkids. None of the Ramos children got married. In fact, there was a rivalry between the -- that -- those children [00:22:00] and the Colunga children. But my Nina Maude would share great stories. She would say, "When the kids were little, all of them would stop at my house --" And this included [David Gaska?] stopping to see his aunt and Fidel. They were very close, that family.

TOM RIVERA: How about Allfred?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Well, Allfred was close to my mom in age, and so he would visit my mom in adult life. But (laughs) Rudy once shared a story. He said -- Auntie Ada's always kind of boasts that they had the first telephone in South Colton, and Rudy would say, "What does that matter if there's nobody else to call?" (laughter) Because Rudy was quite a character. He had an outstanding life, in my mind. He

was so creative. Do you mind if I talk about the Ramos [00:23:00] kids, Rudy?

Later, I'll bring Auntie Ada back. But he started working at the Harris Company, and he -- and you know those windows on E Street were display windows, and it was his job to decorate the store and the display windows, especially during Christmas. My mother -- and one time, they had a Lionel train, and my mother was looking at the decoration. This was in the mid-'50s. My sister -- oldest sister had already graduated from high school and was working. And my mother said, "Oh, buy your little brother that train." And my oldest sister said, "Mom, that would take my month's salary." But she bought it. And when I got up Christmas day to play with the train, first thing, my older brother said, "Stay back. Stay back." [00:24:00] Because it was not the kind of toy -- it was an expensive toy. They wanted me to protect it. I protected it all my life and gave it back to my sister when she had a child, a son, and they passed it on to her grandchildren.

TOM RIVERA: Oh, wonderful. What a wonderful --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: And they still have that train, and that train would be about 65 years today.

TOM RIVERA: Do they call it the Freddy?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: (laughs) Probably. But I think my brother-in-law had more fun with it. But back to Rudy, then he went to [Penney's?] because Penney's was a bigger chain store, and that was the time when he would sketch the merchandise that was going to be sold, I guess, that week or that month because he was an artist, and they didn't take pictures. But he said Penney's was too small and he [00:25:00] wanted to leave the San Bernardino area, see the world. So he went to Vegas and he started working, I think, for Diamond's Department Store, a big chain in the Western states. But because he had the gift of the gab, they put him in charge like an MC at fashion shows (laughs) because their clientele was high end.

And then when he retired from Vegas, but he was still too young to stop working, he worked for a firm in East LA that made mannequins, and he would go every year to New York City. Now, Rudy was 20 years older than I was, so when I'm a teenager, he's 35, okay? When I'm 20, he's 40. When I'm 25, he's 45. So he's already traveling and he was very much into the performing arts, [00:26:00] and he would tell me, "You know, Freddy, when I was growing up in South Colton, I wanted to go into LA to see the plays, but I had no friends that had that interest. So I just go by myself. I get on the bus and I go to the theaters in LA." But when he would go to New York with those conventions every year, he would see some Broadway shows, and he would tell me about these new plays that would take years to come out to our area. But that was Rudy, and later, he decorated my hall when I got married. But he also would decorate the church for --

TOM RIVERA: San Salvador?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: And Guadalupe. He was close to the priests of Guadalupe, and he really went out at Guadalupe because they had a big altar and high ceilings. He could really drape it with fabrics and so forth. His brother [Louie?] started working at Norton [00:27:00] and that's when they were building these missiles, and then they shut down Norton, so Rudy had to go toward the San Fernando Valley where they had defense factories and so forth. He moved, oh, Thousand Oaks, and he shared a story that I thought was fascinating. He said toward the end, when they needed a technician, they would call him -- the government, the defense department -- and he would have to meet some military officer at some airport, and then they would take him in a remote area. And he didn't really know where he was going. He was not supposed to know. They would pass the side of a mountain and stop, and the mountain would open up, and they would go in, and it would be a tunnel for missiles. And he would work. [00:28:00] Then -- so his skills, I guess,

whatever he did on missiles were valued very much, and here's a guy from South Colton (laughs) really making a contribution to our defense. But Rudy was in the Korean War and he talked about the war, how bitter the snow was. So those are my stories of the Ramos family. My Nina Maude, she had the most beautiful yard. She was cutting her grass into her sixties, I think, and she had these beautiful flowers, and I would go visit her and I would say, "Who takes care of your yard?" She said, "Oh, I ordered these flowers. I plant them myself." (laughs) Her favorite was this ranunculus. It's a pretty flower. But she had roses and she lived at the corner of 3rd and L Street. And then [00:29:00] my Mama Chule was two blocks over on N, in the middle of the block between 3rd and 4th, and Uncle Gabe was -- where the depression is, the bridge.

TOM RIVERA: So did Ray -- [Ramon?] -- inherit the grandma's house?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: No, this is the way it works with the Colunga family. Ray was married to [Cielo?], and they had children. I believe one of them was [Dickie?].

TOM RIVERA: Dickie, right.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: I'll get back to him, the oldest. So my grandma Ines lived the second house from the corner on 7th Street and Congress, across from Wilson. Do I have the right street setup?

TOM RIVERA: Yes. Yes.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: It was a two-story house, and I remember that because I went there as a kid. It was like a compound for the Colungas because the next house was Auntie Ada, and then she built two more houses. [00:30:00] And I'm going to talk about her. But the Colunga house, the original one, went to Fidel. But remember, Fidel's dad passed away, and so when he got married, I believe he got his grandmother's house, and his children were raised there. And then when Auntie Ada left the area after her husband passed away and she remarried, she went to

the Pacific Northwest, Tacoma, and I have some short stories to tell about her that are fascinating. In fact, I'll start the stories with her, but she came to one of those houses after her marriage didn't work out after many years, and that house, [00:31:00] I believe, went to her granddaughter, the daughter -- the oldest daughter of David Gaska. Okay?

TOM RIVERA: Okay.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Okay.

TOM RIVERA: And David was married to [Arias?].

ALLFRED PLAZZO: She was a beautiful woman.

TOM RIVERA: Red hair.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Red hair, yes. Yes.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah, she was a --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: What was her name? It escapes me for a moment.

TOM RIVERA: She was the '51 Fiestas Patrias Queen.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, really? Yes, yeah, I remember. She was gorgeous, yeah.

TOM RIVERA: Let me get back to --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: But -- okay.

TOM RIVERA: Let me get back to Gabe.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Okay.

TOM RIVERA: We talk about his many activities. We left it at his band. But was he involved with building the new church in Colton?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, everybody in the community was. In fact, I remember going to a fundraiser, a fiesta that they had there across from the old church, and my cousin Esther Ramos was manning a booth, and she said, [00:32:00] "Come and support us because we're raising money for our church." And later, she shared the story that Uncle Ray and other people in the community -- because they were

trying to cut corners and they were trying to save money. They knew the building skills, so of course they had an architect and probably a contractor. But if they could pitch in and help out, I guess that was the agreement, that anybody in the community could show up and volunteer and contribute their skills towards building the church. That's why they were so attached to that church, because it was actually part of who they were. There's the other Catholic church on the other side of town, but remember, back in those days, the Latinos did not live (laughs) on the other side of Colton. They only lived on the south side. In fact, my aunt [Connie?], who was very fair, very beautiful, [00:33:00] she shared the story --

TOM RIVERA: [Rosas?].

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah -- that when she went to the movies, somehow she was allowed to walk through the front, but the theater was divided. The Latinos had to sit in the back. My aunt Connie said, "No, I want to sit with my brothers and sisters." Well, they wouldn't let her brothers and sisters because some of them were more moreno. And so she went back there and sat there with her brothers and sisters, but she wasn't going to sit in the front with them. In fact, my aunt Sophie shared this story, that when she was young, her and her husband would go to [Yubita Springs?], where -- which is where the [Inman Center?] is. It was a lake. And the Anglos would go there to swim. The Latinos could only sit on the grass and watch. Can you imagine? Just watch. Maybe one day a week, they were allowed to swim.

TOM RIVERA: No, but that was the -- normal that day, yeah.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: That was the way it was.

TOM RIVERA: That's the way it was. [00:34:00] Everybody accepted that that's the way it is. (inaudible) segregation.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah. Now, so what was the --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: But I'd like to share one more thought about my uncle Gabe's family.

TOM RIVERA: Okay.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: His second son, Robert, a year before he died, we went to Europe together with his wife [Shan?]. They were childhood sweethearts. They'd known each other in elementary school, and I'm so glad I had the opportunity --

TOM RIVERA: And they only lived half a block from each other.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: (laughs) Oh yeah.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: But they lived many years in San Antonio.

TOM RIVERA: No, but I'm saying in South Colton.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: He was an electrical engineer, graduated from Cal Poly, had a masters. I think he attained the rank of captain, and after the military -- and he was assigned all over the United States, I think even D.C. and Chicago. He worked for various defense industries. [00:35:00] So that -- and I went with his younger sister, Veronica, from that second group of children that her parents had. It's like they had two families, four and four, and they were just separated by about 10 years or 12 years, something like that.

TOM RIVERA: What was Gabe's role in helping build that church, do you know?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: No, I don't know particularly about it, but I'm sure they were all part of contributing. My uncle's ties to South Colton are -- that's why it didn't surprise me that a baseball field is named after him. I just -- this was his home.

TOM RIVERA: The baseball field is located where at?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: It's the one in South Colton, over here where [00:36:00] we have had some -- you know that little hall there? What is the name of that hall?

TOM RIVERA: Luque?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah, uh-huh. So isn't that the baseball field there?

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Uh-huh, there's a field there.

TOM RIVERA: Yes. There's -- they have two fields there.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah, uh-huh, and I believe that's the one.

TOM RIVERA: One of them is named after him. Who were his friends? Do you know who his friends were?

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

TOM RIVERA: -- in the community?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Well, I know when they did the Hall of Fame, the mayor came -- Gonzales?

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Okay. And he spoke eloquently about my uncle and he said, "I can't say enough about Gabe Castorena and his roots in this community and what he has contributed to this community." It was overwhelming. In fact, even when my cousin Bobby passed away -- now, remember, he had not lived in California for decades. His wife [Sharon?] had a service here at the senior center [00:37:00] where we used to meet. And she had mariachis, and they were musicians, and she played that trumpet song that's in the distance. The musician was out of sight.

TOM RIVERA: What is that, do you remember?

M1: (inaudible).

ALLFRED PLAZZO: No, it's not [Tapa Savad?].

TOM RIVERA: The Mexican's.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah, it's like "Dying Trumpet" or something. It's a melody. But they usually play it in the distance. It's outside the room so you can hear it. And that's what they did.

TOM RIVERA: They played the sinfonía.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah. Then he played the trumpet. Well, my uncle Gabe played --

TOM RIVERA: -- saxophone.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, you should've seen his services at the Preciado Funeral Home over here. They brought his saxophones. I mean, he had a collection. In fact, when my kid was growing up, he was part of the county [honorwide?] band, and when we went to this [00:38:00] performance at the University of Redlands, I noticed my uncle Gabe's grandson was also in the band. His name was [Alex?] Castorena. And I said, "Alex, I'm your cousin, and your cousin is playing in the band with you." And Alex went to Georgetown University, graduated from Georgetown, and the last I heard from his aunt, he was studying to be a priest. So I don't know if he's made --

TOM RIVERA: Getting back to the Colunga family --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh yes.

TOM RIVERA: -- Dorotheo.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Well, I vaguely remember him --

TOM RIVERA: Well, let me --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: -- because he was much older. But I have stories about Auntie Ada that I would love to share.

TOM RIVERA: Well, Dorotheo was working for the city of Colton --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh yes.

TOM RIVERA: -- for 30 years.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh yeah. This is a story I'd like to share because it has layers to it. I guess women were not expected to go to school because my mother was kept out of school for some reason. [00:39:00] But her aunts, who were her -- near to her on her age on the Castorena side, Mary and Elena, they snitched and they told the authorities, "We have a niece that's not coming to school, and she's living with her aunt." (laughs) So I guess the authorities went out there and inquired and they said, "Well, your husband works for the city." I think refuge. And they said, "Well, if you want him to keep his job, you have to send her to school." And so she went to school immediately. But they pulled her out when she went to high school. Now, my aunt Connie who was just a few years younger did graduate from high school, but my mother -- and it haunted her her whole life. But they told her, "Why do you need an education? You're just going to get married and have children." So during the war years, you know how women entered [00:40:00] the workforce because there weren't a lot of men? They were off to World War II? She went to apply, I guess, at Norton, and they turned her down because she didn't have a high school education. But she did work for a defense factory near a little mountain over there by Cal State in an ammunition plant, and the women were told they couldn't wear any jewelry. Then later she worked at Willet's, and that's where she met my father. But my auntie Ada also worked at Willet's, but she also worked at Helman's, and this is the story I love. Auntie Ada, she was always the life of the party. When she came to a family event, she was the center of attention. She was so outgoing. She had so much confidence and she dressed to the nines, and it's not that she was wearing necessarily expensive clothes. She just knew how to [00:41:00] accent her -- with a scarf, with a big hat, with a big flower, with a nice belt -- gold buckle -- just something that stood up. So I called her up when I was now back from college and I said, "Auntie, I'm going to take you out to lunch, but we're going

to leave the area. We're going to go someplace that I really don't know, but let's go to Beverly Hills." So we went to the Beverly Wilshire Hotel there on Wilshire Boulevard by Rodeo Drive, where Michael Jackson had his (laughs) (inaudible) reception, and I think Elvis lived there. So I was a bit intimidated because I had not been to places like that. I had heard of them. But when Auntie Ada was at the door and we were being shown to our table, she walked in with so much confidence and she had a walk like [00:42:00] Sophia Loren. Just a nice stride. I thought, "Auntie Ada, you look like you own the place." (laughter)

TOM RIVERA: Literally somebody else.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: And then she shared this story, and she said, "Well, when I was a young girl working at Helman's --" This is the point I want to make. They would send her to fashion shows in Beverly Hills. She was a buyer for Helman's. Now, I don't remember Helman's that well, but it was a nice department store in Colton, and she would, I guess, select the dresses and probably men's clothing too that were being sold in the store in the area of Colton, and she didn't graduate from high school, but she had taste. She had taste. Later -- well, this was after college.

When I was in college, I was in ROTC, and I was at Fort Lewis [00:43:00] and I didn't want to stay on the base on weekends. And she was living in Tacoma right there next to Fort Lewis, so I would call her and I said, "Auntie, can I come and stay with you?" She said, "Sure, Freddy, we'd be happy to help you." Then her husband was in the Elks and they would go to their -- to eat their dinner at the Elks Club, and she made this observation, and it never -- it really struck me like a ton of bricks because of my background. She said, "Freddy, I want you to look around this room. And can you tell me something that you notice?" And she said -- and there were a lot of people in this banquet hall. She said, "You and I are the only people with black hair." Everybody else in the room had blond hair. And then later, when we

were leaving, going back to her house, [00:44:00] we were going through some side road and then we ended up at this saloon and she said, "Don't worry, Freddy, I know. It's my husband. He has some -- he's always doing tricks." And we went into the saloon. Now, here we are in the state of Washington in Tacoma and I must've been 23 years old. I'm now 69, going to be 70. When we went into that saloon, there was a group of men, mariachis, (laughter) played -- four of them. They had the violin, they had the big guitar, and then they had the bass, and these guys had the sombrero with the mariachi uniform, and they were playing in this saloon in Washington. I thought, "Oh my goodness, you have made me feel at home," because I have [00:45:00] to share this story. When I was growing up, my mother would have the radio station on if she was home, and it was the Mexican station. I'd get tired of it because I wanted to hear rock and roll, right? I was a teenager. Well, when I graduated and I went to UC Santa Barbara, a campus of 13,000 students, there were only 20 Latinos and African Americans on campus. So if you spread us out in the course of a given day into our various majors, different buildings, we would be lucky if we ran into another Latino during the day. I was part of [UMAS?] -- later became MECHA -- to recruit more Latinos to the campus. [00:46:00] But I told my mother, "I am so homesick. Send me the Mexican albums. Send me Javier Solís." That was my favorite. The song that was my favorite was "Payaso" because outwardly he's laughing, he's smiling, but inwardly, he's sad, and I was sad that I missed my family and I missed my Latino culture because I was way out of water. Way out of water. The only reason I went there is I had gotten a region scholarship.

TOM RIVERA: Well, tell us about your region scholarship.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh my goodness. Well, Henry and I were Future Teachers in high school.

TOM RIVERA: You were classmates? You and Henry were classmates?

HENRY VASQUEZ: We were in English together.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah, English.

HENRY VASQUEZ: Miss [Potina?].

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Miss Potina, and she was the sponsor of Future Teachers. I was [00:47:00] president one year, but I shouldn't have been because I was so involved with so many other things. I didn't do justice. I was on debate. That was my main focus, but I was also president of Future Leaders, a small group that Mr. [Alcola?] would meet once a month at his house and bring in these speakers, these Latino speakers. Dr. Garcia, when he just got out of college, [Jess Arias?], first Latino councilman, Florentino Garza, who was an attorney -- Eloise Reyes, first Latina, worked for him at one time.

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: In fact, Jerry Brown was thinking of putting Florentino Garza on the California Supreme Court as an associate justice. It came down to two, Cruz Reynoso, and I think Jerry Brown went with Cruz because he was close to Cesar Chavez and [Maldev?]. I also got a MALDEF scholarship when I was in law school, and [00:48:00] an Italian American scholarship, and (laughs) -- but the region scholarship, I have to share this with you. They had an awards banquet and they said, "Tell your family you're getting an award." So I went to the banquet. Well, my mother invited all the people from South Colton -- the Ramos, everybody, my cousins, my aunt Sophie -- and they went through the whole program and they had not called my name. And my mother was embarrassed and she said, "Well, maybe he got his information mixed up." Then the principal, [Dolan?], came out and said, "We thought we would save what we think is the best for last." Wow. And then they announced my name, and I had no idea what that was, but I remembered the

interview and I'd like to share that. [00:49:00] But I remember the kids coming up to me, [Jeff Cohen?], [David Sloane?], [David Gong?]. They were all children of doctors and they were on the academic decathlon team, which we called Challenge Bowl, and I was the last one to be put on that team. So when I went to the interview, it was the Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs from Santa Barbara, came out to UCR, and he says, "It's going to be short," and he says, "I have your transcript and I know your grades and I have letters of recommendation." One letter, one of my favorite teachers, Mr. [Burke?], showed me, and he said, "I would never do this, Al." He had taught for about 30 years. One year, he became the most outstanding teacher in the district, but his room was like a museum. Do you remember? His room of history. [00:50:00] He would bring out these artifacts every week for every segment of the program and course, and he said, "I regard Al as one of the top 10 students I've had in all my years of teaching." I was overwhelmed. I said, "Mr. Burke, what a burden you have put on me." He says, "No, Al, you sit in the front row and you ace the quizzes and you answer the questions and you love history." And I told (laughs) Dr. Tom, "If I could live my life over again, I should've been a community college history professor. I think I would've enjoyed that."

(laughter) But I was a history major in college not because I thought I was going to do something with it, but I'll share later why. But back to the interview, Dr. [Palmer?], who had graduated from Redlands in the '30s, he said, "I see you took [00:51:00] a world history class and you were reading about a book a week, like *The Iliad* and Shakespeare and Cervantes, *Don Quixote* and Faust and Milton." Oh, it was amazing, the bibliography. But he said, "I'm just going to take my finger and wherever it lands, I'm going to ask you a question." And it was the biography of Vincent van Gogh, and I -- being on debating, I was already taught how to think on my toes. But I'll tell you why I was on debating. I was a severe stutterer all my life

growing up. I had 10 years of therapy. The last year was my tenth grade. But from first grade to tenth, they would pull me out of class once a week for an hour, and I literally could not talk. I would just go, "T-T-T-T-T-T-T --" In fact, when I ran for student body president at Franklin, which is now [00:52:00] Dr. King Middle School, and I won, when I went on stage for the assembly, I could not speak, and the teacher, Mr. [Marino?], just came and escorted me off the stage because the whole school was laughing at me, 1,000 students. But they voted me their president and that changed my life (laughs) because the principal said, "You know, Al, when you were in the eighth grade, you have been a clown, and you've been acting silly because you want attention." In fact, I've got to share this story because it involves my mother. I've got to share it. So I was in a play and the teacher said, "Okay, we're going to take a break, and I want the men on stage to move the props and the girls go back to the auditorium." It was the cafeteria. And he was looking around, and, "Where's Allfred?" [00:53:00] And the guy said, "Oh, he's over there with the girls." So the teacher shouted across the whole auditorium, "Allfred, you'd better get an education because you cannot do manual labor." Well, I'll tell you about manual labor later. So I went home real proud and I shared this story with my mom, and I told her, "I think the teacher thinks I can get an education," and then I gave her the rest of the story. Remember that guy on the radio, Paul Harvey?

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Who would start with an opening and then give you the rest?

And when I told her the rest of the story, she said, "¿Y no tenías vergüenza?

Pendejo, (laughter) get out there and pull those weeds." She was going to see to it that I do manual labor, and talk about manual labor. When I was in law school, before I decided to come back to Southern [00:54:00] California -- I did not succeed my second year. I decided to drop out because I would've been on probation. I

went to work in the fields as a migrant worker. And my classmates, Latino law students, were begging me. They said, "Al, you don't have to do this. You can get a job in Sacramento. You have a college degree already in some state office." And I said, "I have to do this. I need to know what it was like for my ancestors," because my older brother, who's only 14 years older than I am, my mother used to send him to work and he was working at 10 years old [00:55:00] at a mom-and-pop store at 8th and J in San Bernardino, stocking the shelves. But -- so I had heard the stories of my family and I said, "I know I'm not going to be here for the rest of my life, but I will do it for a summer." And I had a sister living in Sacramento and she wanted me to stay up there, but I said, "I think I'm going to go back to Southern California because I have more relatives in Southern California. I feel more at home. More families know me." So that was my story about manual labor, and I kind of digressed into that.

TOM RIVERA: A little bit. (laughs)

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, the interview. So he asked me, "How do you compare yourself to Vincent [00:56:00] van Gogh?" And I said, "Vincent struggles with his family. They want him to enter traditional careers like the ministry, or I think they were in business. But he's not happy. He wants to be an artist." He never sold a painting in his life, never made any money, but today, he's considered one of the great artists of all time because of his technique and what he -- the way he experimented. I said, "I struggle with my mother. It's a daily constant struggle. I know she values education because she couldn't go to school, but she has been telling me that upon graduation, you will get a full-time job, and if you have time, you will go [00:57:00] to Valley College at night." And I said, "But I want to go to college. I want to go to a four-year university and my teachers keep putting these ideas in my head that if I just keep up the grades, they think I can get a scholarship." I got

the region scholarship. And when I asked the dean -- the vice-chancellor at a reception at the chancellor's house on campus later that year, I said, "Why did you give me the scholarship?" I know I'm going to get emotional. I said, "Was it my grades or my academic activities? Extracurricular?" He said, "No, it's because your teachers believe you will make a difference someday." And to this day, [00:58:00] (crying) I still believe I haven't made a difference, and I've been blessed with so much opportunity and have had a wonderful life and blessed with wonderful children and I've traveled. That is why I came up with this vision for San Bernardino. It has haunted me for almost 50 years. When I came back and started working for the assessor's office as a deputy assessor, and then assigned to the western portion of the county, all that area, from Fontana to Rancho, Ontario, Upland, Chino, Chino Hills, had vast areas of undeveloped land, vacant land, agricultural, rural. It was my responsibility to evaluate that development that you -- [00:59:00] of all different types and kinds that you see out there. In fact, the first office building I did was probably the biggest office building in the county, that empire building, which is an old building by the 10 freeway and Haven, by that hotel. When they sent me out there to evaluate it, I just stared at the building for about 15 minutes and I said, "Wow, where do I start?" And then I said, "Relax. You've been sent to school. You know the theory. Just walk in there and talk to the property manager and tell them you want to see the leases because you're going to use the income approach." On a commercial industrial property, we believe the value of the property is not what it costs to build it, but the income it can generate based on market leases. That is the standard, okay? So they would [01:00:00] put me in a room with these millionaires and attorneys and vice-presidents of finance and business managers and accountants, and I think they would intimidate me -- or think they were going to intimidate me. And I would say to them, "I am here to do a job. I would like to have

your cooperation, but if I don't have your cooperation, I'm going to do the job anyway. But I would prefer your data than to go down the street and get somebody else's data because I will do a better job if I use your data." And when I started talking the income approach and started using their vocabulary, I gained their respect because they knew that I was putting myself at their level, and I never had any trouble, and I did thousands of properties, thousands over a 35-year career, okay, with the assessor's office.

TOM RIVERA: [01:01:00] Well, your mom was right, the education paid off.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:(laughs) Oh, you think so? (laughter) I know when I graduated from high school -- I have to share this story -- my immediate family was there, but I was brought to tears when I saw my uncle Gabe come to the graduation because I knew this was a man that, like my mother, worked at two jobs and he must've called her that day and said, "When is Freddy graduating?" She said, "Tonight," and I knew it was hard for him to get away from work. But he was going to show me that he was going to be there for moral support. Even after my mother passed away -- my mother passed away when I was 24 years old. I was lost. She was my rock.

[01:02:00] I had big dreams, big dreams. I'm going to share this, and please don't misinterpret what I'm going to say. But try to put it in some context. I was put on a waiting list to go to Harvard Law School. When I applied to Harvard Law School and they did not reject me outright, they said, "We're very impressed with your application. We just want to wait a little bit." I thought because I was a person of faith, I thought -- and being a student of history, and that was the -- I'll talk about my history interest. But I thought, "President Kennedy went to Harvard." [01:03:00] I felt so humble. I said, "God, what is your plan? I don't understand it. (crying) It's bigger than I can even comprehend. If this door might open --" I was shaking. I literally was. I thought, "Well, I'll try." But eventually Harvard declined and I went to

Davis. Davis started a week before UCLA. When I was already at Davis, UCLA called the house and said, "We're accepting Allfred." My mother called my sister and they didn't tell me at the time, and I wanted to go to UCLA because I was an urban person. Davis at that time was [01:04:00] a really rural campus. They had a vet school and they started with the law school. Now they have a medical, so it is a big university. It really should be UC Sacramento (laughs) because you can see the skyline of Sacramento from the grounds of Davis. But it started as an agricultural campus like UCR because they apparently had the best soil and they'd done so many advances with so much agriculture. But I did okay my first year, and first year is the hardest, but that second year, my mother was dying of cancer (crying) and I would come down, false alarm. Oh, I've got to go back. The week of finals, my mother passed away. I didn't care. [01:05:00] I didn't care. (crying) I guess I didn't do well enough, so I was now on probation, and a lot of my friends said, "Al, petition to the senate." And I polled my professors and those that had given me good grades said, "We will fight for you, Al." And those that had -- that I'd done poorly in said, "Well, maybe you don't belong here. Maybe it's time you realized you don't have it -- have what it takes." And maybe they were right. I don't know. But I gave up on that dream for a while. Then I went back when I was married, and maybe that's the reason my marriage failed another 20 years later, because when you go to law school, it is really an undertaking, and -- but I've been blessed. My career with the assessor's office [01:06:00] opened up a whole new field that I didn't have any idea what was involved, and as I learned the skill of appraising, and they would send me every year for my certificate, and I had an advanced certificate. And then I ran out of state courses I could take and they sent me to Vegas to learn how to appraise casinos. (laughter) And I was ready to retire, and that's just when [San Manuel?] was taking off. But I remember the instructor

having the same experience. She said she was hired and the next day when she went to work, her boss retired, and now she was in charge and she had to appraise the Luxor Hotel. And she had that same moment when I had in front of that office building. She drives up and says, [01:07:00] "Where do I start?" But then you start breaking it down into its components.

TOM RIVERA: Al, when did you get married?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Late in life. I was 35. But I would like to talk about my major. That's very important, history, and why I picked it. Okay, then we can -- the reason I picked history, because when I would come home and turn on the TV in the middle and late '60s, our country was on fire. There were riots all over the United States. Some people didn't support the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, some people were against equality and trying to break down the barriers of discrimination. And I said, "I really don't know our history. How did we get here [01:08:00] as a nation?" So I said -- I wanted to be a lawyer so I was a political science major because back then, they didn't have prelaw and they didn't have public administration. It was all part of political science, so I took courses in political theory, international relations, government, and all poli sci. But I majored in history, and you had to pick either European or US, and I picked US, and my emphasis had to be some US period, and it was the South. And so I took classes in slavery, slave revolt, Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow-ism, prominent Black African Americans in the early 1900s, the Ku Klux Klan marching on Washington in the '20s, and the [01:09:00] segregation in the military, and Truman ending that barrier, *Brown vs. The Board of Education*, anything that had to do with the history of slavery and discrimination. In fact, when I was at Franklin, we had 1,000 students, and about 500 were Latino and 500 were African American, and I think in the entire school, we might have had two Anglo. In fact, the last time I went trick-or-treating, I was

probably in the sixth grade, and I lived at 20th and Western, three blocks from the Highland Avenue bridge. So we thought the candy was better on the other side of the tracks, kind of like South Colton, the other side of the tracks. (laughs)

[01:10:00] At that time, Latinos didn't live in the other part of San Bernardino. All the minorities lived on the west side, Route 66, Mount Vernon. We just got to Muscupiabe and knocked on the door and the adult that came to the door -- an Anglo -- said, "You don't look like you live in this neighborhood." You never forget that. And the sad thing is I cannot share this with my children because they can't grasp it. My kids grew up in Rancho Cucamonga in a very affluent area. Their mother is of German ancestry, so two of my children look like her. They're blonds. (laughs) And my other son, who's moreno, he claims to be Italian. And I always show them this picture of their great-grandparents and I said, "This is your

[01:11:00] lineage. This is the Latino side that I really grew up in." So I kind of digressed there, didn't I?

TOM RIVERA: A little bit.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: But where was I? Older.

TOM RIVERA: I was going to ask you, Al, just digressing a little bit, is the first time I met you, Al, I looked at you and I immediately thought, "This is a Castorena."

ALLFRED PLAZZO: (gasps) Are you serious?

TOM RIVERA: "This is a Castorena."

ALLFRED PLAZZO: That's a compliment.

TOM RIVERA: You look like all your uncles.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Are you --

TOM RIVERA: Especially Porfidio.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, I wish my mother was alive to hear that. You know why?

You know why?

TOM RIVERA: Why?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Because when I was at Franklin and I was the student body president, I led the flag salute at graduation. My mother said this lady sat next to her and she mumbled, "That boy is not Latino. He looks Jewish." (laughter)

[01:12:00] And so my mother shared that story and I knew how to push her buttons. I would get her mad and I would say, "Oh, I'm Jewish, and these are the hands of a scholar." And she would say, "Get out there and pull those weeds." (laughs) She says, "You're not Jewish. Jewish people have money and you don't have anything."

TOM RIVERA: Anyway, Allfred, for a long time, I've been wanting to get some background on the (inaudible) family Colton, but I had -- was not very successful. [Stella?] was my sixth-grade teacher.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, really?

TOM RIVERA: She was my sixth-grade teacher.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Well, I had met her at Aunt Mary's house. Okay.

TOM RIVERA: And then Porfidio was my next-door neighbor. He was -- I was super duper --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Next door neighbor? So you knew his family.

TOM RIVERA: Yes, he was an artist also.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Really?

TOM RIVERA: And he was a musician and he was a tremendous ball player.

All the Castorena boys were good ball players.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Really? Didn't [01:13:00] one of his sons dress in zoot suits?

TOM RIVERA: [Ricky?].

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yeah.

TOM RIVERA: Ricky Castorena.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Because I saw him years later at a dance and Aunt Sophie said, "Oh, that's our cousin," and he was wearing a zoot suit. I thought it was cool, yeah.

TOM RIVERA: Anyway, I thought, "This is a Castorena person," and then I compared you to all the -- not only Porfidio, but also I recently saw a picture of [Piyo?], and I said, "I'll be damned. He also looks -- Al looks like Piyo also."

ALLFRED PLAZZO: I have a sad story. My aunt Lena was ill and my car was having problems. She said, "I want to go see my brother Piyo. Can you take me?" And I said, "Well, I need to work on my car." And when I got my car fixed, she had passed away, and I always felt bad that she had never had that last moment.

TOM RIVERA: And [Sal?] Castorena was very impressionable, but he was [01:14:00] a scout for the major league teams.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Wow. Yeah, see, you know more about that generation. My mother was so proud of Stella. She would say, "We have a cousin that's a teacher." But Aunt Mary's son, I believe he became a principal or vice-principal. He lives somewhere in the San Diego area.

TOM RIVERA: Mary?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: [Alaman?], married to [Nash?]. She is the sister to Porfidio and Piyo and [Arturo?] and all that. In fact, they were raised by Arturo. See, they were very young when their mother died, and so he took in his sisters, Lena, and raised them with Esther and his daughter, and I think the other daughter was [Cherry?]. I would say Cherry.

TOM RIVERA: Well, Esther was a musician also, played the piano.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Well, her son was in performing arts. In fact, he performed in *South Pacific* [01:15:00] in San Bernardino, but later he moved to, I think,

Hollywood to be closer to those plays and things like that. And one of his sons -- well, his other brother, I think, he was a writer.

TOM RIVERA: Yeah. And then one of the sisters married Henry Mendoza, the politician.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Was that [Sylvia?]?

TOM RIVERA: No.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh.

TOM RIVERA: I don't know.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Okay. Now, I was coming out of the sinfonía with Aunt Sophie and we ran into Aunt Mary and she was with Sylvia, and so they were up in age now -- really up there in age, because they didn't last much longer. Yeah.

TOM RIVERA: Well, we talked about your family of Colton, Castorenas, Colungas, Ramos, and the relationships you have with different people.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: And Mama Chole. She worked with the Southern Pacific, I believe, but her husband -- the stories I remember, he was very involved in the community in [01:16:00] a lot of social gatherings to bring the community together.

TOM RIVERA: What was his name?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Luz Armenta.

TOM RIVERA: Okay.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Okay.

TOM RIVERA: Well, what I wanted to ask you, of all the experiences that you had not only with the family, but also visiting Colton, and your family members also, what is the best thing that you would remember about South Colton?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh. (pauses) I would have to say the generosity of all the people because, remember, my mother grew up in South Colton, but I didn't. I wasn't born in South Colton. But she would send me as a child to stay with the

Colungas, to stay with Chole Armenta, to visit Maude Ramos and [01:17:00] Uncle Gabe. I was always -- I felt very much at home. They -- my mother said, "That's my family. Those are my roots." She made a pact with her sister, Aunt Sophie. When they became adults, they would live close together. So my mother's first home was on A Street one block from the corner of 8th and Davidson, and when Aunt Sophie got married, she moved in the middle of the block with Paul Martinez and they build a little house, and then they started building apartments. Later, they built their big home at 21st Street and Western, and they had another lot and they built another house, and they sold it to my mom. [01:18:00] So I was very close to my aunt Sophie because my mom was working all the time and I was always next door. In fact, my closest, of all her children, was my cousin, [Doug?]. He was a writer and he wrote a book and I have it. It's called *The Fiesta Culture*. But before he left this area, he worked for the *Riverside Paper* and wrote articles. In fact, he was amazing. As a little kid, I think he was a prodigy because he would use his allowance to subscribe to *US News* and *Time Magazine*, and he was only like 10 years old. But we played games and he learned all the capitals of the states, and I was older and I didn't know that, so he challenged me. [01:19:00] And then we expanded to the western -- and then Europe and then Asia. But if you asked a question, you had to know the answer. So he said, "What's the capital of Afghanistan?" And this was in 1958, okay? Now, whoever talked about Afghanistan in 1958? And I said, "Where is that country?" And he got a globe and showed me. (laughter) He said, "Here it is in Central Asia." But he later worked for the Agriculture Department in D.C. He left as a young man and he died of brain cancer over there. But I really think he had a press pass, that he could go to those White House briefings because he was working for the government, and I thought that was amazing.

TOM RIVERA: So Colton was your second home?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh yes. [01:20:00] Absolutely, and it still is. It is. Well, it's hard now because all the family's gone. I mean, the only one that I might run into is David Gaska, and that's rare that I would run into him. In fact, I saw him at your presentation, and when you were presenting, he was sitting in the back, and before I had to leave, I went over to say hello. Yeah. But yeah, to me, we are who we are because of family, because of our ancestors, and we stand on their shoulders. I often thought if I had been born in another time, I would not have had the opportunities that I've had, that -- my grandparents and how they had to struggle [01:21:00] and my mom. It just -- I took my kids to Europe when I retired. They were much too young. But I decided to take them all because I didn't want the younger ones to say, "Well, you took the oldest," and maybe I wouldn't get around to the other ones. But the oldest got it. I was on a small budget, but he has since gone back three or four times. He has this bug and now he's in Spain for a few weeks. But I have some pictures of my children here. When my youngest son graduated from Cal State and they walk across the stage and they have a camera taking a picture, [01:22:00] the cameraman froze because my son is decorated with so many ribbons and ropes and sashes. He said, "You must be the most decorated person in the class." My son being so humble and modest, he said, "Well, maybe. Maybe." (laughs) Then my middle son, who doesn't value education -- it gets me so mad because I paid their tuition. I made that as a gift to them. I said, "I don't want you to have the student loans that I had, okay?" And they were able to move onto another stage in life and buy houses. But my middle son, he said, "Dad, can you come to a banquet?" It was for the school of business. And when I opened the brochure, and I didn't know this because my kids, they never share and I don't bug

them. The school of business, 600 students, they singled out [01:23:00] five, and my son was the most outstanding student in finance.

TOM RIVERA: Congratulations.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: And he never mentioned it to me.

TOM RIVERA: Big honor.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: No, yeah, but he doesn't have that head. My oldest son, he's now working for the county. He's in a managerial position, assistant superintendent chief or something. But he had worked in the private sector and his last job was Amazon, and he was second in command of their facility. They had 800 people under him. But he said, "Dad, I'm done. They work us 16-hour days and I've been doing this for years. I started right out of college with Kohl's and then I went to Target and Carmax, and now Amazon, and the corporate culture is the same everywhere." He says, [01:24:00] "I don't -- money's not everything. I don't want those six figures. I'd rather just be home with my family and have an 8:00 to 5:00 job and enjoy life a little bit." So I said, "Well, you have to learn. You make mistakes and you learn from your --" But he's a go-getter and when you have three children, you see they're all different. They're all different.

TOM RIVERA: Right. Well, Al, I'm delighted that you were able to share --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Have I answered all your questions, Doctor?

TOM RIVERA: I think you have.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Thank you, because this is an honor, and I hope I've done justice to what you want to capture for the people of South Colton, the people that came here decades ago, and who they were. I have this genealogy.

TOM RIVERA: [01:25:00] Yes.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: I hope you will include this. I wish my mother was alive today.

TOM RIVERA: I wish she were here.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: She would be so proud.

TOM RIVERA: She would be very proud of you.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: She would be so proud that you're even taking the time to --

TOM RIVERA: No, your families were --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: But I'm proud of my uncle Gabe. I just -- he was such a humble man, really humble. A lot of people set high goals and they want attention. They want fame. And it's often the people like Cesar Chavez who are so humble that fame comes to them because they're so giving and they care about other people and they have struggled, and we know [01:26:00] that Cesar Chavez struggled. (laughs) But I -- not too long ago, I saw that movie *Dolores*.

TOM RIVERA: I haven't seen it yet.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Oh, you have to see it. You have to see it. They start the movie with that O'Reilly guy who's on Fox News.

TOM RIVERA: Yes.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: He says, "I don't know who Dolores Huerta is. I've never heard of her. I've never heard of her. Who is she?" And then the movie starts, chronically (*sic*) -- her when she was a young girl -- decades, decades of probably 60 years of her involvement that's on film, that's recorded, documented. Oh, and that movie along with Cesar Chavez, we need to show that at the schools because the younger generation [01:27:00] today, a lot of them don't even know who these people are. And maybe to conclude -- and I think we talked about this -- and [Carmen Nevarez?] pointed this out to me. She said, "Al, we are repeating history with the way we're treating immigrants today, the discrimination that existed back then. You would think that we would be beyond this point, and look at the climate in our country, our current president who divides us instead of uniting us and raising all of us to a higher ideal, that it's our diversity that has made this country --"

(laughs) A lot of people better get used to it because Latinos are here. (laughter)
They're here. And they're not going anywhere.

TOM RIVERA: I don't think they are.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:No. [01:28:00] And they're the history of the United States.

TOM RIVERA: It's [coming for effect?].

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Yeah. You just -- you can't escape it.

TOM RIVERA: No, you can't. Well, Al, thank you so much for being with us
this afternoon.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Thank you.

TOM RIVERA: We'll go ahead and --

ALLFRED PLAZZO:-- take the picture.

TOM RIVERA: -- take some pictures, and we can incorporate them into our
interview. So thank you very much.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Thank you, Dr. Tom. I really appreciate that.

TOM RIVERA: (applause) Thank you.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:(laughs) Remember, I'm nobody. I'm nobody and I believe
that. Maybe someday, if I become somebody, then you can say, "You've finally
become somebody, Al." But I just -- I believe in my vision and I've talked about it,
and Dr. Tom took the tour, the first one over 20 -- [Graziana?] took it. I was telling
Dr. Tom the tour hasn't changed. I've cut down a lot because I think I've
overwhelmed people [01:29:00] with too many examples and I try to have just one
good example. But I've changed my vocabulary and I open with this -- and I may
not have said this to you. I may not have because I was so focused on the detail on
the actual sites, of going to these places -- I say now, we have a social injustice in
San Bernardino. We have had for decades, and it's lack of economic opportunity.
If you want to understand how to fix it, understand my vision. And if I could just talk

briefly about one idea -- I have many, but just one. One. You cannot pick up a paper any week and read that there is a housing crisis in California, in LA County, in the Inland Empire. [01:30:00] The cost of homes is beyond what most people can afford, okay? You go to Fontana, in Sierra, they're building new homes, 500,000. You go to Rancho, 600,000, okay, and more. There is a concept that has been evolving for decades in the San Gabriel Valley, and I see it in the Western portion of the county, and this concept is in the inner city, they are tearing down one-story houses that occupy a lot and they're building, like you can imagine in Rialto, Riverside Avenue, those ranch style houses. They're building four two-story houses about 2,000 square feet, no yards, but one driveway serving multiple units. "Maybe that's not your cup of tea," I tell people on my tour. [01:31:00] "Maybe you wouldn't want to live like that. Maybe I wouldn't -- but if it benefits somebody in San Bernardino, maybe it's not a bad idea." And I'm going to tell you who it would benefit. First of all, I'm a free market person. In other words, when I give my handout out, I say, "San Bernardino does not have any money and it never will." That's my first principle, meaning there will never be enough government money to solve the housing problem, and if you do get government money, it's going to probably be low-income -- projects -- and we have too much of that already. We want affordable middle-class housing. So I'm a free market person. In order to get the investment -- now, think of a metaphor, the three legs of a stool, and then I'll conclude. The first leg is the private sector, the business community. If you're going to get them motivated, [01:32:00] they have to make money because they're in business to make money. The land value in San Bernardino is too valuable and I have defined the inner city from Highland Avenue to Mill Street, from Mount Vernon to [Watermill?]. If you want a house with a yard, you have 80 percent of San Bernardino. All the rest is San Bernardino, north of Highland, Del Rosa, Valencia,

up to Marshall, Muscupiabe, beyond Mount Vernon, medical center, [Vernaban?], Cal State, 40th Street. You have 80 percent of the city. But if you really want to compete with all the other cities, building housing -- see, the rest of the county has left San Bernardino City behind in the dust, and I think the leaders for decades threw in the towel. They said, "Oh, well, we can't compete with Rancho Cucamonga, [01:33:00] and we can't compete with Redlands. We can't compete with Grand Terrace." (laughs) Okay. And now Fontana, and I live in Rosena Ranch, a masterplan community. Beautiful homes. In that inner city, we can build affordable housing. Why? Because developers in all the rest of the county, wherever they build, they have to buy land and give up that land to streets. They're not going to take a loss on that. They're going to recoup and allocate it to their homes. That's why those homes in Rancho cost 600,000, in Fontana, 5, because they have to put in the streets. We already have the streets in San Bernardino. There's a big difference between paving streets and buying land and then trying to recoup the value of that land, okay? And no other city in the county -- see, Colton has a small area. [01:34:00] Ontario, Upland -- San Bernardino has 1,000 square blocks, and so it's a one-story city. We're just going to go from a one-story to a two-story. That's not radical. Almost every new track is two-story. The only difference is it's no yards. If a guy bought two lots and tore down one house that's one story and there's a vacant lot, he might be able to build four two-story houses, and where they meet the lots, that's your driveway. No other city in the county has six commercial streets so close together -- Mount Vernon, E Street, Waterman, Highland, Base Line, 5th Street. Okay, you could be anywhere in that 1,000 square block area. In 15 minutes, you could be at a commercial street. But all those commercial streets are barren. Fifth Street, downtown San Bernardino, Mount Vernon, [01:35:00] Route 66. I mean, there were only four stops back in the day

before the freeway: Barstow, San Bernardino, Pasadena, and LA. Later, they took it to Santa Monica. Okay. You go to Rancho Cucamonga, from East Avenue -- the city boundary -- to Grove Avenue, Upland, there are monuments to Route 66, signage, obelisks, mosaics in the street, a pedestrian bridge with garitos on one side, and the other side, the eight states of Route 66. You don't have that, and we should be [sell?] it because we were the Route 66, not Rancho. My brother-in-law grew up in Cucamonga in Old Town, three blocks, and the rest of Cucamonga was just vineyards.

TOM RIVERA: -- vineyards.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Nobody stopped. But now the German tourists coming to the United [01:36:00] States because they see that old TV series. It's popular in Europe and they want to come to Route 66. The government has designated Route 66 a national trail. There should be money that we could improve that street, Mount Vernon. We could bring it back. Well, the other leg of that stool, who's going to be the builders of these 1,000 square blocks? Our Valley College vocational students. They could have jobs for two generations, 40 years. They could be -- after graduation, they take their state exams. They could be connected with the contractors, subcontractors. They have the building schools -- I mean, electricians, air conditioning. They're not going onto a four-year college. Not everybody's meant to go to college. In fact, we have [01:37:00] realized that we have underserved that group of people because want -- got carried away and wanted to push everybody into college. But the third leg of the stool are our brainpower, our university graduates. Cal State, when they graduate from Cal State, do they stay here? No, because there's no affordable housing. They go to Beaumont. If they go to Beaumont, we've lost them. They're not going to give back. That's 20 miles away. That's beyond Redlands and Loma Linda, Redlands, Yucaipa. Okay. So I'm

saying if we build affordable housing, because they can't afford those 500,000-dollar houses and that 400,000 where I live -- my son can afford it only because I'm helping him and I'm telling him, "Well, I'll pay you what I would pay an apartment." But our Cal State graduates, even if they can't find [01:38:00] work in San Bernardino -- like, if they work in Riverside or they work in Ontario, Rancho, or they take the Metrolink, if they live in San Bernardino because they can afford a house, brand new house in the inner city. They will give back. They are our future leaders, brainpower, future entrepreneurs. In fact, one group of kids -- I was crossing the street -- E Street, at Court Street -- and one young man, a Cal State graduate, said, "You're Mr. Plazzo. You're the guy with the vision for San Bernardino." And he said, "Well, I'd like to take it sometime." I said, "(snaps) You're taking it now. You're coming to my car." He said, "But I want to eat." "Don't worry about that. I'll feed you later." (laughter) So he came with his buddies, [Oscar Sanchez?], I believe, and I gave him the tour, and he said, "You know, Mr. Plazzo, we think of ourselves --" And I never thought about this. I thought about a lot of things, [01:39:00] but he said, "We are entrepreneurs of new high tech businesses. We want to create a think tank in Downtown San Bernardino like Silicon Valley and we think in terms of global marketing." Boom. They blew me away. And then he said, "But if we don't start building that middle-class housing in the inner city, we're gone. We're gone." So investors, the builders, Valley College vocational -- who will also be the beneficiaries. They'll be able to afford those houses -- and Cal State graduates, creators of small businesses, future leaders, brainpower. What more could we want? Then all the rest will come. The downtown will be revitalized with new shops [01:40:00] and stores because we will keep those people and we will have a renaissance. I don't use the term redevelopment because redevelopment has government connotations, like eminent domain, government money. No, I'm

free market because -- I'll take government money. There's some block grants for parks and upgrade the streets and things like that. But the actual building of stores and businesses, the government should give a penny toward. That's why San Bernardino went in bankruptcy. They owned that theater to the tune of 15 million. There's 14 theaters there. If the developer could only have built eight, that's what he should've done. They bought the Carousel Mall. What business does the city have owning a mall? That's why it went -- because they're not realtors. They're not leasing agents. They're not in the business of bringing businesses, [01:41:00] okay? And they built that stadium, which was nice. It's nice to have a stadium. But why didn't they let the [foreign?] team for the Angels, a billion-dollar corporation, pick up the tab? Now [Sam Manuel?] owns it. But the point is this is why the city went bankrupt, because it was misusing public money when it should've been creating those conditions, changing the zoning to compete. See, what's nice about the tour -- and there's a lot that's been done since you took it 20 years ago. I've updated with some new examples -- I don't make it up, Dr. Tom. They say a picture's worth a thousand words. I say, "Look at this housing development. This is what exists in Upland. Single-family homes, no yards, in Ontario, in Rancho. This has been the trend [01:42:00] because the land is too valuable." Anyway --

F1: We're going to need to stop, yeah.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Thank you. Thank you.

F1: Henry, Frank?

(break in audio)

ALLFRED PLAZZO: This picture is Sebastian Castorena. He is the oldest of the original Castorena family. All the Castorenas in Colton are related. This is his wedding picture. He is my grandfather and this is my grandmother, Maria. She is

the youngest of the four sisters that came from Mexico with their uncle, Theo Simon.

M1: And what was her maiden name?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Terones, I believe.

M1: Okay. Let's go ahead and take the next one, and for that one, you can hold it up on the other side of (inaudible).

ALLFRED PLAZZO: These are their three children. The oldest is my mother Nasaria, who was --

M1: [Which is she?]

ALLFRED PLAZZO: [01:43:00] She's in the middle. She was called Chayo in the community, but in the Anglo world, she started using the name Nancy. The other lady is her sister, Aunt Sophie, and the gentleman is my uncle, Gabriel Castorena, who is in the Hall of Fame in sports at the senior center. He founded the early baseball teams. He was the coach. A park is named after him in South Colton, and he was a superintendent for the city of Colton, worked over 50 years. He was also into music, a great musician, and played in many popular bands, Sal Vasquez.

M1: Your mom's maiden name?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Would be Castorena.

M1: [01:44:00] Castorena, okay.

ALLFRED PLAZZO: This is my mom's baby picture. She's probably not even two years old. She was born in 1915, so this was -- this picture is at least 100 years old because we're in 1918 (*sic*) today.

M2: Was she born in Colton?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Yes, South Colton. Her parents came from Mexico during the time of Pancho Villa. They were trying to escape that civil war in Mexico.

M1: And where is she from again? In Mexico, which --

ALLFRED PLAZZO:I'm not sure the community they came from in Mexico. This is my wedding picture, but what I want to point out, there are two of the original Castorena family members. They are the two youngest. [01:45:00] They are my two great-aunts. They're over here, Lena --

M1: In black.

ALLFRED PLAZZO:-- and Mary.

M1: In pink is it?

ALLFRED PLAZZO:Kind of purple-ish. Okay. They are the two youngest sisters. Their brothers were Sal, Porfidio, Arturo, Piyo. I hope I didn't leave anybody out. Of course, my grandfather, the oldest, Sebastian. And then over here is Auntie Ada, my mother's biological cousin, but we called her Auntie Ada because her mother was Ines Colunga, a sister to my mother's mother, and when her mother and father died of the Spanish influenza when my mother was five years old, Ines Colunga took her in and raised her, and this is the [01:46:00] first daughter -- biological daughter -- of Ines Colunga. But she adopted a child before she started her children, and this adopted child was Modesta here. Modesta. She later married Marcelino Ramos. And they had the children Luis, Esther, and Rudy that I talk about on the video. Esther and Luis are in this picture. Rudy isn't because he's decorating the hall and he was a decorator. These are my mother's children. (pauses) I would like to say something about my brother and my sister. They're all special. [01:47:00] My brother didn't have a [civil?] engineering degree, but he did that work. He was drafted. Because he was great in math, they assigned him to the Army Corps of Engineers. When he came back, he was working for the state, the county. All these freeways, he had a hand in. He would take me to the construction sites, but the project I like to refer to is State College Parkway. He designed. He worked for the city of San Bernardino for 35 years, and after

retirement, they called him back three times because they needed people. He worked part-time. By the time was 80, he said he had enough. Okay. And I'm so proud of my sisters. They've been so kind and generous [01:48:00] with me. One Thanksgiving dinner that I spent with my sister here was so memorable. She invited so many strangers that were alone -- not just family members that were a part of the dinner -- and I thought, "This must have been like what the original Thanksgiving dinner was really like."

M2: Can you give the name of your --

ALLFRED PLAZZO: My sister is Nancy [Gutierrez?], and she retired from the school district, but like my mother, she worked two jobs. She was a single mother, raising her children. My sister Alice married David Luna. He's the one that did the family tree when he first met my sister because he was meeting all these relatives and he didn't know who they were, and that's what I've submitted with this documentary, the family tree. He was working in the defense [01:49:00] industries, and they drafted him to Northern California, so they've lived in the Sacramento area for, oh, probably (laughs) over 50 years, close to 60 years.

M2: What was your brother's name?

ALLFRED PLAZZO: Ruben. My brother's name is Ruben. My older sister and older brother, they were more like surrogate parents because my sister is 16 years older and my brother Ruben is 14 years older. So imagine, when I'm 5 years old, he's 19. When I'm 10, he's an adult. So it was always this adult figure in my life, when my mother wasn't around. My other sister here, when my mother started working graveyard, I was 9 years old, she was 11, and we were home alone at night. Today, you would probably call that child abuse, but [01:50:00] back then, my mother had to do what she had to do, and that was the only job she could get, a graveyard job just a few blocks from the house at Tops Restaurant. This is the final

picture, and this is one I like because it's my graduation picture in college. This is how old I was. A year later, my mother -- or two years later, she passes away. I was 24 years old. But I didn't sever my ties with Colton, South Colton. My mother made four requests of me. She said, "Take care of my sister," who was my aunt next door. She said, "Stay close to your siblings." She said, "Don't forget my family in Colton." That was Uncle Gabe, that was Auntie Ada, that was Maude Ramos, that was Mama Chole who raised Uncle [01:51:00] Gabe. And I had -- I have a brother from a previous marriage from my father in Northern California, and he never forgot my mother, even after my father abandoned us. And I always kept in touch and he always kept in touch. My other said, "Don't forget him." That's it. Thank you.

End of Interview:
[01:51:24]