

**AUSTIN HISTORY CENTER**  
ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT

**Interviewee:** Susana Almanza & Sabino Renteria

**Interviewer:** Gloria Espitia

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**Key Names:** Susana Renteria Almanza, Sabino Pio Renteria, Miguel Renteria, Tomasa Renteria, Lonny Arias, Elvia Castro, Zeke Uvalle, Joanne Salas, Eli, Paul Hernandez, Francis Martinez, Mr. Rendon, Jose Cantu, Father Joe Senata.

**Abstract:** In this oral history interview conducted by Gloria Espitia, siblings Susana Almanza and Sabino “Pio” Renteria detail their involvement with the local Austin Brown Berets. Issues discussed include their work with Latino youth, their advocacy for rural workers and undocumented immigrants, as well as the Brown Beret’s fight against racism and police brutality in Austin in the 1970’s.

**Transcript**

GLORIA ESPITIA:	Hello this is Gloria Espitia, Mexican American Community Archivist at the Austin History Center. Today is Monday September 16, 2013, it is currently 10:28 am. I am conducting this oral history interview at the Austin History Center in the Holt gallery and reception room. Today I have the pleasure of interviewing two family members, brother and sister and also members of the Brown Berets back in the 70s and 1980s. First we’re going to start with Susana, Susana if you will give me your full name and spell it out for transcription purposes.	0:00:00
SUSANA ALMANZA:	Okay, it’s Susana Renteria Almanza, that’s S-U-S-A-N-A Renteria is R-E-N-T-E-R-I-A and then Almanza A-L-M-A-N-Z-A.	
ESPITIA:	Okay and Pio?	
SABINO RENTERIA:	My name is Sabino Pio Renteria, S-A-B-I-N-O, P-I-O, R-E-N-T-E-R-I-A.	

ESPITIA: Okay now if you'll will both tell me a little bit about your background, about your family. You'll were both born and raised here in Austin but give me a little synopsis of your family background, how many children there were, were you fit in that family structure.

RENTERIA: I can go first. There were eleven children in our family, my father was Mike, really Miguel Renteria and my mom was named Tomasa Renteria. There were eleven in our family, there were two sets of twins. The first set of twins, my older sister, her brother died at birth so that made us ten. We lived in a very very poor neighborhood, we grew up in a house—most of our housing at that time was really bordered and in the 10<sup>th</sup> Street, in East Austin. The housing conditions were really bad at that time, people are really struggling and with those kinds of kids I was the sort of like, one, two, the third—fourth member of the fourth oldest—well I was the youngest, fourth youngest or whatever you want to call them. I grew up there in the Guadalupe neighborhood and we lived at 1205 East 10<sup>th</sup> Street. We were a block away from my house, we didn't have any kind of running water or restrooms. We had an outhouse in the back so it was a very very poor condition, I mean everybody in that whole neighborhood didn't realize it but we were really poor. I mean we grew up in—and we were discriminated against by everyone. I mean the police hated us because we would just constantly—we were just a poor side of town and there was a lot of crime and we lived right off of Latin Street which was the sort of like the black red light district where all the UT students would come down here on Friday or Saturday nights and party and just did whatever they want to because there as all the black bars that were on 11<sup>th</sup> Street and it was one of the popular places for black kids to come and do whatever—I mean white kids from UT to come and drink and party and do whatever they wanted to do.

ESPITIA: What time period was that, about what years was that?

RENTERIA: This was nineteen—in the 60s, the mid-60s and early 50s.

ESPITIA: Okay, alright, Susana?

ALMANZA: As my brother said you know we come from a large family and I was the middle so I came right after my brother here. What I really liked about our family is that we never had a dull moment because once you put us all together we could place kick the can, football, baseball, and you put another big family together you would think we were having a tournament or something. The fact that we were—the Guadalupe church was our backyard at that time so there was

always an empty field there you know so one thing is that we had a lot of space to roam. When you come from a big family you tend to be big explores too. One of the things all summer long we were always visiting all the different creeks. I don't think that there was a creek in Austin that we didn't get to visit or explore and swim in, or pick up tadpoles, and we lived at the Palms School swimming pool all summer long from the moment the water was put in to the last drop was drained out. I have to say that even though we came from poverty background like my brother said, we didn't realize it because we had so much to do and you know it was real—those are my most cherished memories, always going places and doing things and maybe being—we didn't own a vehicle but sometimes my dad had the company truck and being able to go to the theater up in Montopolis you know the outdoor theaters, the drive ins and stuff. It was a lot of fun, it was a real good memory but also it was a time when there was a lot of racial divide like my brother said. If you cross the street that was the beginning of the African American communities. Some people say that's where it ended. We lived where—we say the Mexican community began, some people say that's where it ended. You literally you would cross the street and you were the beginning of the African American community at least to us. We got to experience a lot of time because there was a lot of racial tension at that time and there—I think the real height of racism because we were born in the fifties and so when you look at that time period and growing up in fifties and sixties that was a real volatile time period growing up.

ESPITIA: What about your parents growing up, give me a little background about your parents and—because both of you'll, I'm sure there're probably other members in your family that are activists but you'll are the ones that I know, you know and I know you'll are out there I mean you're really—it's in your heart and you're trying to do everything for you community that had pride. Was that instilled in you by your parents and you know what were they doing to make sure that you'll at least had a little bit better opportunity then they did?

RENTERIA: Well we had a—my dad only had a half first grade education and my mom had a third grade education, she only went to third grade. But they were really really faithful to the church and they instilled that discipline to us that you know we had to go out to the church to help and through the church and through the CDC, youth programs, you know through them with their help they taught us the skills and to live and function in the environment we were at because the church had a lot to do with how—and my dad would, I mean we had to go to church. It was just like discipline on us you know. My father worked

really hard you know and Sunday was a big treat for us because that was the time when we were you know the day before we killed a chicken—we raised chickens and stuff and different types. We would have a feast on Sunday so that was a big day for us and my dad used to love to watch football so I used to sit there with him and we would watch football and that was just a big—all the family would get together and have a good time on Sundays. You know my mom was just a stay at home mom, she had all the kids, she had to take care of them, you know she did her best considering you know the low income that we were having. My dad worked five and a half days and sometimes overtime just to feed us. I saw the struggle that he went through and my dad always told me, Don't be—*No seas pendejo*. He said, You stay in school, you get the education, do you want to be like me, working, struggling like this? That's what I got out of it I said, No I'm going to listen to you dad and I'm going to improve myself and I'm going to finish high school and get me a good job. That's what he kept asking me about.

ALMANZA: The thing I got from him, that even though we had to teach him how to write his name as we went to school we began to teach him how to do things because before he used to just sign with the X but he was a very good respectable man, everybody would say, Oh Mr. Mike. His name was Miguel but the African American community loved him because those special occasions like birthdays or first communions he would do a big cook, he would cook and then he's send plates to all the neighborhood. He'd go, *Andale lleva los platos*. And so everybody would love—everybody would say, God here it's your festival or your celebration but your dad always thought about the neighbors and always shared what he had, even though it wasn't much he always shared that. He always voted and to me that was important, he would take, even at those times when—I didn't know how much he understood but he knew that—he taught us the importance of voting and being involved. 0:10:00

RENTERIA: You had to pay your poll tax.

ALMANZA: You had to pay your poll tax at that time and so to see that even though my dad was a very humble, very simple man and worked like my brother said from the moment that the sun wasn't even out but he would work early in the morning because he didn't own a vehicle, he had to walk to work and walk back after long days of work. I think that he instilled a lot of ethics in us about taking care of your family the best way you could no matter what. He was very respectful, he wasn't somebody that was you know cussing or stuff like that. He was a disciplinarian but for a reason, he was a large family and my mother too she always had—you know was making tortillas, had

food smelling, I mean I remember lots of good times with you know *frijoles* and butter and *mantequilla* and doing the tortillas and she was sort of like our doctor you know because we didn't have our personal doctor but she knew about how to healing. She would have her spider webs and tell us you know not to knock them down when we got cut she would heal us and the only time that we would have to go to the emergency room was because the cut or something was so big that she couldn't heal it. She was very spiritual, you know, we had our alter there in the house and we prayed. During stormy days we would—you know she would have us there praying so there was a lot of praying going on in the house (laughs) and you know she had her ways and it was lighting we covered the mirrors and stuff like that. I think that was so important because we always knew that when we came home our mom was going to be there. That there was always somebody there at the home and to me that was real important is that we know she was always doing things but that she was always there and she had a garden and to me that was real important. Like my brother said we had our chickens, we were real sustainable back then, we had our garden that you know she—we would grow and work on you know every year. I think that those real basic things about not forgetting where we come from and working the earth, sustaining ourselves, we used to go—we were farm workers we would go pick cotton during the summer to make, you know extra money and stuff, the whole family. My mom she always home with the little one my dad went with us.

RENTERIA: And mom always used to get up early in the morning and had all the tacos ready for us to go and we were living right next to the *torquero* the truck so we had too—I mean at five o'clock in the morning we were gone you know. She would get up at four and make all the tacos and ready for us to just—

ESPITIA: You know as I listen to you'll telling those stories, your lives in so many ways is very similar to mine. My family, the same way, my parents the same way and yes we lived in a two bedroom, seven kids, and two adults, two bedrooms. Didn't have running water, outdoor, you know everything. Very similar the only thing was we lived a very sheltered life so when they would take us to the area, *donde vivieron los mexicanos*, we lived across the river there in Victoria, the Guadalupe River. When we would take us to the little *terejo* for them to buy the groceries they would say, Lock the doors, put up the windows, you know, Don't talk to no one. (all laugh) Later we found out that a lot of those people, you know the kids that I was growing up with would turn out to be—that we were told, Don't talk to no one—would turn out to be doctors and lawyers and all of that. So I mean, so you know I know what you're talking about because it's

very very similar also but entirely different you know when smaller communities so different from a larger community. Now let me ask you about—how did you'll become involved in the Brown Berets? What was—

RENTERIA: Susana was the first one, she introduced me to Ernesto Fraga which was sort of I guess I'll let her explain that.

ALMANZA: You know I met Ernesto back because I used to work at the East 1<sup>st</sup> Street neighborhood center with James Ramirez and John Trevino, Gonzalez—it was like the hub, it was where all the activism was happening in our community was—back then the neighborhood center and at that time Ernesto was working at the neighborhood center in south Austin and so we got to know each other and date each other and stuff and then about I think '73 he invited me to go to a Brown Beret meeting—they were putting the Brown Berets together and they'd been meeting at Cristo Rey Church on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Back then it was Father Lonny Arias (??) he was real activist priests and so he had been active in so many things. He was sort of like helping to sponsor—hosting the Brown Berets, letting them meet there at the church and so I said, Well sure I'll go check it out and see how things are going, what they're doing. I went to the meeting and that's what they were talking about you know, police brutalities, or how do we need to work with our youth? How do we need to protect our neighborhood? The *barrio* was the key word. At that time there was a whole issue about *charnalismo*, there was a lot about brotherhood and sisterhood and about *la familia* and trying to improve the communities. This was all things that I believed in growing up, you know I was all about family because that's where I came from. Family we knew other families and so to me was always about bettering the community because I had that experience of you know, living in a segregated community and then also being because we were you know poor and we spoke a second language and all that so I'd grown up understanding a lot of different things in the way a society was. When I saw a lot of young people wanting to make change I was very inspired by it. I had already been involved in the high school you know organizing. I helped organized a Chicano walk out there, trying to change student government at the high school so I'd already been very active in my life and so when I got to the Brown Berets I thought, Oh wow another group of young people wanting to make a lot of changes.

ESPITIA: How young were you at that time?

ALMANZA: Well I had to be about twenty, twenty-one.

ESPITIA: And so you, how did she recruit you?

RENTERIA: What happened was I was—I had become really politically active with the *Raza Unida* party, I mean I was just—you know all what they stood for was you know the fight that we had about immigration, police brutality, I mean it was just—too me—and I was working—I had just graduated from high school in 1970 and I was working at education service in a region thirteen that I had a job in. There was one of the greatest things that happened to me because you know we had some really active ladies in the organization there that—I mean Bob Perkins mother was working there she was one of the creators of Goddess Collective, I was just floored to see higher up *Mexicanos* you know, Mexican American being in a position where they're highly educated, respected, and I'm going, Oh my god this is just, this is wonderful that they was treating me a *Mexicano* that was just looked down upon as somebody you know with respect. They said, *Oh mira*. They would look at my face and say, *Puro indio*. (all laugh) At the same time growing up there we moved up to Eights Avenue (??) which is between 9<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Street on Navasota which is across the street from the state cemetery.

We were constantly being picked on by the police. There were no where we could drive around without getting stopped and assaulted, being told, Hey a Mexican. You know and getting put in jail and I mean I was caught diving, the biggest insult was I was two months away from being twenty-one, I had a court a bottle, a beer bottle that was empty with a little bit in the back seat you know that was left there and I got stopped and they said they charged me for minor possession and took me in jail and I'm here, I already had my wife, I had a son. I'm going, wait a minute what are you doing—You'll Mexicans you know, shut up, and they put you in jail. I was really frustrated with the way that we were being treated. *Raza Unida* gave me the outlet to go out there and I—since then on you know I'm part of the democratic party now but you know I really believed that that was going to be the solution to get our respect that we want. That's what motivated me and then when I met you know Ernesto Fraga through Susana and I was about '72 or something like that, '73. He was telling me what his plan was, I said, This is great because I want to be part of that because we need to tell the police to quite abusing our people. We were getting beat up, we were just—it was our young, the young people back then they could never say anything back to a police officer that got stopped, if they did, automatically jail or a beating. No one would say anything about it, they would just say, Awe those damn people they deserve it. That's what frustrated me and that's why I joined the Berets because I know that the power relies as a neighborhood that gets together with all of us together we

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were going to stop this injustice that was going on and it was—I mean at that time in Austin you could not go across Congress, west of Congress was—at night, they would tell you, Don't be caught on the other side of Congress at night because you were either going to be beat up or put in jail.

ESPITIA: So when you'll got together and met Ernesto and the formation of the Brown Berets here about how many members were there at that point, at the starting point?

ALMANZA: I think that there was a good, I would say, a good fifteen people at that time. I think there was always been a core of about, ten to fifteen, maybe twenty—a good core group. Because there's always people who come to activities and meetings but a core that was real active, I would say fifteen to twenty people who were very active and always doing things.

ESPITIA: So how did you Susana, because I know that you were one of those individuals that for the Latinas perspective getting involved and then also standing for you principles saying, Hey this is what some of the issues that we should be dealing with. How did you come about in trying to get the other members to sort of follow you in that path?

ALMANZA: Well one of the things were they were quite a bit of young ladies that were part of the Berets and so one of the things was, how could we work you know the women together to the programs. Because one of the programs we did was like feeding the youth during summer time because one of the things were a lot of our kids not were getting into the seventies and a lot of parents that used to be stay home were no longer could afford to stay home, now we were talking about two parents working and a lot of the children kind of being hanging around and like I said we would hang around at Palm School, you know for more than a day. Our situation was different because we could go home and our mom would be there and she'd have food ready. So we started this whole program where we'd made *fideo* and beans and tortillas and have a whole group of people and we would feed the kids and then they began to know that at lunch time they could come to the Centro Chicano and that there was going to be a meal happening. That kind of progressed having other activities for kids, you know saying, What can we put together? Other members who had connections to people who had like ranches and land or a certain programs. It was making those connections of, how can we take our kids out of the barrio and show them other places, but happy places and do campouts and stuff like that.



It was working with them and it was also working at that time you know Paul Hernandez was sort of like the chair or the leader of the Brown Berets and it was also working with them to say, well if we're talking about building the family we also have to make sure that the females are involved. Not just in the cooking and doing the work but also as being the spokesperson that they had to be sort of like a duality. If Paul was going to speak then there also needed to be a woman speaking because we were supposed to be representing the family and so that we needed to have you know a male and female presence all the time. Those were issues that were also discussed on the state level as the Brown Berets got together at the state chapters to talk about the whole structure and the whole representation and the different programs.

ESPITIA: One of the things that I find very interesting is that you'll in a way were taking the motherly approach and how many of the Latinas in the Brown Berets at that time were married? Do you know?

ALMANZA: I don't—I think a lot of them were still not married, they got married during the Brown Beret process like Crystal Mendez was Elias Mendez sister, she got married during the Brown Berets to another Brown Beret guy. Angie Mendez at the time, her brother Elias Mendez was in, she wasn't married at the time either right?

RENTERIA: No.

ALMANZA: She got married later on.

RENTERIA: Yeah but Eli and Angie—

ALMANZA: Oh I'm sorry Eli and Angie got married. Angie was Angie Torres then but she wasn't married at the time, but did they get married during the Brown Berets?

RENTERIA: Mh-hm.

ALMANZA: So relationships started from there—

ESPITIA: From being in the membership.

ALMANZA: Yeah but at the time there was a lot of the young people were not married like Joanna Salas, she wasn't married at the time but they grew and then she married.

RENTERIA: Paul was married.

ALMANZA: Paul was married.

RENTERIA: But his wife wasn't a Beret.

ALMANZA: But his wife wasn't, so a lot of relationships I think manifested during the Brown Beret struggle and then they did—there was married but at the beginning I remember most of the girls were single.

RENTERIA: Sam was married, there was a couple of married people but the wives weren't really active in the Berets at that time because they were raising a family.

ALMANZA: That's why I say the girls, single ladies, or young ladies they were single then along the process got married. Some of like he said the guys who were their wives weren't.

RENTERIA: We were at that time we were facing a big problem with spray paint. Our kids were doing spray paint so we were doing a lot of outreach work and we had younger people like Zeke Uvalle and Eli Mendez and those are the kind of people that had saw the discrimination in the school district and how they were being treated and how everybody was just—every year it got promoted whether you learned how to read or not they didn't care to put you in a remedial class. They would say, Oh just—give you a fifth grade book and say, Just read that and just be quiet and we'll give you a B, you don't even have to bother just as long as you behave we'll just pass you on up. At the same time we were seeing a lot of little junior high kids and elementary kids that were a little older getting into spray paints, sniffing glue, gasoline which is—you know we said we need to stop this, we need to stop this abuse of our kids and we need to educate them. That was one of the functions that el Centro Chicano took on and it was started by the Brown Berets but the Centro Chicano was an organization too that was—we had control of it.

We started el Centro Chicano but we let that be the outlet where we would do all the outreach work, we would work with the kids and at the same time deal with the political issues that we were facing because police brutality was really horrible in fact our group of Brown Berets were the first group in Austin that started filming police officers. We would have a little patrol and every time they would stop someone we'd be across the street filming it. They would get so upset, but we got a grant and we bought a video camera and we would just sit there and anytime you know we had a little hotline, every time they'd call us we'd go out there and just film them you know. But that was later on, not at the very beginning as we—and

we had a hotline for police brutality that they could call in at the Centro you know so.

- ALMANZA: As a matter of fact to follow up on that is that the Brown Berets really are the reason we now have the police review commission now, the police monitored. That was one of the main recommendation that came from the Brown Berets was a police review board but of course at that time we wanted them to have subpoena powers. So way back the Brown Berets were the ones that brought up that issue who protested and you always see that you know community review board now is because there was a height of like Pio says, police brutality in our community. Something needed to be done about it that's why it was like it didn't matter where you went you were always harassed by the police and especially at night you know was very control-ist where you could and could not be at. So I think it was the Berets like you said initiated these projects for the youth, looking at youth development, looking at taking care of the next generation, looking at the police and the police monitoring the review board. Those are all changes that have now come about but that the Brown Berets really worked to initiate you know a lot time ago in the early seventies. 0:30:00
- ESPITIA: How did you'll decide that el Centro Chicano would be located where it was? Did you'll just happen to see a vacant building and say, Well that's where we would like to rent. I'm assuming you'll were renting at the time—that's where we would like to have this or was there a reason for that location?
- ALMANZA: I don't think—I think someone had it that, I can't remember who owned the house so it was somebody who knew the person and who supported the Brown Beret issues because the first one was right there on—
- RENTERIA: San Marcos.
- ALMANZA: San Marcos Street and so it was somebody knew someone who had that property and who was willing to let us use it because I know it was very minimal of what was being paid. You know they probably could have made two, or three, or four times the amount. So it was somebody who really supported the group and the different—what we were working for and stuff that made it all happen.
- RENTERIA: That first place we—when we kind of—there was a period that the Berets kind of just like split because there was a disagreement so we ended up—that's how we moved out of the—we actually didn't more we ended up closing up the San Marcos Street. Another

incident happened where a police officer, a parent called a police officer, he was having problems with his son right there behind, on Caesar Chavez which was 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Johnny Voils(??) and the father ended up getting killed by the police officer. Here the guy had called the police officer you know and he ended up getting shot by the police officer and this was just outrages you know so we had a big demonstration to march down to the police and through the help of the, what's that—the *buen pastor* is a Methodist or Presbyterian church, they offered us a building, the house there on Willow Street right next to it which is now a daycare center. That's where we set up our shop because of the church there, they offered the building to us free so we moved out Centro Chicano there.

ESPITIA: Now el Centro Chicano when you'll did more, if I can ask, what did create that little slip between you know we're going to move to another location and was it after or before the fire? Or am I getting to different locations?

RENTERIA: No the fire was way after, the split happened because we were demonstrating there across the Palm School. Palm School had closed and Barry Gillingwater was wanting it to—really that was the end part of it. It was more the funding that we were getting, the speakers, the leadership we didn't stipends to go out and speak and get money. We were running really low on paying our rent, utilities and all that so we wanted that money to go into—you know part of that money to go into finding a place and the leadership said, No because we're earning the money and we've got families to feed and all that. And so that's what happened we had to end up closing it, plain and simple.

ESPITIA: Well the Centro Chicano I know from what I hear and what I've read had a great impact on the community. Ramon Maldonado came in one day to talk to me after the MACC oral history project, the program that we did with the MACC and he told me how he had been one of those young kids sniffing glue and everything. I mean I was really taken back by him because he wouldn't allow me to do an oral history interview and I understood that and as—but he did bring me some of his artwork, some pictures of his art work and articles of the kids he worked with and everything but one of the things that he brought me was a photograph of him being a boy scout—was it a leader—

ALMANZA: A cub scout leader I think—

ESPITIA: And that really floored me because here he was talking about himself as a little boy, being a troubled youth glue sniffing and everything

and he was accepted into el Centro Chicano and was told, You do away with all that, you do what we tell you, you will learn, you will do all this and that's what happened. It was at that point that I really started pushing, you know for more information because I get it from him as, it changed me. I guess I wish he would have allowed me to do the interview but I understood—

RENTERIA: He's a great artist.

ESPITIA: Oh yeah, he is definitely but the story, it was one impact with him now Susana I know that you because of your involvement with the Brown Berets and you're wanting to make sure that children were always taken care of and that you'll did programs and everything. Tell us about the Leander fieldtrip that you took and the kids at Zavala Elementary.

ALMANZA: So what we did was we took, several times, we took a big group of the kids down to Leander and Elvia, remember Elvia Castro she had the connections and there was a lot of people that knew certain—that work with certain camps and they were able to say, Well we can get that camp for a weekend. We'd all—you know they'd get the camp out for a lot of kids it was the first time going somewhere fun to camp out, where you're not working in the fields or something, you just camping out and we did a whole list of activities that we were going to have. Get up and make pancakes for the kids in the morning and then do hayrides, do sack races, just all kinds of just really run stuff, you no just have a good time and let the kids be out in the nature, also, be out in the open environment. Even though a lot of our communities, it's not as full as today, it was pretty open but this was even more out because you're out in the ranch and you're getting to do a lot of different things.

RENTERIA: You're out in the country, it's still there it's a real beautiful little place but we're out in the country. A lot of these kids never have left the neighborhood, they didn't know what it was like anywhere else. That was the things that we did, by that time I had already gotten a job with IBM and IBM would give us \$1,000 for community funding so I would apply for these grants and you now, to by all kinds of little items and one year we were able to take the kids to Six Flags.

ESPITIA: So your employer supported your efforts in what you were doing in the Brown Berets then, I mean if they're giving you grants or stipends you now—

RENTERIA: Through the Centro Chicano.

ESPITIA: Through the Centro Chicano so that was a good thing to have a big corporation like that. Now let's go back to this field trip and to others I mean here there were members of the Brown Berets accompanying you'll, going with you'll, so that meant that the parents of these kids trusted you.

RENTERIA: Oh yeah.

ALMANZA: Absolutely.

ESPITIA: That you'll would take care of them because they were going to be gone for a weekend and then going you know in vehicles to the location and you know kids will be kids. I mean some of them will go out exploring you know, they get lost or whatever but that was another thing. Now we do have a photo here of that, can you—

ALMANZA: And this is one of the photos, the campout in Leander. It says June '74 here you know that it got printed here and you can see I believe right there they're getting ready to go on a hayride so you'll see all the little kids and then some of the members there also going along with them for this hayride. That's why I was saying—like Pio was saying, There's a lot of times they never got to do things like this, this was like their only outlet to go like all together in a big group and be riding around at the camp and being out on the ranch is a beautiful sight and stuff. It was—this was something that we did several times, was always trying to bring the youth and giving them exposed to different areas because that was one of the things the Brown Berets was about. It was about looking at the future generations and taking care of our youth and because you know we were family structured, we were always about taking care of our own brothers and sisters and we were preaching that we were all one family you know whether it was blood relations or not we were in that time when we were talking about *carnalismo* so all the children were our children so we worked to try and do activities, do fun activities, education activities, the *teatro* Chicano you know, making sure that our kids didn't get stuck on to all the glue sniffing like he was saying, the paint sniffing, all this stuff that was going around in our community, trying to steer them in a different direction.

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RENTERIA: And whenever we saw each other you know we—it was like hugs, we would just hug everybody, you know it was like family. We really—you know when we saw someone, either a kid or you know your friend, give them a big hug and you know, Glad to see you and it was just like a big family. That was what you know kept us together and the kids really saw that we respected them you know it

never was—we weren't like a authority like you've got to be here be quite we just treated everybody just like equal.

ESPITIA: By that time did you have a family? Were you married or still single?

RENTERIA: I was married by that time I had two sons.

ESPITIA: So in a way too being a father and you know doing this, it helped in the family structure too.

RENTERIA: Oh yeah, they were a part of the—they were there too, I always took them places.

ESPITIA: Now we have a document here also that was very much a part of what actually organized the Brown Berets in Austin and in chapters throughout Texas and actually I think Colorado and some of the other states also. Let's talk about the manifesto and what impact it had on the Austin chapter and how it came about that you'll become a part of this document.

ALMANZA: Well you know this—the Brown Beret manifesto you know one of the things that people would do was they would get together at least a different chapters from the state of Texas and one of the big meetings they had was looking at putting together the manifesto and then looking at what were the issues. You would find that no matter if you were in McAllen, San Antonio, or Dallas or Houston or Austin that the issues were the same. When we talked about it we talked about police oppression, that was a big issue and how we were going to address that and you know how we were going to work with the community and you know the community like I said the community review board was a really big issue for all the different cities in the state of Texas.

The other thing was we looked at of course expanding the Brown Berets chapters and looking at these issues and then we looked at immigration was another issue we looked at because immigration and immigration rates have been going a long for a very long time and a lot of the new generation think it's a new thing but the immigration rates had been happening back then and so one of the things that the Brown Berets wanted to look at was how do we address the immigration issue and also making sure that all the materials were bilingual. That they were in Spanish had English was very very important to us and then we look at the whole issue of education to make sure that there—what we want to make sure is that our history and our culture was also being in the books because nothing about us was in any of the books or any of our history,

education, so that was a big issue to make sure and also to make sure that we were also becoming the teachers and the professors within the education system—that was a real big and then housing—we looked at housing, looking at affordable housing I mean that's been a long issue for us or just fair housing. Looking at you know housing that was economic safe, you know it was a safe place for our families to grow and stuff and then we look at prison reform just because the majority and still to this day it was our people who were in prison and so how do we address that whole issue about reforming it so it's actually rehabilitation and not just spending your time there in the prison. Then we looked at medicine, making sure that there were free clinics, health clinics, having access to the clinics and so forth and then we looked at communication that we needed to put our own media, our own newspapers, our own radio shows, our own T.V. to look at so that we could tell our side of the story and so communication was a real big thing for us also. I mean when you look at—and you look at the Brown Beret manifesto those are still the issues we're working on today, health, education, housing, we're still dealing with police you know, police brutality and killings.

RENTERIA: You've got to remember at that time too the farmworkers—it was a big movement too because you know in Texas they still had the short hoe, they cut the handle off the hoe—the *campesino* that worked out there in the Valley, they had to you know in order to make sure they worked they give you the little short hoe and you had to go out there and we were demonstration but the Berets was one of the main force behind the demonstration because we were not going to be intimidated by police force. The *campesino* you know a lot of them were *Mexicanos* they were working the fields and you know they would get scared if they see the Texas Rangers and the DPS officers. We would go out there and be sort of like the guard during the demonstrations and we would walk and make sure and we'd have our little walkie-talkies and communicate and blow horns so we were more like a—with the manifesto behind us we were more like the guard of the demonstration of the Raza movement.

We used to go down to Midland, we used to go down to the Valley, we went to Houston because the activists there in those little towns were constantly finding themselves committing suicide they would say. They would pass out on the track and get run over by the train, they would find them hanging in the cells you know that was a lot of what was going on at that time so you know we said—we got to a point at one time where we had a constitution convention where we declared our self-independent you know of Texas and we curated *Aztlán*. *Aztlán* was supposed to be—because that's how fed up people was. We had a big convention in El Paso one time that—



declare our independence because we weren't going to take it anymore. You know so if it would take whether we had to be at war we were going to do it because we weren't going to take the abuse anymore that we were receiving at the hands of what we called the *rinches*, the white police force in Texas.

ESPITIA: The manifesto and there's about how many, eight? I can't remember how many of the goals that you'll were setting out what would be, let's say four that you'll really considered, as a chapter to be a priority? We'll say four but it could be more but we'll—

ALMANZA: I think that one of the priority was the who issue of the police oppression was really—that was a real big priority and education was very up there with it and then housing was another big issue. I don't think we labeled, like youth development or youth but that's definitely I think just in all of these issues. Economic development was another big one but I think the communications were up there just because we did have young people that were teaching us about videos about—we had access to people who putting out the newspaper or people who had access to radio so communications was something also that was real heavy up there. I think the number one issue was of course police oppression but then I would say education came right after, communications—

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RENTERIA: Jobs.

ALMANZA: Yeah, economic development, jobs and stuff. Those are really top issues and the other ones kind of fleet or they go parallel to them you know you can't really—but like I said, we never did, even though we didn't like youth development or youth leadership it was very much there because everything we did was about youth and it was about working with them at some capacity like whether it was giving them the skills, whether it was showing them a different models of programs. We did a lot of workshops like knowing your educational rights, knowing your rights as a student, the *theatro* Chicano was doing a lot of role play, educating what people would now call probably popular education. Using those tools, those are the things that we did back there during the Brown Berets.

ESPITIA: Now how did you'll manage again going to—there weren't that many members but how did you'll manage to get all these reporters to march with you'll to be out there without I mean somebody would get beaten up by the police and by that night or the next day you got people marching, you've got I mean hundreds of them. How did you'll do that?

ALMANZA: Well you know like I said even though we were members we all had families so like we came from ten, from a family of ten so that kind of family is already growing and I think all the other families are very much connected so either like we were saying even though the spouses were but maybe they had other family members that belonged to that family so it wasn't really hard and besides the people were just looking. The people wanted to be active and wanted to do and they might have not wanted to be in the everyday affairs but when there was like a beating or a killing everybody in the *barrio* understood it you know it didn't take much for it to spread like wildfire you know people who did have phones, people who visited. I think there was a lot more communications happening even though people talk about the internet and all that, no there was a lot of communications going, people basically went to the same stores, they went to the same churches, you know they went to the activities, I mean there was a lot of talk always happening and there were like radio stations that announced it and there was newspapers. I think that the support was there all the time, they—it's always the people waiting like, Okay who's going to lead it. And then they come in—they're willing to—and that's exactly the way it was. If there was an issue all you had to say was there's going to be a protest at the police station or whatever and the people were ready because it was really impacting their families but they weren't taking that leadership role but their families like Pio said, there was not too many people who hadn't gotten harassed by the police in one way or another. So they understood that issue very well.

RENTERIA: Or being discriminated you know.

ESPITIA: Well I know when I interviewed Frances Martinez for the MACC oral history project Frances, she talked about how the voice was given to the community and her being much older individual but through Paul Hernandez who went and showed her and her husband how they could get money to repair their home and the zoning issues and all of that and that was shown to them by the Brown Berets so she said you know they were going to do anything to help even though they felt that they didn't have the knowledge and couldn't really communicate as well as the younger they were still going to do whatever possible to support whatever you'll were doing. This again it's amazing because I do back to the ages, you know you'll weren't that old, I mean you know and yet the older generations, the older individuals listening to the younger generations, which is another thing too when I'm—in working with this project and doing the photo exhibit we will have at the Terrazas Branch Library and I mean we were limited to the number of photographs that we can have there so I—I mean you know to me there was many many more

that I could choose from thanks to you, Susana and to Gilbert. There were some photographs that Gilbert sent me of some young boys and you'll along with the Brown Berets started a youth beret chapter. So tell me a little bit about that because I find that fascinating and I would love to get one of those individuals, I thought about it after I saw that, on the panel to see what impact it might have had on them and in their lives and what they're doing today. Can you'll talk about the youth beret chapter as to how that got started?

RENTERIA: Well it really got started when we moved to the—we always worked with the kids, you know the little kids. It got started there at the—Caesar Chavez when we were moved to the Caesar Chavez because *Buen Pastor* was expanding their daycare center so the church kind of asked us if we could find another place so we moved to the Caesar Chavez location and we had a whole bunch of kids that we had worked with that were getting it their teens. We said, Let's start a junior Brown Berets and that was like Zeke Uvalle and Eli and them was working with those kids and we would have—what was so nice about these, the junior Brown Berets is that we could have fundraisers now and they would do the work and raise money and we would use the money for them so you know—

ALMANZA: Slave drivers. (laughs)

RENTERIA: It almost sounds like the Catholic church you know (all laugh) which is probably based—you know that's how we grew up. We started having fundraisers and letting the kids make a decision on what they want to do with the money and give them some responsibilities and stuff like that and that helped because also their friends started coming over. We had no problem you know, if there were demonstrations they know that we're going to take care of them so I mean we also—now you can look at some of these kids and they are white haired now and all that. (laughs)

ESPITIA: Well and that's the thing when I look at some photographs, because just recently I came across it and I think it was maybe one of yours or maybe one of Gilberts but I think it might have been one of yours from my contact sheets there's—it seems like they always paired these young people, these youth, with a member of the Brown Berets who'd been a member for some time. Because you see that and you see Paul Hernandez—there's a photo image of Paul Hernandez with two young boys next to him and at first I thought, Well that's just some kids that are—but then when I found about the junior Brown Berets that's when I put two and two together. It really seems like as I look at some of those it seems to me that you know those kids were wanting to be right there and supporting and learning about that.

Now another image that I got from your contact sheets was the Brown Berets apparently there must have been a—some type of maybe a caravan maybe a demonstration and keeping cars from going across—maybe festival beach or whatever. There's a caravan of young kids on bicycles and it's like a chain and the cars are on the other side and you know to me that was something else. To see these kids on these bicycles not letting anyone go across and I again that's just an image that I keep in my mind and it will be part of the online website exhibit that we're going to add. Unusual again, it's kids and so that is the one thing. Another thing that I found, of course I don't know the him very well but Shorty and The Corvettes, you'll had him perform at the opening of the second—

RENTERIA: Lupe Ortiz.

ESPITIA: Yes, yes and he was performing there so he's going to be one of those individuals also that that image is going to be in the exhibit because again you get you know different perspectives of how people were supporting. In reference to supporting who were some of the community leaders that you can name right now that were out there supporting the Brown Berets? Whether they be elected politicians or you know individuals in the community that were really well known, were there some that you can name that were very supportive of the Brown Berets?

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RENTERIA: There was very few elected politicians because they didn't like the word Chicano in the first place you know. They always argued about that. I was the more political person in the group, every time something politically happened they would blame me for not talking to these guys you know, con John (??) and John Trevino, Richard Moya, you know some of the first people that got elected. I would say, Hey you know I have to work for these guys because they're our leaders you know and the only way we're going to be able to get along and get things is to support these guys. There was a time that we came up with the idea you know Paul Hernandez and the other groups were really fed up with our politicians at that time—they were just—and I said, Okay well the only way that we're going to win is we need to go out there and start organizing the precincts. So we ran a whole bunch of people as our precinct chair and we got people elected so then we went after the Tejano democrat. We were going to replace him and we were one vote short of taking over the whole political group of the Tejano democrats here in Austin. Back then it was Mexican American democrats, by changing the whole leadership that's how strong we had gotten to a point. We got Marco De Leon elected as county commissioner and so that's what you know through the political process and so we didn't have too many

political people that really were supportive of the Brown Berets. We had a lot of community leaders like Senior Rendon, Pete Martinez, Frances Martinez, you know people from the community that were of good standing, they were good supporting us. Through the political politician we didn't, they didn't trust us so that was the split that we had here in Austin.

ALMANZA: I think too that like you said the beginning we didn't have any politicians because I think Richard Moya was the first one and John came in till I think '74 or '70, I can't even remember like the year. So it wasn't till later till people really got elected but I think that also at that time I think those people who were getting into the political rim had to be real cautious about association with the radical group because some people did see us as a radical group, they saw us as a militant group and that's the way we were being portrayed by the status quo. That we were this militant group but we were never being looked at like we were a grassroots group, which we were, who were trying to improve our communities and the lives of the Mexican American community. The status quo would always look at us as this militant group and I think also because we wore uniform khakis and stuff that made us look like we were this real militant group but really we were just trying to be organized in our work and also so that people would identify us you know as a grassroots group who were working together and at that period of time we have to look that's how identification was done. It was about how you wore, how you dress so that—we were at that period of time when that's how you express you know what group you rely on whether you know it was a Black Berets or whether it was the Army and the Green Berets you know and us as the Brown Berets. There was this really thing about having uniforms and being together and stuff like that so yes, mostly it was the community supporting that's really the people you really want until you get people in office who can understand that and who do then have to support the issues that you're working on.

RENTERIA: Because you have to look at one thing too is that at that time they were developing—the put a power plant right in the middle of our neighborhood. They took all these homes, people lived right around Fiesta Garden and just you know eminent domain, they would get \$2,000 or \$3,000 for their home. Also they had all this vacant property at the fish hatchery which is RBJ now and instead of building a school there that they had had another plant they went and took the salvation youth center there where Sanchez Elementary is at and it was just a little small section of land. There were houses all the way around and they kicked everybody out of there—their eminent domain that whole—so you know there was a lot of injustice going on with a lot of people in that area so they were really fed up. We

didn't have any political power, we didn't have any kind of economic power and we were just getting pushed and pushed and taken and so you know it wasn't very hard they just didn't have the people there that the—you know the ones, the politicians that were elected at the time were trying to please the other people. They weren't really out there you know demanding a lot of justice so that's where we came in and said, That's just it, *Ya basta*. We were not going to take it anymore and so you know when they—people saw that we were not afraid to stand up that's—they just came out and really supported us and that's how we were able to do the things that we did because it was the people behind us that really pushed us you know we would have never gotten there without the support of the *barrio*.

ALMANZA: Yeah it was a lot of the people power, the community power. Really it was a lot of empowerment of the community because that's who we had to reply on, you had to reply on the masses, the masses of the community thrusting forward, showing up packing the meetings, packing the city council, packing all the different meetings, you know marching in the street, taking signs and so it was a lot of activism that was happening and it was a community power itself, the empowerment of the community that was really driving the changes.

ESPITIA: What—because now it's I know I'm going to cut it short in a little bit here but a question for each of you, your role, your involvement in the Brown Berets, what stand outs—has had the most impact in you and you Susana as to what really you were proud about having been a Brown Beret member and you know the outcome of it was.

RENTERIA: Well the thing that makes you—you know the respect that we have now in the community to and we're slowly losing it now because the city is growing so big but it gave us dignity to look up and say, You know we're equal to you, you the power, West Austin, and that's what really I mean I feel good about it is because you know my kids can walk down this street whether they're black, brown, white, and not be afraid. That's what you know really I feel that we did, we accomplished that we're not afraid anymore, we are people of power now. We're not bound to anybody and that's what we did.

ESPITIA: The amazing thing about you and Lorry is that you're out there rubbing elbows with mayors and all of that awesome, and both of you are but that is the amazing thing about it that I see you know when you go back and you you know listen to these interviews, you read these articles and so forth is that know the struggle and then to see the outcome and you'll be in very involved in politics and so

forth so that's what I see. Obviously you'll done some excellent work here but—now Susana what about you?

LASTNAME2: Well I like to see what I'm so proud of is that there was a lot of unity. There was a lot of community involvement, participation, and to me that's the key—is that you brought so many people together who realized that they did have a voice, that they weren't really voiceless. I think the empowerment of individuals, the empowerment of the community is like the most beautiful thing that happened during that whole Brown Beret movement was empowering the community to say, You're not voiceless, you can stand for something, you can voice to make changes and you can be part of that change, and you deserve changes in your community things should be better. When I see the changes even though now we're taking a back step with a lot of the gentrification, different issues that are not impacting our community but I see how far we've progressed that that movement helped thrust us to the front of really not being afraid to speak up, of working for justice, of saying that we have as much right as anyone else to equal education, to not be oppressed by the police, to have housing and economic development. All of the issues that we still work on today but to say we have a right to be involved in that process and to make changes and when I look at that movement and I see people still working in different issues, they're not with the Brown Berets and some people have left, some people are not as active but some people remain very active. People started their own organizations, you know they started their own businesses, they're still involved in community issues and so—we left seats for that next generation you know because I run into some of those people and they don't forget about being in the Brown Berets and being exposed to the Brown Berets and always you know, We've got to keep fighting for the rights of our people.

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ESPITIA: I think that too as I see it and as I see the progression that each of you have taken those individuals that were members again I find that to be very amazing because as young people you were out there, you were doing your thing, you could have very well gotten yourself into trouble, could have given up, it could have drifted in another direction you know being—the trouble with the police as far as being in jail, prison, whatever but it's amazing how each of you as members have taken that role, put it into the community and started to be you know very involved. I mean to the fact Pio that you ran for city council and Gilbert Rivera ran for city council and Paul Hernandez ran for a position, Marcos De Leon as you mentioned also ran and was elected and I think he was the only one of the Brown Beret members elected. Then again too I see you know where Zeke Uvalle got his Ph.D. and I think Joann Salas also has got a

Ph.D. and so it is how you know you see all of this struggle was very evident but again still the involvement with you Susana with Poder and also you still continue to work with the youth. Still being very active with that so now let me ask you this question, as you look to the future and Austin and the way that it's going, the expansion, everything, what do you see for those individuals, for the neighborhoods that you're really trying to fight for and to you know, what do you see the future of that being?

RENTERIA: I see it, it's—I don't see how it's going to survive, it's really heartbreaking to see the things that are—you know we're so close to downtown, nobody liked us back then but now you know they say, Oh that's the goldmine over there. You know when you have the University of Texas teaching people how to flip property and you know you have all this money that's coming down from the low bond, low interest where these developers are just coming in and buying all the property. You know I see it like the reversal of what used to happen where you know the developers wanted to break up the white neighborhood and they would sell on house to the black and everybody would just leave the whole neighborhood you know now it's just in reverse.

These guys are coming in here, paying big money for the houses you now, probably selling for \$200,000 just the land itself you know in some of these locations. You got houses there—the advertising right now its \$640,000. It's just—there's no way that because the tax structure was set in this state and how the republicans really want to punish us that we can survive in that little community because you know when the taxes are going up to be \$5,000, \$6,000, \$7,000 a year it's very hard for people to hang on there. The homeowners are the ones, well they're not going to get hurt too much but it's the renters. The renters are the ones that are just—I've seen people that have rented a house for forty years in my community. Forty-years, I thought they were land owners and then all of a sudden the next day the owners sells the house off and they have no place to go, they have to leave probably to Lockhart, Manor, wherever they can find affordable housing so we're losing our community slowly but it's just going to be—the only ones that are going to be able to survive are the ones that you know either plan and saved up a lot of money so they could pay their taxes you know or the younger generation you know was lucky enough to buy there—had good jobs, they're the ones that are going to stay there. Our community is slowly going to go away.

ESPITIA: It's not deteriorating but it's being taken away that's the sad part.



ALMANZA: And for me I do see I think now with the single member districts finally coming in that there'll be that opportunity to at least try and impact a lot of our communities because you know I don't think Austin is going to get any smaller as far as the Latino community. We're already in the schools, we're making like 65% of the population and we're about 37% you know give or take the population here in Austin. I think what's going to happen is with the city is always doing, you know one time we were on this side of Austin, on the west side here around when the Austin History Center is, then we're on the other side of the highway. The new projection is the new East Austin starts at Highway 183 and I already see that development with all the money being thrown over there, the affordable housing is being built, everything and so it would be just a shift of were that new community is going to be starting and where it's going to be. We already see a lot of the unwanted things going east of 183 so it's the new East Austin. I think that there's always going to be you now the need to organize and the need to bring betterment to that new group of people that's going to be you know in what we always called the urban reservation because you know following the model they want the land and move you that continues to happen but I think the new single member districts is going to be able to at least create some kind of balance because now you're going to have representatives from those communities and there's going to be a lot of education needing to happen but they're also talking about their potential for three or four Latino districts—possibilities. When you look at that and you see the growth is just making sure that you do that education and that you registered to people and the people that you do get elected are very sensitive to the needs of the poor and the working poor and the community at large, I think that's really important because you can have people there who have no roots and then have not sense about what's happening in the communities so that's real important.

I still see a lot of different hope because as our population continues to grow here I think that we're going to have a lot of power and I know just now just in the few years that you've been here we've documented so much of a history that could have been lost forever. About you know the Latino community, the things that they've done here, business people, educators, whatever you know we now have that documented. I see Silvia Orozco's working on the Fifth Street corridor of the Mexican American history from Republic Park on making sure our history's in Republic Park. I see a lot of the changing coming around where people really want to know a lot about our history where they want to celebrate our history you know now the whole city celebrates *Cinco de Mayo*, *deciseis* is not being celebrated at the state capital, these are things that never happened

before so I think that there's been a lot of changes and I think that that change is going to continue to be and because we have a constant influx of people that we're always going to have to be looking at bilingualism, people coming in and having to continue to make sure that we have things that are bilingual and that the culture—I still see that *aquí estamos y no nos vamos*. You know we're here and we're not going is just that yes a lot of changes are maybe the old neighborhood is not going to be the way because we already see 7702 was the most gentrified zip code probably in the whole nation so we know it's here but we also know that we're not gone yet. That supportive and that history, having the roots and you know being able to just like document here what's happening so people will know what was the struggle and that yes, it takes a lot of struggle to make a lot of changes.

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RENTERIA: And that was the reason why we fought so hard for the Mexican American Cultural Center, they wanted to give us Fiesta Garden and I said, No we're going to have it on the west side of 35 because it's going to remind people that you know the struggle that we had and we didn't want it to be isolated in some location where it's hard to get and people don't want—traffic to come in there so it's those little things. We are not going to get forgotten. Yes our neighborhood is going to be gentrified would it be all white, I doubt it, there's a lot of *raza* moving in there too. They're a little more wealthier and they can afford those kinds of places but you know most of the population's going down south, south east you know Dove Springs, William Cannon, that area. East Austin you know we're going to be there. I'm not planning on moving you now, collect cans and do whatever I can to pay my taxes you know.

ESPITIA: Now what I do want to thank you'll for allowing me to do this. Like I said this is small condensed version of an interview because there're so many questions that at the same time so many things that you'll have done as members and so many—a lot of hard work and I know at times there were people that really were looking at the Brown Berets as trouble makers and everything else but as history is going to show it was you know it was done at a pace where yes they were doing what they felt needed to be done and it was supportive of their community, the love for their community, the love for the family, the love for their neighborhoods, it was all like you said a unified group of individuals, young yet at the same time going from feeling it in their heart. Usually I know sometimes the heart over the brain can get you into trouble but it's already because that's what we were born with, a need to have love and kindness for everyone. I do thank you'll for doing that, now there is one picture right there—it's just—I think there's a celebration and you'll were I believe you'll

were getting ready too—you'll had just moved to the second location I think, maybe I guess. This is the only photograph that we had of the Brown Beret members as together, as celebrating. The names of the individuals we have them in the back but that happened—it looks like a very happy time for you'll, are either one of you in that photo?

ALMANZA: Pio is.

ESPITIA: Pio okay, alright.

ALMANZA: Where are you Pio?

RENTERIA: Right there, with the mustache, that's Bobby Chapa, that's Sam Mendez, that's Roy—

ALMANZA: Roy Sonia—

RENTERIA: No that's Roy Anteredez(??).

ALMANZA: Oh it says right here.

RENTERIA: That's Adela, that's Sam's daughter and that's Sam Mendez wife, and Sam Mendez uncle there and that's at the First Street, the one that's been burned.

ESPITIA: But that is—that's one like I said, the only photograph that we have of a gathering you know, I do have a—

RENTERIA: There's a photograph—

ALMANZA: I have some but—

RENTERIA: There's a photograph when we were in the Q house too and it was a—I saw it at Danny Ruiz museum. It was a real big photograph, they blew it up and it was—it's not there hanging anymore but it was there last year when I went by there and I saw that photograph. That was at the Quintanilla house.

ALMANZA: Quintanilla house.

ESPITIA: Well thank you'll very much, I appreciate this, I am looking forward to the October 19 program you all will be on the panel along with Gilbert Rivera and Lilia Rosas is going to be the moderator for that panel discussion. I think you for that.

RENTERIA: That's Jose the guy who you talked to yesterday or the day before yesterday.

ESPITIA: Oh he is in every picture *verda*? I mean I was really impressed with him. I was impressed with him because he seems to be in a lot of photographs and I am hoping that I will be able to do an oral history interview with him.

RENTERIA: He's a veteran Marine.

ESPITIA: I have learned so much and this is very important again that we document all of this.

RENTERIA: She's an executive aid of the sheriff, Greg Hamilton, that's Sam's daughter, what's her name I can't remember. She was one of—this young lady here, she was so good I mean she was one of the best fundraiser—I mean she would go to a person's door and they would never tell her now she was just so good raising funds for us and everything. She was just a darling.

ESPITIA: Well thank you'll very much I appreciate it and looking forward to the exhibits and to all—I mean we have a full month of October, lots of little events and hopefully we have done justice to everything because it needs to be documented so thank you'll very much.

ALMANZA: Thank you.

RENTERIA: Yeah you can call her she works for Greg Hamilton.

ESPITIA: Okay, Greg Hamilton, okay alright.

RENTERIA: She's a—that's her dad Sam Mendez and that's Florence. Is that Florence is that her name? I can get you her name if you want it, I mean she was one of the—

ESPITIA: Yeah to get a perspective on the younger ones.

RENTERIA: I mean she was one of the younger ones.

ALMANZA: How different Jose Cantu looks here, I didn't recognize him with his hair. I kept thinking, Who is that? And now you're telling me that's Jose Cantu. I can't recognize him with that hair, wow that's Jose Cantu are you sure? Wow. (both laugh)

ESPITIA: You see if he wouldn't have said until that photograph in that newspaper article that you'll were looking at that has you and Adela

and him and it just says—and that's why I had to ask, Are you sure that he was a member.

ALMANZA: Let me see that.

ESPITIA: Yeah that was the thing it was like, I wonder who's that guy. Last time we were there for Cinco de Mayo in there somewhere is him and Pio and Adela and Jose. I'm like, Oh my god, you know he's in every picture. I mean he's in that very popular picture that what's his name—

RENTERIA: Yeah he's in that Ruiz library too, I told him I said, Jose I saw your picture over there.

ESPITIA: Yeah I just choose some to put in there but it's like trying to put it in chronological time period.

RENTERIA: Did you ever find that picture when the one that we're in San Marcos when we a meeting with the police chief.

ESPITIA: Yes and that's going to be in the exhibit, that will be in the exhibit.

RENTERIA: That's the guy from Dallas.

ALMANZA: Oh yeah that's Juan. Was that Father Joe Senata?

ESPITIA: Yeah in the exhibit the Father Senatas will be there and Pete Martinez also but in the online it will have both of them too. There's the picture. 1:30:00

ALMANZA: Oh that's Jose there? Oh that's right that's Jose and Angie and it says Jose Cantu there.

ESPITIA: I didn't know he was a member of—you know and so until he mentioned that.

RENTERIA: He wasn't in leadership at all.

ALMANZA: Just a member of the *Raza*.

RENTERIA: That's why you didn't hear much about him but he sure was in the pictures. Oh that's Sam's other little daughter. 1:30:49

*End of Interview*