

## Interview by Savanha Esquivel

Mr Hernandez: But I would just sit there and listen, and the concepts would fly over me. Words that I did not know would fly over me, but I would remember them and I would find out what they meant later. But, being the only Mexicano, and then when the Beret started, we started the Beret, then we had about eight Mexicanos, Chicanos too, being at the meeting.

Esquivel: Were those just friends or just people that you had known in the neighborhood?

Mr Hernandez: Well, people that became Brown Berets. They started out with who knew who. Then you're bringing people in. You would check them over and say, "Okay, yeah. I think you make good material." I was very lucky that some of the kids I chose to work with, one became ... They were into getting into trouble in high school. One time an English teacher called me up and said, "Man, I got two students that are very, very smart, but they're too smart for their own good. They're getting in trouble." I said, "What kind of trouble?" "They challenge. They challenge the structure. They challenge the teachers and they're getting in trouble for it. Maybe you can help them find a way to channel that energy to where it becomes positive and they won't become bitter."

Mr Hernandez: Yes, so yeah, I took that on. And one of them became a professor. Went and got his doctorate degree down in Arizona. Others, I mean, they just went on their way, became regular people living in neighborhoods. Some were young, not married, no responsibilities, so they would have the time and the leisure. The thing was to keep everybody knowing and respecting and helping and studying.

Esquivel: What in particular were they studying?

Mr Hernandez: My favorite book is 500 Years of Chicano History.

Esquivel: 500 Years of Chicano History?

Mr Hernandez: You ever heard of that one?

Esquivel: I think I have.

Mr Hernandez: Okay. The book itself is very simple. It speaks to you in three ways: English, Spanish, and pictures, so it's easy to teach with that book. I would take people having problems with reading and use that book to help them read, use that book to help them write, use that book ... I hate writing by the way, I hate it. But I mean, as I'm older, I read more. It just confirms the thoughts that I had. I find that a lot of the stuff I read, I had thought about. They just had words for it when I didn't.

Mr Hernandez: First time I went to see the counselor, I was mad as hell. I'd just killed a man. And so I went over there, I got up next to him and all I could say is, "Y'all are just a lot of bullshit and nothing else. Just bullshit." They said, "Mr. Hernandez, if you

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can't speak right, if you can't speak correctly, then I'm gonna have that officer remove you and take away that microphone." I said, "Mayor, bullshit."

Esquivel: Was that the first time you actually, directly speaking to them?

Mr Hernandez: Okay. That came later. First, I had to get that anger out first. Okay. People ask me why did I hate white people. I said, "I don't hate white people. I hate what some do. I hate the way that some act, but I don't hate." I said, "What makes me so angry is that I love my people and I hate to see them hurt. Anybody that hurts them, becomes my enemy. So it's not that I hate. It's that I love." Che Guevara too he teach in love and that love carried the revolution. You have to have that because you have to marry yourself to that.

Esquivel: You have to be able to repair. You can't just be broken with anger. There has to be some sort of thing to repair.

Mr Hernandez: You have to make sure that it doesn't snap back on you. It's like you're so angry at somebody that you throw something at them, but what if that thing bounces back and hits you. You have to be careful. And the same thing with words. I have to pick up a vocabulary. In my later years, I met Leslie. I was 40 something when I met Leslie, my wife. She has an extended vocabulary, two masters degrees, super intelligent. She's the kind of person I can discuss things with, no matter what the level. Whether it's internationally or global, as they say, or it's the macro or the micro. We can talk about all of it.

Mr Hernandez: Sometimes we watch TV. Sometimes I watch too much TV. I'm watching that soap box story called The Trumps.

Esquivel: Oh yeah. Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: It's a daily basis. it's a daily thing.

Esquivel: It's ridiculous.

Mr Hernandez: He's pulling out where the truth is. He's trying to use it to the max because he's president. He wants absolute power, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Those are words that are out there, but you have to attach them to the meaning of practical application to what is out there today. Yes. Now, individually, I don't know what was your life was ... Where'd you grow up at?

Esquivel: Dover, Texas.

Mr Hernandez: Dover? What was it like over there?

Esquivel: It was very Mexican, but we didn't know it, 'cause that was just our ... It was just very Mexican-American. It was just our life.

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Mr Hernandez: You speak Spanish?

Esquivel: I speak Spanish. Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: Did you speak it back then?

Esquivel: I didn't speak it back then. I spoke Spanish. I understood all of it. The Spanish that I did speak ... There's a lot of, I guess, for people my age, there's growing up in the late 90's and early 2000's, there was a lot of joking and repression. When I would speak Spanish it was joked about. And so for a long time it was like, "I'm not gonna speak if you're gonna make fun of me. Why am I gonna do that if you're gonna be like, 'Oh, [Spanish 00:08:38]'? If you're gonna make fun of what I'm trying to say. Why am I gonna join that?" And then once I went to school it was like, "Oh, they just don't know how to properly foster ... They don't know how to respond in that." So I know more Spanish. Obviously, I think you can just keep learning more and more the older that you get. So I am. It is something I'm interested in, to learn Spanish 100%.

Esquivel: I do know most. I do sometimes have trouble responding because I'm scared I might say something wrong, but I can get by pretty well.

Mr Hernandez: Growing up in my day Spanish was not allowed. You couldn't speak it in the sidewalks or in the school. They had these rules. Don't speak Spanish in the hallways. They tried ... I got to the point where I had no ... What's the word for ... my accent. I learned to tune it to the white man, to the white system. My parents instilled on me the language thing. Learn in English. Learn, learn. That's the only way you're gonna get ahead if you learn English. Which was right. This is the way they saw it. If you don't know their language, then how can you communicate to them that you are better suited if you weren't allowed to do this. That way, you could do the job better. And of course, some would take that as being uppity.

Mr Hernandez: "You think you're smarter than me because you say you can find a better way to do it." No. At the same time, I said, "Hey, for me, I can do it better. Now if you don't wanna admit that, that's fine, but I know I can do it better." Those kinds of attitudes, and this is what it comes down to is attitudes. It's like I had little white boys. They were my friends because their dads and my dad were chopping cedar because that was the only work available. They were called cedar choppers. I got to get along with a little redneck cedar chopper, which did me well because later on in life when I was working as State Representative, I went out to Oakhill and it was nothing but white farmers, ranchers. So, I had to be able to speak their language, so I could reach out to them. That experience way back in my life allowed me to do that.

Mr Hernandez: I also grew up in an area where there was a borderline between the Mexicanos and the Blacks. I also got to learn, had me some black friends, and I got to learn

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what that life was like. They were my little white redneck friends. Yeah. I got to know that people are people.

Mr Hernandez: Now, I was also a nationalist. Mainly the Chicano nation. Being as a Chicano nation with understanding what that really meant. I would use that to close off people from getting too close. But, as the Brown Berets, we have to be a different kind of Mexican. [crosstalk 00:13:08] Go ahead.

Esquivel: What was the difference like?

Mr Hernandez: The difference was to show that there were Mexicans that were not afraid to speak up, to speak truth to power. And that would stand up and were not afraid, knowing what the consequences.

Esquivel: It's kind of like if you follow the rules that they're placing on you, you're kind of acknowledging that they're the higher power. They have the power if you follow the rules they give.

Mr Hernandez: They are the higher power, which is ... That's another thing I have to tell you about, one other time. Anyway, the whole thing is that, what power structures want is for whoever is under their structure to be subservient. And so they have a pecking order. At the top it's all white, and then you get down to where it's kind of integrated.

Mr Hernandez: Now, I used to get mad when they would say integration, because okay, we can live together, but if that guy makes a hell of a lot more money than I do, that's not integration. Integration means that I get to be able to make the same amount of money. The same opportunity to make that kind of money. Economic integration, not just physical integration. Economic integration, cultural integration, political integration.

Mr Hernandez: I used to meet with the CEOs of the different banks and I ... What do they call it? Tit for tat? Tit for tat or something. I would get in the boardroom and show them, "Hey, I'm not inferior as you would think I am. I know your language, I know my language, and another. I know another language that you don't know and will never know. It's how I think. That's the language you'll never know, because you can't think, you can't fathom the process that I use for thinking." It's much more global interactive than anything they would come up with. So, I had a feeling of superiority over these bankers, over the CEOs that controlled millions, probably billions of dollars. I said, "I don't need all that money to show you, hey, I'm equal. You're powerful? I'm powerful."

Mr Hernandez: And that's what we need to strive for. But, we have to do it in a way, that is also philosophical, with principles, so that we don't wind up being the oppressors, the very same people we come from. And that's why I think going back to the liberation of the mind, liberation of the soul. The liberation for everything that

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holds you back, holds you down, and give yourself up to grace for a period. And all is given to you, be useful at it.

Mr Hernandez: Now, if you believe that you were put here, that these human beings were put here to be the caretakers of earth, which is my belief, is that our purpose here on earth is to take care of the creation that Mother Earth, and everything in it. That's why we talk about the creator, Great Spirit, creating everything you see and everything you don't see. Now in astrology, they come up with a black hole. That's really unseen. That's dark matter that God created. The Great Spirit created. Allah created it. Jehovah. Whatever God's name is. Or the creator. That was created by that entity.

Mr Hernandez: And so when evil speaks sometimes, we honor our Creator of everything you see and you don't see. Creator that inspired me to come and speak to you in the best words that I know and respect. Now, I will show you what you show me. Kinda like over here, but, I'm speaking from the heart. And these people are playing around making cartoons, playing around on their iPad. I divide the attention mostly. But they all got something to say. Everybody I gotta shut up. I listen, I don't watch, observe. That's another reason, to serve, observe and protect them, self determination and community control as what we stand for. And so it's very hard, somehow somewhere we gonna have our community.

Mr Hernandez: They can take us to our destiny. We were put here on this earth to declare of murderer. And people has the first quarter chemotherapy. So we had to take care of the child. Now, we're different in so many ways, like in the Chicano movement, it's blood. Our blood runs straight to the beginning. The only development current research is just trying to get people more aware of their culture. But also in...basically, people my age are old school, when everybody work for himself and you have to belong, familiar with the ways which are adopted. Familiar is the way old are talking about. My family, my mom and dad didn't understand we were a family. My family gave my dad a book. It was called "Occupied America." Have you ever read it or seen it?

Esquivel: Yeah. I have seen it.

Mr Hernandez: Okay. This is required reading for [inaudible 00:21:41] course. It's like assignment. And I think [inaudible 00:21:46], but I think I gave away all the copies I had. I can get my questions on topic who is authorized. I'm really, at century everyday, Often. And I read it.

Esquivel: Can you read it? Did your dad read it?

Mr Hernandez: Yeah. He read it [inaudible 00:22:09] and have this concept of the order of our people. From the countries from the time they try to brainwash us and make us captives, and make us subservient, they will find no resistance. It's still going on today.

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Esquivel: That's fine. [inaudible 00:22:53] So what's the age frame of you and Brown Berets? It's like your early twenties?

Mr Hernandez: I was in my twenties and I didn't like the way things were.

Esquivel: Yeah. And you're just like your community or-

Mr Hernandez: Anywhere. Everywhere.

Esquivel: ...in the state?

Mr Hernandez: I saw that there was lack of respect for me. All they wanted to do was use me because I was a good worker until somebody tried to screw around with me then [inaudible 00:23:46]. I went from being the top as a production line to be the top person in quality and quantity of the product. I've been to most of them and they were best quality because I took pride in them. .

Esquivel: what were you make making or...

Mr Hernandez: Making rings.

Esquivel: Rings?

Mr Hernandez: Yeah. High school graduation. They still there. It's called John Carver, so it's right there. It's right there on triple S and 35 up to a circle, but it's for out south. Not quite as far as in China, but close. But anyway, my school way, the hell out there. I used to live here in East Austin and there were times I never saw the sun. I woke up early in the morning and I would work late and sometimes seven days a week, but I kept demanding more and more and my fellow workers were not condemning. So they were way down here and wasted [inaudible 00:25:21] gotta fight for it.

Mr Hernandez: And by that time I had already work with some of my friends that were activists, were union people and so I said, "You want to talk, there's the union," I said, "Great, come follow up."

Mr Hernandez: So we started bringing in union people to help me and as I was trying to convince people, they used to hire people from Luling from [inaudible 00:26:06]. It was, there were really sharecropper people and they want to share a job in the city to come and it would work. But they're very humble and they're taught to do, as the boss, [Spanish 00:26:26] they were quick there, our own people quick there, to make us work harder to crack down on us and for us to be exploited by the master. So yeah, now the way to get out from under that was to show , hey, I'm the best and you don't believe it, I'll show you. So when the Brown Berets, we came, well, a friend and I, we went to a whole bunch of stuff together and he bought a book one time and he hadn't read it. It was by David Sanchez. You know David Sanchez?

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Esquivel: Mm-hmm.

Mr Hernandez: David Sanchez had this book out. I've got some Brown Berets. So I took it and then read it. I said, you know what, that's what we need here.

Mr Hernandez: Because I knew all the gang cliques and they were going at each other, and I was trying to create peace. So you gotta offer them something because I can't support them. These guys are pushing buttons. I can't stop because I can't support them. That's the only way they can make money to survive, to live. But it's the system that lifts up that business, that and alcohol. That's why you see all the bars. No, mainly to keep us placated. Do you know what placated is? Keep them in place. You know what I'm saying? That's what they wanted to do. They only way to do that is to keep you... you know, these other things that would give you comfort and never become a problem.

Mr Hernandez: But uh, yeah, when the Brown Berets started, we used to meet at a bar. One of the Brown Berets at a bar, and so excited to meet at his place as we're growing. It was convenient after the meeting, we'd drink a beer or two or three or four or five. And that was the big fear, tequila, which I taken back, I would do over again. I would not do that. I would try to educate people now. In paint sniffing, I did a lot of research, we did a lot of research. On guys who we're sniffing. I used to have a center of Chicanos, a little place for people to come and their complaints, we'd take them, see what we could do it anyway, like some of the kids, they were paint sniffers, and users.

Mr Hernandez: Speaker 1: 00:29:48 It was late at night, they have nowhere else to go. They would come over, and I babysit them until their parents for somebody looking for them, I'd say okay, "Here he is! He's safe. Not going anywhere." [inaudible 00:30:12]... be careful. But anyway. Yeah. Like then the cops were telling people that I was the one supplying them with paints and all this, trying to turn the blame against me, which they didn't believe because they knew that I was there for them-

Esquivel: Mmmhmm.

Mr Hernandez: -not to bring them down. On the street, there's two kinds of people. They're the ones that are negative about pushing stuff and there's me out of here pushing stuff. Mine is for your heart, for your head, for your soul. Now, what doesn't pop for me, that's money. I'm not into money. So yeah. I mean from the beginning we subsidized everything ourselves.

Mr Hernandez: There was an occasion where I was asked or a proposal, and then I never have never written a proposal. I couldn't write. And so I got a little help and it was through the Presbyterian church. They gave them [inaudible 00:31:35] a Chicano, but then one of the rich people was supporting a activity that was bothering us, people, elderly people mean, but was also taking away what's important. It was taking away our land and putting a fence around it and

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charging us like to get into that. That's what they call Chicano Park. It was a known park.

Esquivel: Yeah, yeah. Is that the one off of [inaudible 00:32:15]?

Mr Hernandez: Yeah, right there. Now.

Esquivel: Yeah?

Mr Hernandez: There was a big battle there that I took a stand. [inaudible 00:32:28] ...to take a stand. I said "join me" and I became a target and they parked us.

Mr Hernandez: There's a picture here. There's also video.

Esquivel: Was this for the the boat racers?

Mr Hernandez: It's not boat racers. It's land use.

Esquivel: Oh, okay.

Mr Hernandez: Everything was about land.

Esquivel: Is this you?

Mr Hernandez: Yeah. [inaudible 00:33:37]

Mr Hernandez: Now that was at the mayor's house and this wall the kids are standing on was the wall that was a wall around this house.

Esquivel: Is this the marks from the police department? To the neighborhood?

Mr Hernandez: I have a way of looking at things. I'm blessed. I'm very blessed, for example, we were at the police station and they had these cops all dressed in black on the roof, and with their [inaudible 00:34:25] and their automatic weapons, and their helmets, you know, where you couldn't see their face. It was all black and shiny. They looked like the angels of death. That, just that scene there, [inaudible 00:34:47] up with the angels of death for the city manager, and for the mayor and all the higher ups, up there and they put one on the street here down there for us.

Mr Hernandez: They wanted to talk to me. [inaudible 00:35:06] They wanted to talk to me. Bullshit, so. I just looked up, and I said no. They ain't no god. They are no god. That's what they are proposing. That's what they're wanting me to believe, that they have all this power. That they're like God. They're up there and they want me to look up to them.



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Mr Hernandez: They want to look down. No. So we huddled up, discussed the proposal [inaudible 00:35:39]so they met there and they're confident in what they do, because here we are at the police station, and they think they have us, you know, kind of under guard, but everybody starts taking off to their cars, no, taking off and driving to the west side of town and that's where we parked it, the Peace Park, [inaudible 00:36:12].

Mr Hernandez: But the cops didn't hear that. I mean, they were scrambling, when they found the staff [inaudible 00:36:25] doing. It was too late because it was our control for them. We control it and that all these angry people, a thousand people, marching into the rich part of town, scaring the hell out of these rich people.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: You can see them peering out the windows. See that's that fear that make them stop and think. [inaudible 00:37:00] ...that the US was selling to the Mexican government. [inaudible 00:37:15] would take those trains and rob them.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: So [inaudible 00:37:21]. And Pancho Villa to show them hey, I'm no fool. [Spanish 00:37:30]...and crossed into Arizona, and he was the only one who could beat the US.

Esquivel: Yeah, yeah.

Mr Hernandez: That was what those rich people saw. They got scared and then they realized, hey, we better do something. We've got to listen. And that's when the mayor wanted to help them to meet with me. So we met and the first thing I asked them was "Do you support these racists here? Do you support chicken this property away from my people? For your amusement?"

Mr Hernandez: They said, "Yes."

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: And then next time it was more accommodating or. I said, you know what, if I say nothing, he won't leave, because what I want is the world to belong to those who live here. Now, you have no respect for the people that live there. And this is where I give the most respect to the people who live here, which is my dad, my, my neighbors, all of the elderly people, all the people my age, the people under my age, little people, newborns, now all this is our people. So based on that, we want our land, and we want to keep our land. We also need help and creating a better community.

Mr Hernandez: Nicer community. And we had this plan of organizing neighborhood associations, and we did. And then what we told them, I said, look, we want the

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city to support the mechanism and to fund it, what we created. We told them it was capacity building and they thought it was like a developer being able to build to their capacity. I said no, see I wrote the proposal for them to think that way.

Mr Hernandez: But we try. I really meant that capacity as a people here to understand what's being done to them and why. And so they funded this organization between the director, and I formed the board, and I told them, you know what, you're like the city council and I'm like your city manager, your boss. You are the people that represent the people that live here. So you go to people and you ask them what they want and then we'll develop some plans. And so everything's a good association, and we did so. Like a range. It's not all guys.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: We told them, you know, we want to breed a district wherever you can stay where we can keep the rents low. [inaudible 00:41:35]...floor plan, they called for rent control, and speculation control, which was, "Okay, developers are gonna come in here, and offer us a little bit of money, and we're crazy enough to take it, and we're gonna tax you." You come in here and you buy a property for 10 times what it's worth, and bring up the value, then we're going to pay the taxes. All that money that you make up is going to go into taxes.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: [inaudible 00:42:31]...it doesn't work that way. Had the people been more firm, [inaudible 00:42:35] way ahead of it's time. Everything I've done is ahead of its time, but sometimes I have to hold my tongue to keep, because I have to take people that are close minded, get them to see the possibility and that yes, we can achieve, and construct, and fight, and we can create something better. A better state of governance. A better way of spending the money that is given to us by the federal government could help us. We can build our own houses..

Mr Hernandez: We just need the materials.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: We need the deed to the property. We can be self-sufficient instead of transits, because renters become transits. That's by design. I don't want to go way off base here, but there's so much. In 1972, before there was a plan put out by the best minds of the Western Hemisphere, they were put together by David Rockefeller. The idea was these people were to come up with a portrait of life. The effort was putting together all these people, conditions, and put them under one roof, one, in order to accommodate the transition of an economy, you're going to have to do with less money and less opportunity, in order to sacrifice for things to get better.

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- Mr Hernandez: I see that where you can see now the little struggles are going on, about trying to keep...people come [inaudible 00:45:42] cheap property they can afford to buy, but then we create a dynamic that keeps the rest of us from buying.
- Mr Hernandez: I always ask, what is your interest? Now we have the same amount of money, but if your interest is strictly investment, you all you're going to hear about it is that makes money. In my mind, no. My interest is this: that I helped, but not hurt. Do no harm. I'm here to help.
- Esquivel: Yeah.
- Mr Hernandez: You come in with what you call good intentions. The way to hell is paved with good intentions. And he tries to help us, and there is no help. Your intentions may be good and noble, but not worthy of us. They can't harness and generate what's good for the population, the financiers, money-changers, the money managers is to [inaudible 00:47:24]
- Mr Hernandez: And this was the government creating blight, creating negativity. And [inaudible 00:47:32] on prices, the land, on everything.
- Mr Hernandez: [inaudible 00:47:49]...your purpose in life. And so using all these things, mathematics is mathematics. [inaudible 00:48:06] ...on people. Discovered the zero. Without the zero, Einstein would've gone mad, because his calculation wouldn't work. Without the zero. You know, theory of relativity. Is it  $hr^2$ ,  $hr$  square?
- Esquivel: I don't want to say the wrong thing,
- Mr Hernandez: That's okay, don't worry, you can say the wrong thing. I say the wrong thing all the time.
- Esquivel:  $E=MC$  squared?
- Mr Hernandez: Yeah.
- Esquivel: Yeah?
- Mr Hernandez: Yeah. Get this.  $P R$  Squared. And I say,  $\pi$  not squared,  $\pi$  are round! I used to cut up all the time.
- Mr Hernandez: But then, I got shown the other side. You know, enough is enough. Yeah, you done did it? Now it's my turn. Yeah. So if you don't watch it, take one more wrong step, the city's gonna burn. .
- Esquivel: Well, I think it's really important to you to understand your enemy, to understand how they work and what field they work in to better approach it.

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Mr Hernandez: You have to know your enemy. And the Bible says you have to love your enemy. I said, I could love my enemy. I love my enemy enough to know how to make them stop being my enemy. Not that we're going to be friends, but that he's gonna know that he's not gonna win. I was that certain. In fact, somebody re-quoted a quote I had. [inaudible 00:50:07] Remember when you said, uh, something about the Klan. Anyway, it's slipping my mind right now, but yeah, anything else you want to ask about? I mean, there's lots of stuff.

Esquivel: I don't think one dialogue session with you is enough for me to [crosstalk 00:50:32]...the things that I want to-

Mr Hernandez: Oh, no, no.

Mr Hernandez: It's evolving.

Esquivel: Yeah, it's a never ending work in progress I think to-

Mr Hernandez: ...because every time, you know, I hope I never stop learning. I want to learn all the time, because in my head there was all kinds of philosophical, uh, designs and philosophical attitudes and measurements. I'm still working on how we can use math equations to understand how we can get maximum output for what we're doing. I mean everybody uses math. Math is the birthplace of everything we see and don't see, which is part of our Creator, being that there's a lot of things we don't see. You know, that exists in our brains exists around us. I believe there's dimensions that live alongside us. Just a matter of time, space and there's an equation. There is a dimension with another society living on it right next to us. And you can't see it. We gotta learn how to see it. We have to learn how to rewire our brain.

Esquivel: Yeah. How to understand it to better understanding.

Mr Hernandez: Well, you can understand the cosmos. We can understand life as an organism, and life that goes back to the history of old. All these little, what do they call them? These things they find, imprints of animals, of...?

Esquivel: Fossils.

Mr Hernandez: Fossils. Yes. Imprints of all kinds of stuff. And you know, we're in for a large crisis. Um, I don't know, maybe Russia has a lot of their own too. And China. All the ancient civilizations had a connecting somehow. They had a spiritual factual relationship. Somehow or another they got that. You know, they've been finding similarities and different ancient peoples, like the cross before Christ. The cross was a symbol. Cause they found it, the fossil of crucifixes, and of different shaped crosses. Some elaborate, some just simple, but that was before Christ, BC, after the death of Christ, and then they will have the history that was told to the people like that. Mainly to Jesus Christ. I don't know whether you believe it or not.

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Esquivel: Historically, I believe that Jesus was a individual who had influenced other people. I'm spiritual to some extent, but I'm very like existential, like very science. We can dig fossils from 6,000 years ago and say we know this is true because science is what I live and what I believe. I'm to the point now where I'm just kinda like, I don't necessarily believe in an afterlife at all.

Esquivel: I am comfortable with the idea of just like ceasing to exist at some point. Like it brings me comfort to know that that is in a possibility. I also have a lot of, a lot of other very, a widespread beliefs. But I do think I'm approachable to some extent, even if I don't believe in an afterlife, I still can believe in like current things and I'm very like, this is the only moment that exists, right? It's like this very exact second. Everything else is kind of the way you interpret your past and the way you perceive your future is in the present as well. So yeah, but I think history is extremely important because it does help us perceive our future to some extent until like deal with our current moment,

Mr Hernandez: It's a cycle of knowledge, a cycle of life, a cycle of death, a cycle of existence, and cycle of eons. Everything comes inside. How many civilizations have come and gone for how many thousands of years, and is it deeper than that?. I would like to know how deep we go. Where did we come into line and later than most. We human beings are probably the newest mammals that were created.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: So we look at way back and the intelligence of those in the past.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: I mean how ancient people were able to get the knowledge way ahead of their time to do amazing things. Amazing sculptures, amazing places, and amazing things like the Mayans doing neurosurgery 12,000 years ago.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: You know, how'd they know where all the bones are, all the nerves are, how'd it tie in? [inaudible 00:57:50]

Esquivel: They still do that in some places, though.

Mr Hernandez: Well, yeah. It used to be the prominent thought that it was the blood, which if you're looking at it from a closed-in human look, you know, without exposure. You look at bugs. It hurts when it's fierce, but then they start exploring the relativity of the heart and the nerves and the brain, how it works together and they knew that without years of study. At universities or wherever, because were none. In the church, they had the knowledge from way back, in the monasteries. There were documents from, way, way back even before Christ was born. That gives them the knowledge. And so knowledge is power. That's

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like what the opposite of life is. No knowledge, no information, no power. That's how they kept us down because education, even though we stress it, it's all become mechanical.

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: Because there's no insightfulness in what we call education.

Esquivel: Yeah. There's no dialogue with students. It's kind of just this is what you need to know, let me know that you've memorized it. And then-

Mr Hernandez: Coming from a Catholic school and public school background, like compare one to be a xerox machine and one to be a computer. The public schools are xerox machines, memorize and critical thinking is taught in private schools. So they used to be the monasteries. Only rich people would get that kind of education. The lords have made high ranking people, you know, money. They would get that kind of education. The rest will be left to believing in home remedies, not looking towards science, but through faith and whatever they preach. You know, or whatever they like.

Mr Hernandez: I learned that in Catholic school if they have lots of things, but I also have a lot of routine. I have a lot of questions, a lot of things I disagree with outright. So now let's see. Where do you want to cut this off?

Mr Hernandez: I want to know more about you.

Esquivel: About me?

Mr Hernandez: Let's say, your experiences.

Esquivel: What's my experience?

Esquivel: I did not feel like a minority until graduate school, Texas State University. I've been lucky enough to. So I'm from Del Rio where everybody wasn't even Latino, They were Mexican American, like I wouldn't. I didn't know like people weren't like I'm from Guatemala, I'm from Honduras, or something. They were from Mexico.

Esquivel: I went from that to Texas State, which is very high Latino population, but then in graduate school is when I kind of entered into where I was obviously the only person of color in a class. Or I was obviously the only person of color discussing something from my point of view. Like there may have been other Latino students, but their minds are obviously in different tracks than mine, not mine.

Esquivel: I'm very fed up with the way we continuously treat each other. I am tired of the government. I'm tired of the system works perfectly for them. I can see since I studied it, I can see the direct results of the things that they've tried to

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accomplish. I can see the numbers and I can see the attitudes and I can see those things that people of color, some people of color still hold onto. Maybe ideas of success and stuff, but it's kind of like your ideas of your idea of success is fed to you so that you can follow that path and not divert and be like, hey, I don't really want this. I don't need this. This isn't helping anyone else.

Esquivel: I think we're obviously in the time period right now where people don't want to acknowledge reality. It seems very surreal. The situations that we deal with, and even though I'm not experiencing it day to day. I have the privilege to be like, oh, I'm going to read a book and research. I have that privilege and the fact that other people out there don't, it obviously makes me-

Mr Hernandez: Let me interrupt you right now. Let me say, what day next week do we meet?

Esquivel: Next week? Whatever day works for you.

Mr Hernandez: This is fun. We could do it twice a week.

Esquivel: Yeah, that's fine.

Mr Hernandez: Okay, how about-

Esquivel: I had a job that I was working at night but I left it so I could focus on my-

Mr Hernandez: How about tomorrow? I'll take tomorrow. Afternoon.

Esquivel: Afternoon? Maybe afternoon before, maybe like 2 or 3?

Mr Hernandez: [inaudible 01:04:41]...Thursday. I don't have anything tomorrow. [inaudible 01:04:51]

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: Sometimes only two hours.

Esquivel: THat's fine.

Mr Hernandez: So tomorrow?

Esquivel: Yeah.

Mr Hernandez: Four o'clock?

Esquivel: I have a meeting at 5:00 tomorrow, but if it was from four to five, that will be fine.

Mr Hernandez: Okay, that'll be good.

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Esquivel: All right. Okay.

Mr Hernandez: It was good seeing you.

Esquivel: Yeah, definitely. I-

Mr Hernandez: We've got a lot to talk about.

Esquivel: Yeah, I know, I think we do, and I want...like I said, I obviously want to get my Master's and I want to finish grad school but I am more interested in figuring out how I want to contribute, and I think it's extremely beneficial for me to listen to people who have contributed in the past and maybe... all this dialogue is for my own growth as an individual and as a productive person within what I still see as a movement that is not-

Mr Hernandez: Yeah cause I'd like to see some return for my efforts. Not for myself, but in a return to some policy or whatever-

Esquivel: Yeah and I think documenting this history is extremely important because it leaves like a launching off point for other people interested, and I know that my generation and generations I'm going to meet are motivated by history. I am motivated to work harder by seeing the efforts of others because I know that it is worth it.

Mr Hernandez: Oh good. [inaudible 01:06:37]

Esquivel: Yeah, sounds good. Well, I can knock on your door or around four tomorrow?

Mr Hernandez: Yeah, just call me right before.

Esquivel: I will.

Mr Hernandez: Okay-