

Interviewee: Lisa Gutierrez Guzman

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Biography: Lisa Gutierrez Guzman grew up in the 1950s and 1960s from a working class, multi-racial background. She was a weekend hippie in '67, went to the be-ins, concerts, and some anti-war protests. She started becoming more aware of how racism affected her family dating back to her great-grandfather in the Philippines, and his free and enslaved ancestors before that. She certainly knew how her interracial parents were treated. At the time, she had no money to go to college, but it turned out that her grandma had been saving for her first semester because she knew that Guzman wanted to become a teacher. That is when Guzman started attending S.F. State in 1968 as an eager 17-year-old. She started reading about the pre-strike activities of the BSU, TWLF and SDS in newspapers and leaflets. She attended classes on the morning of November 6th but went to the rally at noon to find out more about the strike. Joining the crowd, she marched up to the administration building and demanded that the president come out and address the demands. After the strike ended, Guzman and all of the other students that went on strike won an Ethnic Studies College and more students of color into the college. But, for Guzman personally, the thing that she “won” was a deeper understanding of capitalism and racism, changing her life forever. Later on, she met her husband through political work and found a job in which she could organize on the job, including finally becoming a bilingual teacher in 1988 and retiring in 2018. Today she continues to tell her personal story because of her background, that strike, and the people she met on the picket line on 19th Avenue and Holloway.

Abstract: [00:00:06–00:10:28] Lisa traces the lineage of her last names, detailing her multiracial background. A San Francisco native, she attends San Francisco State College using a savings fund given to her by her grandmother. Her freshman year is where she encounters the strike, marking the beginning of her developing political consciousness. [00:10:28–00:20:17] She gradually becomes more attentive to the strike and decides to boycott her classes altogether, notwithstanding her parents’ disapproval of the strike. When her parents forbade her from attending any rallies, she snuck out to the protests. [00:20:17–00:31:00] The escalation of the strike’s actions and police presence led to her arrest, which was one of many in the mass arrests. She describes how the police used the “pincher movement” to corner multiple strikers, and the mistreatment she experienced being held in the women’s jail cell. [00:31:00–00:35:22] After her dad bailed her out of jail, the growing tensions between Lisa and her parents forced her to move out and the experience of her arrest indefinitely altered her worldview. [00:35:22–00:45:24] When she received her diploma from SF State, she eventually went on to become a teacher, working prior as a clerical worker in a hospital until she could receive her teaching credential. [00:45:24–00:55:15] Lisa narrates the impact of solidarity on the strike and her own life, in which solidarity became her lens to interpret her own working-class experience. [00:55:15–01:05:15] Lisa talks more about the political milieu of San Francisco (Martin Luther King Jr’s death, I-Hotel, Vietnam War). She walks through her collection of archival photos and newspaper clippings of the strike, including the day of the mass arrest. Lisa talks more about the strike’s actions and her comrades who were present in the photos. [01:10:46–01:20:58] In the second interview a year later, Lisa recalls more details from her arrest. She provides more context about the tactical squad and tells a story about how she and the other female arrestees protested for bread and water in the jail. She also discusses the capacity for jail support for strikers during their court hearings. [01:20:58–01:30:43] Lisa emphasizes how much of a success the strike was, despite

the onslaught of budget cuts and department politics. [01:30:43–01:46:39] Lisa talked about the struggle of identity as a multiracial person during the strike, being pulled in different directions. In no way was the strike perfect; Lisa cites her experience with male chauvinism and movement-building. In the end, Lisa says solidarity in struggle was what allowed the strike to achieve its victories.

Lisa Gutierrez-Guzman | Transcript, November 04, 2022

[00:00:06]

Lisa Gutierrez-Guzman: Okay. My name is Lisa Rae Gutierrez-Guzman, and if I could just say a little bit about my name, because it points to my multiracial background. "Lisa" was for "Mona Lisa," which was a popular song at the time, named after the painting. That's not so culturally related, but "Rae" is from my mother's father. She was from Delight, Arkansas. She was Caucasian and Native American. In the South, it was very common for girls to be named after their relatives who had passed. I thought that was just a Jewish tradition, but it was actually a tradition from the South as well. They would just go ahead and feminize the name. That's how I got "Rae."

"Gutierrez" was the name I had when I came here to San Francisco State in November of '68. It's a Spanish surname, but I'm not Latina. My grandmother was a Spanish Filipina on her mother's side, but her father was African American. He was a Buffalo Soldier that was sent to the Philippines during the Philippine-American War. So, the Spanish Filipina and the African American from the United States had my grandmother, then she married a Chinese and Spanish Filipino, so I think it was predominantly "Spanish," because of the fact that Gutierrez is a Spanish name. But he was most definitely also Chinese. Then, they had my dad, who was that mixture of person, and then he met my mom, who was the Southern person from Delight, Arkansas. The home of Glen Campbell, very famous singer at the time. So, the name is really important to me.

Dr. Grace Yoo: That's amazing! What an amazing history. I hope you studied it all. So, the question I have for you is: where were you born, and where did you grow up, like high school and all that?

L.G.G: I was born and raised in San Francisco. My parents lived in Bernal Heights, on Wool Street, right off Cortland. I remember, very vividly, them telling me it was such a small place, that they didn't even have room for a crib, and then I was in a little drawer when I was a young baby. But then they moved to the projects in Hunters' Point. I went to what was then called Sir Francis Drake Elementary School. Now, because Sir Francis Drake was a bad person in history, it's called Malcolm X. That's where I went to school from kindergarten through part of third grade.

My father was as an upholstery worker, he had a good union job at the time, so he was able to move [us] out of the really small house in Bernal Heights. They lived temporarily in the projects — well, "temporarily" — it was eight years. I already told you I went to Sir Francis Drake for those first three and a half years, and then I went to a school called Bayshore Elementary, which was a part of San Francisco. The area was annexed by Daly City later because it was cheaper taxes. I ended up going to an intermediate school right near my home, right outside of Visitation Valley in San Francisco.

Then I went to high school at Jefferson High School in Daly City. At the time, my parents had the choice of sending me to a San Francisco high school or a Daly City high school. They elected to send me to Jefferson because they felt it was more integrated, being from a multiracial background. They, as a multiracial couple themselves, had experienced a lot of racism as they married, and they just wanted to have a more integrated community. At that time, the school I could have gone to in San Francisco was Woodrow Wilson High School, and it was very segregated: 98% or 95% Black. If there are anything at Jefferson, there ended up being so-called "race riot." That's okay, it helped develop me as an individual. And then I went to San Francisco State!

[00:05:06]

G.Y: Yeah, and why did you decide San Francisco State University?

L.G.G: I almost forgot the most important reason why I'm here. Well, what happened was my grandmother knew that my parents could not afford to send me to college, but she wanted me to go. So, she saved money as one of those "Christmas funds." I think it was probably only enough for a semester or two, but it was close. By bus, it was only an hour and I didn't drive. I debated about [going to] City College of San Francisco, because it was free at that time, and then transferring to State. But I said, I wanted to be a teacher, and if I know that already, and I have some financial support, I might as well go straight to State right away. And then I got involved in the strike.

G.Y: Can you talk about how you heard about the strike and what your role was?

L.G.G: The main way I heard about the strike was through leafletting: people were passing out leaflets and selling newspapers, and even *The Daily Gater*—the newspaper at the time—they had articles about things related to the strike. It was just my first semester, I wasn't even 18 yet, I was still 17. I said, hm, sounds important, issues about racism I know that was an important issue for me, because my parents did experience a lot of racism when they got married. Also, the Vietnam War going on at the time, so I felt there was a lot of racism against the Vietnamese people. And, of course, the Civil Rights movement was going on at the time; now all of that I found out and paid attention to once I got to State.

When I was a high school student, I was kind of political. Everyone was kind of political because there was the big hippie movement that was happening in the Haight-Ashbury, there was the "happenings" and the "be-ins," things like that, and I went to some of them. I went to some anti-war protests, but I didn't know anyone, I was a very shy student. So, I got leaflets at SF State; I'm an avid reader and I read everything I got, and then I had people coming into the classrooms to give presentations about the strike. It was a mixed group racially and ethnically, so I started paying attention a lot more about what this thing is. I said, you know what, on November 6th, the first day of the strike, I decided to check it out. I went to the rally at the speaker's platform, which they had at the time for all the free speech activities. I listened to the speeches, and everything they said [was] right. Of course, more Third World people should be admitted into college. Of course, they should have more ethnic representation among the professors of the college. Of course, I felt strongly that there should be an ethnic studies department or school. It just made so much sense to me.

Some of the demands, I didn't really understand all the way because I was so brand new and young, but the general, most important ones were logical to me. But a strike? That was a whole 'nother ballgame. My grandmother had paid for me to go to college, and I was going to go ahead and turn my back on that? I wanted to be a schoolteacher; here I was getting involved in something like that. I said, okay, I'm going to go to the protests, but I'm not going to go on strike. What happened was I marched with everyone from that group at the rally, and we walked up to the administration building. The leaders demanded the president at the time, David Smith, come out and speak to us to formally present the demands. He sent a representative out. It probably could have just been a secretary, and she said he had more important things to do. We were about 200 people, by the way, it wasn't just a small contingent of people. I said, what? That doesn't make any sense. I'm not totally committed to strike, but I knew the demands were important.

[00:10:28]

So, I ended up going to all the demonstrations that I could, when I didn't have class. I still went to classes the first week, but I was convinced—not because anyone convinced me—I just saw the evidence of police brutality.

[Lisa holds up a photograph of a police officer detaining Ronald McAllister.]

Not as much, at the very beginning, I think the police were checking us out, and also we were checking out the situation—I'm saying "our," at the time, I was not a part of the "we" or the "our," because I was still so brand new. When we had that demonstration at the admin. building, I was in the back. I was way back being my shy little self.

[Lisa holds up a portrait of herself when she was young.]

For a week, I just went to the rallies and such, but on November 13, I boycotted the classes—I went on strike. I felt a need to put my commitment on the line. I knew it was a risk, I knew I could possibly get arrested, and I was later. I knew it might affect my educational career, my focus, but it was something I was willing to do. If we didn't do it together, and it was a multiracial group of people that were marching, then when was it going to happen? All these important demands.

G.Y: So, you remember November 13th, what was pivotal about that day? The strike started, or?

L.G.G: No, the strike started on November 6th, but I just remember very vividly that I went to classes for five school days, and then I decided to drop out, well not drop out. "To be educated on the picket line" is a better way of saying it. I was hoping that somehow, I'd be able to recapture my classes, my requirements, and eventually graduate from State. I didn't know [how] I would be able to. So, I remember protesting, but not out of my classes for a week before November 13th.

G.Y: And you said, I'm just going to jump in. How many students do you remember on those picket lines that were also on strike?

L.G.G: At the beginning, there was just a few hundred. Every day it increased, because the point was to try to get people to boycott their classes altogether.

[video cut]

L.G.G: It eventually built up to 2,000 people picketing on a single day. The picture I have over there shows a typical demonstration where we're marching all around the commons, I don't know if they still call it that. Eventually they went ahead and said that picketing was illegal, so then we [picketed] on 19th and Halloway. When it got to 2,000 people picketing every day, there was also an increase in police brutality. By the way, it was in the newspapers every single day on KQED. It didn't always get on the other TV stations, but often. Certainly, when it got big, they had to do it every day. Eventually, 80%, if not more, of the classes were boycotted, or people had their classes off-campus. They used a lot of the churches and community centers around the neighborhood.

[00:15:00]

Sometimes, they did class in inner San Francisco, because that was the only place they could find [to have off-campus class]. One of the most popular churches where we had meetings was a Catholic Church on Oak and Fillmore. That was the effect of the strike. It became the longest student strike ever—four and a half months—and it was so effective that it won a lot of the demands and established the school of Ethnic Studies, then the Black Studies department, and the Asian American Studies department, and at the time, La Raza Studies department, and Native American [Studies] department. All those were established because of the strike.

For me, the most important outcome—because I saw the struggles I went through to get into the college—was the amount of Third World people from different ethnic backgrounds that were admitted into the college as a result of the strike. I know this as a fact. My roommate in the dorms, right here at State, was a

Mexican working-class girl whose parents were farm workers. She would never have gone to State unless something had been established like what we did at the strike, and our own sacrifices.

[video cut]

L.G.G: People don't really know the history as well as they should. People don't know what it took to establish this stuff. People sacrificed. Can I talk about my experience being arrested now?

G.Y: Please.

L.G.G: One of my best friends at the time was Chinese. In December, my father ended up forbidding me to go to San Francisco State because he knew I was just getting into shenanigans. They were just so shocked, because I had been such a shy student with good grades. Then I had given up my classes and gone on strike and was protesting every day. But I was in their house, and I was the oldest of four. I was a bad example to the rest of them. My parents, especially my dad, who was the more authoritarian guy, said I couldn't go to State anymore. Well, there was a very important meeting at the Gallery Lounge, it was right behind what is now the Student Union, and we used to have a lot of our meetings there.

I said, how am I going to go to State when Dad says I can't go to State? I know, I'll go to Chinatown and then I'll take the M car all the way down to State because I had to figure out a way to look like I wasn't coming out here. Of course, he didn't believe me, so he drove us down to Chinatown and dropped us off at one of the corners. Then, he thought, maybe she really is going to Chinatown with Susan. She is Chinese, and she is a good friend. Susan didn't come with me, but I went ahead and took the M car, went to the meeting at the Gallery Lounge with about 500 people sitting on the floor, and all of the sudden, my dad showed up at the Gallery Lounge. He was way across the room. He may or may not have seen me because he didn't say anything, so I don't think he saw me. Things are elevating, and this was in December. Somewhere around there, we had a protest off-campus at the Chronicle building, because the *SF Chronicle* was having really biased reporting of what was happening at State, even when there were a lot of community leaders who were coming out to speak. Willie Brown, who ended up being the Mayor of San Francisco. Even before [becoming] an Assemblyman, he was just a really big politician and community leader. This guy, Dr. Carlton Goodlett, all kinds of different community leaders. They were coming out here, so it was just getting bigger and bigger coverage. But the *Chronicle* just had a biased approach about the strike, and here we were, trying to serve the community and fight for the rights of minorities to get into the college. So, I used the old term again, "minorities."

[00:20:17]

I went to this protest, I didn't know anyone still. Because I was shy, I didn't talk to anyone. It was a very hot day in San Francisco, very rare. I was dressed in a heavy coat, I had a scarf, I had sunglasses. At that time, I didn't wear regular glasses, so I normally had nothing. But that day, I had sunglasses and a hat. A woman from the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) came up to me and said, "It looks like you're hiding from someone." I replied, "Yes, because I don't want my parents to see this on TV." And that's how I made my connection with people in SDS.

I got more and more committed. I started meeting people and talking to them one-on-one, finding out more of the details, and that's when I really got more involved. In January, after the holiday break, we went back to school—probably around mid-January, though I'm not sure exactly. Isn't that when the break usually ends, late January? Anyway, January 23rd was a major rally at the speaker's platform. By that time, Hayakawa had taken over as the college president, after the previous president had been fired. They brought in a Japanese president, hoping he would be able to quell the strike. But Hayakawa made a speech that went something like, "No be -ins, no rallies, no hootenannies," using all these weird words I

had never even heard before. No gatherings on the campus. But we ignored him, and we went down and had this major rally. They did give us a warning, saying that if we didn't leave in such-and-such amount of time, we'd be arrested. But they didn't actually give us time to leave. They surrounded us like this: [*Lisa holds her arms out.*] they called it a "pincher" movement. Right around us from all directions. Our rally had several hundred people—about 400 of us were arrested [at the rally] that day. Altogether, there were over 700 arrests, though not all were individual arrests; some people got arrested multiple times. The authorities separated the girls from the boys, the young men and young women. I keep forgetting that I was still a girl, but many of the students were in their late twenties or early thirties, so there was a big difference.

We got brought down to what we called "the Hall of Injustice" at 850 Bryant Street, where we were arrested and sent to jail. That changed my life, too, when I got arrested. I had already seen the police brutality every single day on the picket lines, but I experienced the brutality when I was in jail. What happened was, the rally was at 12 o' clock—so most of us probably had breakfast, but we didn't have lunch! By the time it was 3:00, 4:00, or 5:00, we were starving, and we didn't care what we got. We could have had stale white bread, we didn't care. Anything. Any food that would go into our mouths to calm our hunger. So, we started protesting in jail for food, and I was really proud of the women because we started chanting. The guards were furious. All the guards were men at that time—there were no women guards in the jail. They were furious that we would have the audacity to protest and make loud noises. Little did I know, people outside of 850 Bryant were collecting bail money and supporting us in any way they could. They were lucky they didn't get arrested, but they knew what was wrong, and they helped us in any way. They heard all these girls and young women chanting and I thought, "Why aren't the guys doing anything?" I never did find that out, but I was proud of us because, eventually, we got some white bread.

[00:25:21]

But before we got the white bread—I almost forgot the most important part that really changed me—they hosed us down. They used water hoses from the fire department, and they hosed us. At that time, miniskirts were very popular, and we weren't allowed to wear pants in most jobs. Society at the time said girls were expected to wear skirts and dresses. San Francisco State's always cold, so I think some of us might have been breaking those social mores. There were probably some, and I think I was one of them that day, girls wearing pants. But majority were probably wearing skirts and dresses. Here we were, being hosed down with water hoses. Fill in the blanks: you know exactly where that water went. It was traumatizing.

I started writing a diary in jail because I thought people were not going to believe me when I told them what happened to me. I subsequently lost the diary, but it's still up here [*Lisa points to her head*], and I tell people about it. All that changed my life. I'm not even sure what the original question was...

G.Y: I was just imagining how, at first, you were so worried about your dad finding out you were at the protest, and then later on, you were arrested. I don't know what that discussion was like with your family?

L.G.G: Thank you—because I didn't get bailed out until around 11:00 at night. I was lucky because a lot of people at SF State who were on strike were from other cities and states. But I was a San Franciscan, and my father was a union worker, so he was able to pay the bail and get me out. Little did I know, my mom was so worried about me that she didn't sleep at all that night. The next morning, she had to drive my sister to Jefferson High School, and she got into a car accident. They were worried about me. Looking back now, as an adult and a mother of three, and now a grandmother of five, I know that they were mainly worried about me. At the time, society wasn't so political, and they just wanted their firstborn to go to

college and become a teacher. Here I was, ruining my life, supposedly. But actually, the opposite [has become] true—it strengthened my life.

G.Y: And your dad was an immigrant?

L.G.G: Oh, yeah.

G.Y: Was he a Manong?

L.G.G: This is what happened with my dad. My grandmother was a [U.S.] citizen because her father was African American, a black man from Louisiana. She thought that, because she was a citizen, she could bring her children over without any problems. At that time, immigration laws were so different. [My dad] thought he had all these privileges, and he didn't. My dad almost got deported when we were really young. It was a scary time for my sister and me because we thought we might lose our father. Luckily, he was able to naturalize at the last minute. It was hard for him because he had become that immigrant. He came over [to the U.S.] on a huge ship, only but the clothes on his back. He landed in cold San Francisco, and the original plan was to go to Chicago. But his uncle—my great uncle—said, “You're not going to Chicago. You're staying here.” At that time, Westlake wasn't integrated, and my parents tried to get a place to live there, you know, white mother, Asian father. [That was not] allowed. So, these experiences happened, and they were worried about me. But at the time, I just thought they were right-wing and not sympathetic at all. My mom thought I was crazy, and my dad just thought I was ruining my life. But I still went back to their house after he bailed me out.

[00:31:00]

G.Y: Did you end up feeling scared? Like, ‘Oh no, my parents are really upset?’

L.G.G: I was scared, but I also knew in my head that I was going to move out. But I had no means of support. I didn't have a job. My grandmother had paid [for my college] with the Christmas money, but she was not going to do it anymore because I got involved in the strike rather than focusing on my studies. My parents couldn't afford to send me to college, so I had to take a leave of absence and work full-time. But I still went to as many protests as I could if I was in-between jobs, because the strike didn't end until March. The following semester, I went back. By then, my parents had calmed down quite a bit because the ambience of the world was getting so much more political, and they knew they had to change with the [time], too. My dad had not even told us openly that his grandfather was Black. He was trying to hide it. There's a racist term in Tagalog, "etim," which means the N-word in English. It was used to refer to Black people. Ironically, my grandmother, who was one of 14 children and Catholic, had some siblings who were dark-skinned, and some were very light-skinned, like my grandmother. All those experiences affected me. Some time when I was still at home, there was a case called “Los Siete de la Raza,” where some Latino kids were accused of killing a cop. I don't remember all the details, but it really seemed obvious that they were being framed. I took the side of the La Raza, the Chicano students, but my dad, he just could not believe that I wouldn't take the side of the cops. He slapped me upside the face, and I said that's it. I'm moving out. My friend had said, “If things get so bad (I know you don't have the money right now), stay at my house!” I moved out the very next day and stayed at their house. It was hard because I had always been very close to my family.

G.Y: But at a very young age, you had believed in this, and you had the courage to move out.

L.G.G: Yeah. I didn't know how I was going to do it. And it took a while to get enough money, once the strike was settled and I wasn't doing protests on a regular basis. I had to get more consistent work. When

I went back to State, I at least had to get some part-time work. And then I did the thing that students do nowadays—get loans and grants.

G.Y: What was so meaningful for you during the strike? And also, you talk about being hosed and jail being life changing. Can you talk about how that was life-changing for you?

L.G.G: [The strike] was life changing because I had seen the police brutality almost every day on the picket lines—I would see things like the cops being on horses and chasing after people, trying to beat them with batons, and I saw people getting arrested. And I saw the majority of those arrested actually were white, *but* the ones who were brutalized more were people of color, and the ones that got more severe charges were people of color.

[00:35:22]

This experience confirmed for me what these people at the rallies had been telling me: these cops were protecting the government and the administration of San Francisco State, which was trying to prevent more minorities from entering the college and not establishing ethnic studies programs. In my ideal world, as I told [the ethnic studies] students when I made a presentation on ethnic studies at a high school in San Francisco—because I am a retired teacher. I finally did get my credential.

It wasn't [right] that we had to have a separate [ethnic studies college], but that was the situation at the time in 1968 and 9. I started to see all these things and how it was affecting me and my ability to become a teacher, and society in general. It was different things—like when people went to get apartments, they had to get their white friends to get the apartment for them if they were darker skinned people of color. That's not right. My eyes really opened up to the fact that this system was not and still not serving our needs. That philosophy is what carried me through the rest of my life. 72 now, I was 18 then, all those years, you do the math. I have gotten involved in many other struggles, including being very active in my teachers' union, in the hospital's union before I was a teacher, etc. You guys just met me, but I have lots of energy still, and until I get to the point where I get afflicted and I'm not able to tell people about my story, I want to be able to tell them what happened to me, how it changed me, and how we need to keep on fighting.

G.Y: Thank you. So, after San Francisco State, what did you go on to do?

L.G.G: It took a while for me to become a teacher. The students here are going to laugh—I was a P.E. major here at college. The P.E. department was one of the most conservative departments and it probably still is, the jocks that they are. During the strike, they were really mad. They were the ones that would come and attack the strikers.

G.Y: Wow. The P.E. students?

L.G.G: The P.E. students. They did organize a group called "Committee for Academic [Environment]" or some silly thing. I forget. It was a real conservative sounding name. I became a P.E. major because when I was in high school, I loved sports. Because I was undeclared at the time, a friend of mine, [now a university] professor here [at SF State], asked me, "What did you like to do in high school before you got involved with this stuff?" I was a member of Girls Athletic Association (GAA). He goes, "Why don't you do P.E. or something?" I said, really? They were so right-wing. He goes, "Well, you never know. Things have changed. Maybe you can still make some friends. The main thing is to get your *degree*." So, I graduated with a P.E. major—by the way, it wasn't that bad—and a Sociology minor. But I made the mistake, as many students do, of taking a break, especially since it took six years to get my diploma. I

didn't go for that extra year to become a teacher and get your California credential. I took a break and it lasted forever.

[00:40:46]

It wasn't until a friend of mine asked me if I wanted to teach an ESL class to mostly Latino students. I said, teach? I've always wanted to be a teacher. I said, sure, but I don't know a thing about teaching. I was really excited about that for a while, maybe I'll be an adult teacher. When my own children ended up going to school, I realized I made a mistake of not going back to school. I couldn't afford it anyway. And then, by coincidence, I just happened to be in the right place at the right time. Get involved in your school if you have any kids. I happened to be at a meeting where they were talking about hiring people at the school. They wanted paraprofessionals, which means paraeducators that help the teachers. Helping the teacher with small groups, whatever. I said, hey, maybe this is my way of becoming a teacher. I went to the University of San Francisco (USF) to get my teaching credential, but it was a part of a Title VII grant they had, when they were trying to encourage paraprofessionals to become teachers. That's how I became a teacher; USF is outrageously expensive. State is cheaper, believe it or not. USF's tuition is crazy, but I didn't have to pay anything. All I had to pay for was the books. That's what I ended up doing until I retired in 2013.

G.Y: So, were you a teacher for 20 years?

L.G.G: No, so what happened was, that period when I took a "break," I was a hospital worker, a clerical worker for the longest time. When I had that instance with the ESL teacher friend and my kid, that's when I had a back-door entrance into getting a teacher credential. San Francisco, even back then, was a very expensive place to live in, considering what we were paid at the time. So, I couldn't go back. Clerical, you don't get paid much. And that was at the hospital, so at least I was getting paid more because it was a union job. When I got that Title VII grant, that's when I got my teaching credential.

G.Y: That's great. Where did you teach?

L.G.G: Elementary. I ended up going with the young ones. Mostly third, fourth, and fifth grade, although a couple years in second. Also, I was the principal. I was the *maestra directora* at this Spanish-immersion program. I was the "teacher-in-charge;" that's the more direct English translation. So, I worked in the capacity of the principal for a couple years, but still working with other people. I started on my birthday—I do all these dramatic things on my birthday, I don't know why. By the way, I didn't tell you this, when I was spending about 30 days in jail, I celebrated my birthday there.

That's another thing that changed me, because it was so cute. I just told one of the people I met who was friendly to me, and we just played cards every day. I just happened to mention it was my birthday, and they went ahead and organized getting some Danish pastries and they sang "Happy Birthday" to me in jail. These were mostly working-class women that weren't strikers; there were only a few of us. But they thought what we did at State was a good thing. They could understand that we were trying to fight the system; it wasn't just that particular incident. Anyway, I [always] have all these dramatic things happening on my birthday.

[00:45:24]

G.Y: And you were spending 30 days in jail.

L.G.G: But I got out at 20 days for good behavior.

G.Y: Which jail did you they take you to?

L.G.G: San Bruno. But what happens is, they take you to 850 Bryant when you initially get arrested, and then you get sentenced. I defended myself for a while, [but] I wanted to continue my education, and I needed to go back to school. [I didn't want to leave it up to chance.] That's why I, as they say, "copped a plea." I made a deal and decided to not defend myself. Some of us were getting guilty charges, innocent charges, and we were all arrested on the same day in the same circumstance—I mean, it was so crazy.

G.Y: How were you feeling in the midst of that, as the sentencing was happening? I know some folks said there was a National Lawyers' Guild that was helping students, but how were you feeling in the midst of all that?

L.G.G: I still was only 18. I turned 19 in jail. I was confused; I was pissed off. I was elated that we had done something so important, that they felt that they needed us to get away for a while. There was someone that went in with me that I knew from SDS that had the opposite opinion. She didn't talk to anyone in jail. [Mary was a white woman], and she was scared. I knew that [being scared and isolating myself] would be the totally wrong approach; if I went in scared of the people that were in there for prostitution, or robbery, that I would end up isolated or brutalized. I bonded with them right away. I said, you know, this is not gonna be so bad. I mean, 20 days is a long time, but not compared to some people who were arrested for six months, or a year, or more. This is nothingness.

G.Y: So, there was some support on the outside before you went in to prepare you?

L.G.G: Yeah.

G.Y: We heard the legal aid or legal committee was really helpful.

L.G.G: Yeah. The National Lawyers' Guild and the ACLU. They were witnesses on the picket line. Along with medical people that would come out and help us. They would try to get to people who were attacked by cops, and they would give them bandaging or whatever it took. Sometimes, it was impossible, because the cops would come so fast, there was no way. We, in general, would try to get the arrestee from the cop and sometimes we were successful. "We," not "me." By that time, I considered myself a part of the "we." Even though I wasn't doing any of that stuff.

G.Y: What does solidarity mean to you? What did you witness during the strike?

L.G.G: It's everything. Because on the picket line, I witnessed white, Asian, Native American, Black, Latino, there were teachers from the AFT, there were community people coming out to support us. To me, that's the only way you can win, is if you have that unity. If you have any separation whatsoever along anything, racial lines, abled, disabled, whatever. It doesn't win anything; you end up fighting each other. I'm not going to say that we were perfect in that direction. There were times when there as too much on our ethnicity. Like, if someone like myself, who was from a multiracial background—where do I go? How do I relate to this? I did try to go to the Filipino group, Philippine-American Collegiate Endeavor (PACE), but I found that they were not as political as I wanted them to be. Because I don't present as Black, I thought it would be kind of racist if I tried to go to Black Student Union (BSU).

[00:50:12]

The closest thing would be the La Raza organization, and I ended up joining them later. During the strike I didn't, because I thought that's kind of hypocritical too. I'm not of Latin American descent, I have "Hispanic" descent. Every once in a while, there was too much emphasis on where each individual was

from. There was a strike support committee that was sometimes called the “white strike support committee.” I thought, these people [were] supposed to be fighting racism and then they’re calling them that every once in a while, what’s up with that? I didn’t like that. So, we weren’t ideal. Overall, I think that we did try to build that kind of solidarity and unity that we needed to win. And we won!

G.Y: Yeah, you made history.

L.G.G: We made history.

G.Y: And I love the story of how you got involved and how you were courageous as an 18-year-old. And how it transformed your life.

L.G.G: It did. Because every job I’ve had since then, I’ve tried to find jobs that somehow could serve the people. It was hard at the beginning, because clerical workers are just behind typewriters. But I would try to get involved in other ways, like in our union rights. When I started [working] with real jobs, good paying jobs, it was working in hospitals or doctors’ offices, and I saw Paul Newman. Famous actor and his wife Joanne worked with one of my doctors’ offices. So, I experienced clerical end of things of serving people when they were hurt, or injured, or sick. Then, of course, when I became a teacher, education is a priority to me. I ended up being a teacher for 25 years as a teacher and a couple years as a paraprofessional. I saw the reality of education under the system and did everything I could so that the kids could really learn. The kids that were isolated in one way, shape, or form because of their background or their financial situation, [trying] to figure out a way to uplift them so they would feel that they have something to offer. Not always easy.

So, in many ways, I ended up identifying with a working-class background, and certainly later on, being Filipino. My dad was Filipino, and I couldn’t ignore that, it was an important part of it, and I related to that. But I also ended up joining La Raza and speaking Spanish fluently. So, I ended up working as a bilingual paraprofessional and later as a bilingual teacher.

Teresa Izquierdo: Did you eventually recover your relationship with your family? Because you said that you were very attached to them; do you think they eventually understood you?

L.G.G: Yes. But I don’t think it was just me influencing them. I think it was because society was changing so rapidly. My father’s grandfather was Black, and yet he was hiding it from me, remember I told you that? Later on, he had relationships with Black people, friendships and then girlfriends. Then, my siblings and I would have relationships with people of color. I ended up marrying a Mexican, still married after 45 years. My sister married a Black man, my other sister married a Puerto Rican guy, my brother married a Black woman. Some of those ended up divorced and they went other directions, but that’s where they initially married. My parents changed; they started accepting the fact that people of all different skin tones and backgrounds have something to offer. And they knew that. Intellectually, people knew that, but there was so much racism at that time. Remember—it’s ‘68. Martin Luther King was just killed. There were so many things going on that it was hard to accept.

[00:55:15]

G.Y: Do you remember where you were when Martin Luther King was assassinated and what you felt?

L.G.G: I was a high school student and I remember that we had a convocation at the gym, talking about what had happened. I remember that he was someone famous, but I had never seen him in person. I knew it was terrible that he got assassinated, but I didn’t cry or anything like that because it was so foreign to me. It wasn’t someone I directly knew, and at that point, I hadn’t been politicized as I was later.

G.Y: So, you feel at SF State you got politicized.

L.G.G: Primarily. You know, I was accused of being a communist back when I was a high school student, because I wrote an article in the high school newspaper against the Vietnam War. It wasn't at a political understanding, because I didn't really understand what's going on. I just thought that the Vietnamese were being killed in this war and I didn't understand why, and it just seemed wrong. I said something like that; very vague, very liberal. People accused me of being a *Viet cong*. I thought, what's that? I had no idea what that meant. But anyway, my parents did end up being more accepting later. Which is great, and I had a good relationship with my dad; he passed away a couple years ago. It's hard to believe how people don't understand how I could have a good relationship with my dad then until he died, but I was the one who mostly took care of him. It kind of went full circle.

Yoko Tamada: I don't really have questions about the historical context of Vietnam War and what was going on, but do you remember the I-Hotel evictions happening?

L.G.G: I remember very vividly about the I-Hotel because of the fact that the people in the hotel were primarily Chinese and Filipino. Because I was going through all those soul-searching things about identifying who I was. [*Addressing one of the student interviewers*] Being that you're also multiracial. You might've experienced this—I was called ["Heinz-57"], people couldn't figure out who I was. Anyway, some people I knew were going to go to the I-Hotel protest the day they were being evicted, but I didn't feel that connected to it. I wasn't sure how I'd get there; I was in the dorms at the time. I just didn't feel comfortable going by myself not knowing anyone that was going, personally. There were people I didn't know inviting me to go, so I just didn't go. There were so many things happening—I was talking globally, but San Francisco proper, there were so many things going on that were so amazing. I had heard all about the auto-dealerships that were on Van Ness at the time, and that people were trying to integrate those. A lot of peoples' heads got busted trying to get those [places] integrated. All that history was behind me, but it was just like news items, and I hadn't really been reading the newspaper on a regular basis until I got to State.

[video cut]

[*Lisa is showing a newspaper photo clipping of campus protest. Caption of the photo reads: "San Francisco State's strikers wound up their big rally with a march around the campus."*]

L.G.G: ...shows us the rallies happening on the campus when we were still allowed to walk around the campus. See, the date's on the back here: December 7th, 1968.

[*Lisa holds up a photo of a man being arrested, surrounded by three cops.*]

L.G.G: This was a AFT professor by the name of Anton somebody—I'm not remembering their name right now. When the teachers joined the strike, it ended up becoming much more powerful. We little ol' students: who are we? But when the workers boycotted [for] the strike and didn't go to work, it became much more effective.

[*Lisa holds up a photo of a young Asian man and woman at a protest.*]

L.G.G: There were days when there were more ethnic identity emphasis; this happened to be sent to me from the AFT. Somehow, I got it.

G.Y: Do you know who's in those photos?

L.G.G: I don't know the individuals. No.

[Lisa holds more photos of police in large groups.]

L.G.G: You already know about these. I've already talked about these brutalities.

[Lisa holds up a photo of SF State's library's front entrance.]

[01:00:03]

L.G.G: The library was remodeled shortly after the strike. One of the tactics that we had during the strike was we would go into the library, check out about 20 books, and then just dump 'em on the floor. It was a bad tactic because it was against the people in the library who had to put the books back in their proper place. But I remember, it's ironic that the cops chased people up into the doors of the library, because later on, we ended up having those kinds of protests.

[Lisa holds up two photos of two arrestees.]

L.G.G: This is the kind of thing that would happen—and you'll notice that both of these people happen to be white. Majority of the people arrested were white. Like I said earlier, people of color, Third World people, were oftentimes got more severe charges. This is more police brutality.

G.Y: How did you get these photos?

L.G.G: They are mostly from the *Chronicle*. I don't know how I personally got them; I was not a big leader.

G.Y: Was this shortly after the strike or during the strike?

L.G.G: I think what happened was that somehow, someone else had them, and when I was defending myself, they thought that this might be good to show the defense that the police were brutal.

[video cut]

[Lisa holds up two photos of two police officers.]

L.G.G: This is the kind of thing we'd see every single day. Even if they weren't attacking [us], we had that police state, really is what it was.

[A photo of several police officers brutalizing a protestor on the floor.]

L.G.G: This a typical thing, look at that cop with a baton.

[A photo of a police officer crouching in front of a bloodied protestor, another close-up photo of the same bloodied protestor.]

L.G.G: You were asking me earlier, Grace, about this person, and he's in a couple ones. The white guy, white hippie type, the long hair was starting to come out. He was bloodied like crazy—don't get scared by this, by the way. You bloody fast when your head gets hurt. Doesn't mean you're heavily injured, you're just losing some blood, that's all. But I learned that quickly because it looks so dramatic when someone

gets— (laughs). I don't know where I got these, people ask me that all the time! I didn't steal them. They were sent or given to me.

G.Y: I'm gonna put you in touch with Meredith because she could scan them and they can go into that collection.

[A photo of a crowd of people.]

L.G.G: This is a friend of mine, Ernie Brill, who was interviewed by Grace earlier, but if you look right behind him, there's a gentleman that's Iranian. Ernie and I were talking about this the other day, because I told him my interview was coming up, and the Iranian Student Association was very active in the strike, very militant. They would bring hundreds of people to the line, even if they were not State students. Maybe they were from Berkeley or something. And at that time, I thought it was kind of symbolic that there were so many Iranian students. Another photo of someone [being] taken off in a gurney. Another white guy.

L.G.G: This is what I like to show, though.

[A photo, taken from above, of an older man carried in a gurney.]

L.G.G: I don't know, this looks like a person of color. An *older* person, looks like a community-type person. This is [a photo of] the day I was arrested, I'm pretty sure. It could be not, all our rallies looked like that.

T.I: How much time [were you sentenced]? 30 days?

L.G.G: 30 days is what I was given, I spent 20 days, I'm pretty sure. One of these days I got to look it up.

[A photo, taken from behind, of a line of police officers holding their batons in a ready position.]

L.G.G: This is a photo of the day I got arrested because it seems like they're doing that pincher movement I was talking about earlier, where the cops come from all directions. You already got some shots of this, these are some of the newspapers that were around during that time, the daily newspaper. This is Progressive Labor Party (PL), which I ended up being really influenced by and eventually getting involved with. They called it a rebellion instead. January 6th—that must've been the day we came back from school, because we were arrested on January 23rd, so I bet you this is the very first day that we came back.

[Lisa holds up the front cover of The Daily Gater.]

L.G.G: Here's another example of how it looked when we were still allowed to picket on the campus. I already showed you this [photo], this is how I looked around the time I started State.

[A photo of a police officer detaining Donald McAllister.]

L.G.G: If you were a leader of any sort or just very militant and you were a person of color, this is how they treated you. These are more recent stuff. There was an exhibit at the library right here at State, so there's a lot of things in the archive already about [the strike]. This is a friend of mine at the time, who was one of the leaders.

[01:05:15]

G.Y: Who's your friend?

L.G.G: Bridges Randall. He was a leader of the Black Student Union.

G.Y: Is he living still?

L.G.G: He's still living, but I heard he had a lot of medical problems. He's in the South. I don't know who knows [how to] contact him.

G.Y: Georgia?

L.G.G: I think Alabama.

G.Y: I think we're going to try to reach some people in the South.

L.G.G: Ernie might know. I don't know. This woman, I just went to her forum when we had our 50th reunion.

G.Y: Oh, I know Juanita.

L.G.G: Yes, she wrote this book. A memoir. But I like bringing this [newspaper] because of the fact that this is how she looked at the time, and this is where she's sitting in a "Huey Newton" chair, giving the clenched fist, which I love. Anyway, those are some of my pictures. Any questions? Besides how I got them?

[video cut]

L.G.G: ... But I just think that they need to honor [whoever] "they" is. People need to honor the rank-and-file people because this is how we ended up making it happen.

[video cut]

L.R.G.G: We played a very important role. We were [those] rank-and-file militants that were [there] every single day. Every single day we went to the picket line, a lot of us women. We weren't necessarily the ones that wrote the leaflets or spoke at the rallies, but we were the ones that would pass them out, and talk to people, and try to encourage more and more people to get involved. Because of that, it was not so common that many of us [in leadership positions] went to jail because the women's liberation movement had not taken a really deep turn, getting really militant, until the early 70s. At that time, remember we were still wearing skirts and dresses? We *let* the guys take too much of the power. But we were there. We were there at all the meetings and all the events. It upsets me when I come to these reunions—I went to the last one, the 50th, and I went to the 25th—when there aren't enough women. I hope you're going to get enough interviews of women, so that they can give their perspective about what happened.

September 22, 2023

G.Y: Alright, Lisa.

L.G.G: Hello.

G.Y: We're going to get started again and just talk about where we left off in our interview with you last time. Last time, we had talked about [you getting] arrested, and can you talk about the date?

L.G.G: January 23rd, 1969. But I thought I was going to get arrested beforehand because the people were getting arrested left and right, all over the place. But I wasn't a leader, I was "just" a rank-and-file [striker]. The rank-and-file people were really important to the strike because when the leaders were oftentimes having to take turns to go and figure out tactics and strategies, a lot of us were having to take over. It wasn't so much me because I was really young and very inexperienced about that sort of thing. But I knew I was going to get arrested eventually. And that particular day, I was still living at home, and I had lied to my parents, saying where I was going to go. I think that was probably one of the days when I told my parents I was going to my friend's, Susan Chen, and we were going to take the streetcar down to Chinatown, and just have fun, walking around. Well, my dad saw right through that lie right away. He didn't say that he saw through that right away, but he didn't know I would be taking the streetcar the opposite direction to go to San Francisco State. But anyway, whatever the case, we had a feeling because President Hayakawa was really making it illegal to do any kind of demonstration whatsoever on the campus. That there was going to be eventually some sort of mass arrest when we tried to break the ban of not being able to rally, or like hootenannies, and all this other stuff... hullabaloo. I knew there was a chance, but I thought, because I was innocent, that I would be able to get away. The cops, they did what they call a "pincher movement," they just surrounded us from all the sides, just like that. Surrounding us so we couldn't leave. They had already warned people, I'll be honest, that it was an illegal assembly. But we knew that we had to break rules in order to be successful, fighting for a school of ethnic studies and more minority students into the college.

[01:10:46]

G.Y: What time of day was the mass arrest?

L.G.G: It was around lunch time. I remember that very vividly, because I remember we started getting hungry.

G.Y: And where were you all? Were you on the main quad?

L.G.G: Where we would have all our rallies, which was the speaker's platform. I think after the strike they tore it down because it represented so many protests, anti-war stuff and all kinds of things. Certainly, they tore it down [when] they built the new student union. So that's where the rally was. There were probably about a thousand people there? Maybe 750? I don't know. But [the cops] were able to get the people that were the closest in that pincher movement that I've already described. Some people were able to get away, most weren't. Some people got arrested twice that day. In total, they said [about 700] people got arrested that day.

G.Y: Can you talk about the tactical squad?

L.G.G: Sure. At that point, the tact squad was only arresting us by themselves. They were not using their horses. The horses, which is probably what you were thinking, then. No, horses were more when we were having picket lines all around the school when we were on campus. When we were going all around the quad area. They would use horses to try to get the people to disperse. That was very scary because they would... I felt sorry for the horses, actually, but the cops were on top, beating people with their batons. But that particular day [on January 23rd], there were no signs of horses, or if there were, they were on the outskirts. That would be dangerous, even for the horses. In a crowd that big, they could stumble and hurt themselves. Oftentimes, they are shot and killed if that happens. So, no. It was just the police themselves, they had planned this all along, and it was just so obvious that they had planned it. They arrested most of

us on three charges: illegal assembly, failure to disperse, and [disturbing the] peace. It's been a long time ago; Ernie would know every detail. I don't remember details that well, but I think those were our three charges.

I was scared because I had never been arrested before. I knew my parents probably knew I was still protesting, but they didn't know I was going to get arrested. I didn't *officially* know I was going to get arrested. I knew from all the other times from November 13th, when I actually started with the strike, and seeing all the arrests every single day, I knew that we always collected bail immediately for the people that got arrested. People usually got out of jail quickly. But I was nervous—and I was right. There was such a big crowd, it might not be as easy as when there's only 20 people arrested that day or something. So, they separated the men and the women, they put us in all kinds of paddy wagons, they had them already pulled up really close to the school, and then they took us to 850 Bryant. We used to call it "The Hall of Injustice," because we felt that there was more injustice happening there than true justice. The women were the minority; we had far less people than the guys, but we were the most militant in jail. This relates to the thing about timing. People started getting really hungry by around 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Because a lot of people probably didn't even have any lunch, right? All of the sudden, we didn't get our mandated one phone call you're supposed to get, and we didn't get any kind of food.

[01:15:15]

During that time, white bread was most common; we were satisfied with getting any kind of bread, we didn't care. White or otherwise, just as long as it was some kind of nutrition to fill the stomach, but they wouldn't give it to us. So, we, the women, started chanting in jail, saying, "We want food! We want food? Give us some..." I don't know exactly what we said, but we were so loud, that our friends who had not gotten arrested, or had already gotten out and were picketing in front of 850 Bryant, they [really] heard us, and we were on the seventh floor. The guys I think were one floor down. The guys were really getting nervous because they heard all these women chanting and they couldn't really figure out— it was muffled sounds to them. They didn't know exactly what was going on. The cops were so pissed off, that they got their fire hoses. And remember, this is the time of miniskirts. Not many women were wearing pants yet. So, there were still a lot of women who were wearing [short] skirts or dresses. And they started spraying us with water, those high-power water hoses. People were starting to cry; people were starting to scream. It was at that time—but don't ask me for it—that I started to write a diary (small sheets of notebook paper) accounting everything I was seeing and hearing. I said to myself people are not going to believe this when I tell them all the stuff that is happening to me. But of course, my husband threw it away by mistake. I'll never forgive him!

But anyway, we finally got food. We got white bread and water. But we were in that jail until about midnight. So, we were probably there for about 11 hours or so? By the time we got out of here, and transported [to jail], got processed, and had our little protest, it was probably 10, 11 hours. The guys got out earlier than the women (even though the women got processed before the men), and my dad picked me up. My history is such that my father's grandfather was African American, but there was so much racism even within our own family. My dad tried to suppress that information from us, or at least not tell too many of the details to us. One time, during the midst of the strike, when I was still living at home, and when he still thought he could save me, he said, "You don't even know that you're black, do you?" Of course, I did. What does our name "Calloway" come from? That's my father's middle name, his mom's maiden name. So anyway, he was furious. I don't think I said this last time. He was a union man. He was an upholstery worker in San Francisco, at the Simmons Mattress Company, which still exists in San Leandro nowadays. But the highest [union position] he got of any kind was a shop steward. My mom was a clerical worker mostly, but before that, she was a factory worker in the South. She was from Delight, Arkansas, she was Caucasian and Blackfoot Indian, but she always used to say that she was "two parts

Blackfoot Indian," whatever that means. My dad was of Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, and African American.

G.Y: Was he from Louisiana?

L.G.G: Virginia. And some Louisiana. His grandfather was actually from both free and enslaved people of color. He had a combination. His ancestry way back was an English immigrant from 1706. He was the first person to come to the shore and then the slaves in our family came next. But, there was a union. Of course, we know our history, we know that Blacks and whites weren't able to marry. So, we think it was a legitimate relationship, it couldn't have been a rape, like you hear about, because they had a lot of children together. But that doesn't mean that theirs was an honest, loving relationship, who knows. My grandmother was the oldest of 13, no, 14 children that they had. And then the whole family moved to the United States. I'm telling you all this just as a background. My dad was full of contradictions; here, all this had happened in his own family. He had problems getting housing in San Francisco. They tried here at Westlake, and they couldn't because they were an interracial couple. So, the contradictions [with my parents] were so high about the fact that I was fighting against racism at the college, getting more minority students in here, and for ethnic studies, and the whole 15 demands that you know by heart by now.

[01:20:58]

I think more than anything, [my dad] was scared. He and my mother were both scared. My mother, by the way, she was involved in a strike, a sit-down of some sort. It was during the 30s, the Depression and everything was so bad in the United States. So, a really working-class family. That's why I could relate to the strike so much right away. I saw my father almost get deported—that's another story. I saw things in my own family, these things coming from all kinds of direction, and it just made so much sense that I participate. I was really surprised when my dad, even though he was so against it at the time, came to pick me up when I was arrested. He wanted to bail me out. Of course, he didn't know that we would bail each other out if there were no family members who came by and paid up for the bail. A lot of us went to this place called Barrish Bail Bonds. Their slogan was, "Don't perish in jail, call Barrish for bail." (laughs) I'll always remember that. But anyway, my dad did pick me up. I hardly slept that night because of what happened. Sure enough, my mom drove my sister to school—and she didn't sleep very much because she was so worried; by then, they've already gotten the call from me—and [they] got in a car accident because she didn't have any sleep. So, of course, my family was blaming me for the car accident because I got arrested. Things were still so tense, but I was in no place to move out. I was not ready to move out.

G.Y: How old were you, 18?

L.G.G: Then, I was 18. I started State at 17. I got involved in the strike one month after my 18th birthday. I am thirsty, so I'm going to take some water, think of some questions.

G.Y: Yeah, no worries, I'm just going to sneak a peek and see if Ernie's around.

Dr. Tiffany Caesar: I have a question. You talked about how you knew you had to break the rules in order to make change for the college of Ethnic Studies and to get minority students to come to San Francisco State University. I want to know your feelings now about San Francisco State University, and I say that because, as you know, the strike did so much to bring in more minority students, faculty, staff, et cetera. But today, things are not necessarily reflective of those efforts, even though we're trying to retain some of that historical tradition, if that makes sense. If you could talk about your thoughts on what you were actually fighting for versus what you actually see today.

L.G.G: Yeah. I can actually say that I have seen it up close, because I ended up graduating from State after six years, I did finally graduate. And all three of my children went to State. I've had relatives gone to State, and I've picked them up here, because I became a teacher. We've had professional development days out here in San Francisco State, so I've seen it still from the outside looking in because I've never worked here. So, I have seen the changes because I've talked to my family members about it and stuff. I gave a presentation to a high school in San Francisco because my friend of mine is an ethnic studies teacher. She's a recent friend and found out I was a veteran of the strike, so she asked me to speak in her class. One of the students in the class actually asked me that very question but in a student, kind of way... said how I saw the campus is today and how things are; was it worth it. I said, you know what? In my perfect world, we shouldn't have had such an intense fight for ethnic studies. Issues of how people are treated from different cultures should be talked about in every department all over the college and not concentrated in one area.

[01:25:58]

They were making cutbacks to ethnic studies even before I graduated. They started to pit us against [each other]. I joined the La Raza organization, and they asked me to be a representative speaker for the press. We were all [unanimous] from the different ethnic studies departments [in] saying, 'we shouldn't have to fight each other for pennies.' I'm hearing that there's still a little bit of that. 'Black studies make this amount, La Raza or Chicano Studies make this amount, why is yours more than mine?' That's crazy. That's totally crazy. I think [about] all the renovations that have happened here, and I'm wondering how much money has been spent on making sure that students are learning everything they know to be productive members of our society. I'm not disappointed still, because at the same time, it's still sticking around, the college that we fought for. Even though it might be suffering, I don't know the more recent past. But it's still here. That was a success.

Also, some of my friends that came right after the strike; they weren't members of the strike, but they were products of the strike, because they were able to get into the EOP program. It benefited them. Did all of them continue until they got their diplomas? Of course not, but that doesn't happen in the regular population, either. But many of them did. They would not have been able to if there was not, at the time, an ethnic studies college. My best friend, my roommate who I lived in the dorms with together, was a child of farm workers in the valley. A lot of people in the valley were recruited to come here. For most of the Black students, they were recruited from the different neighborhoods in San Francisco *when* there were a lot more Black people living here. But for other ethnicities, they had to go out a little bit further to get enough people. I'm disappointed, but at the same time, I could look around. I saw the plaque as I walked in the door the other day, and I was commemorating all the work that we did and said, hey, right on, that's cool. So, I don't know if that answers your question. Yes and no. Good and bad. But I'm not an expert. I don't know what's happening behind the scenes like you do.

G.Y: Lisa, could you talk about the 30 days? So, you got released at midnight...

L.G.G: That was when I got arrested, but then you have to go to trial. I joined the Political Defense Committee, and our role in that committee was to give support for all people that have been arrested. Not just that day, but also other days throughout the court. During the course of the strike there were about 700, 800 people that were arrested. I would go to everyone's trial and give them support. Is there anything you want? What do you think about a lawyer? That kind of thing. When it came to mine, I overslept. I think it was psychological because no one was on my shoulders. Totally embarrassed.

G.Y: Was it early in the morning?

L.G.G: It was like, 10. Not so early, but I didn't know how to drive at that time, so I had to rely on Muni, and Muni was being typical Muni. It was not so helpful that day. They should've known I overslept and helped me out. I was only [in] my second year at State. I had to drop out because my Filipina grandmother, whose dad was Black and mom was Spanish Filipina, gave me money to go to college, but for one semester. And what do I do? I get involved in the strike. They took away my money so I couldn't continue my shenanigans after that. I call it shenanigans because that's what my parents thought it was. They just thought it was frivolous, and they didn't understand it. Obviously, it was not shenanigans. So, I had to take a semester off.

[01:30:43]

When my trial happened, it was the next fall semester, and I ended up taking a deal. I started out defending myself as if I knew what I was doing, and I realized this is going to be way too hard. I was still too young, and I didn't have enough experience under my belt. I didn't know what to do, and how to do it wisely. All of us were pretty new. Some people had been a part of the Civil Rights movement for a long time, so they might've had some experience. But the majority of people who were arrested did not have any experience in how to handle this thing.

So, I took a deal. I'm pretty sure it was 40 days I was sentenced and 30 days I spent in jail. I don't know if they still do it this way, but the way they did it is if they don't have the facilities keep you down at 850 Bryant, they ship you to the San Bruno jail [after you receive your sentence date]. That's where I spent that time. We were booked in groupings. I think there were seven or eight people in each group, otherwise it would last forever. Some people got lawyers, so they had individual trials, but majority of people got into groups, especially if they didn't have any money for big, fancy lawyers. I was curious about how jail was going to be, but I wasn't scared, because I knew that a lot of the people were going to be people like myself from working-class backgrounds. Maybe not as political as I was starting to be, but just regular people who might've stolen because they had no money or might've sold their bodies because they didn't see [how to do] it any other way. And sure enough, that was my experience.

I got to know people right away. We'd play cards together every single day. Of course, the first thing everyone asks you when you get arrested is, "What are you in for?" Technically, I was in for things that maybe they've been arrested for like disturbing the peace. But then I started talking a little bit more of the politics of what I was in for and why I thought it was important to do what I did. Those prostitutes or petty thieves or whatever; they were really sympathetic. They befriended me right away because they noticed I was open to them. But that was not the case for [a lot of] people—I remember this one very clearly. She was also a member of Students for a Democratic Society. [This] white woman, she was so scared that it affected her. She isolated herself; she didn't try to make friends and didn't talk to people. It made it worse for her to survive her time. I don't know what she got, I can't remember.

G.Y: Did they prepare folks? Like to say, "when you serve time, this is what it'll be like?" Because some young people might not've known or didn't know what to expect.

L.G.G: There was no preparation. You would just have to go with what other people might've told you if you knew anyone that had already been arrested from the strike, for instance. By then, a lot of people had either done their time or were taking deals.

G.Y: So, people kind of shared information.

L.G.G: There was sharing information.

G.Y: Did you have to calm your family when you started to serve your time in jail, like your mother and father? What was that like?

L.G.G: They don't let you call your parents.

G.Y: But when you had to go in.

L.G.G: Oh. I skipped a whole lot. In the spring semester when I wasn't going to school, because I had to take a leave of absence because I had to work, I wanted to go back to school. My goal was to eventually become a teacher, and I did, but not because of State, no offense. One day, the news was on. It was a case called "Los Siete de la Raza." I was arguing in favor of some of the Los Siete members and my dad was against them, thinking they were just a bunch of hoodlums. So that was the time that he hit me. I decided that very day that the next day I was going to move out. He technically didn't throw me out; I could've stayed there, but did I want to be in that kind of house? I had to tell him I was going to be in jail, but I didn't make it a big thing. I just said it's going to be over and done before you know it, I'll be out again. But things were still very, very, very tense between us. Things were still too political. Even here at State by then. They thought I was a lost cause.

[01:36:08]

Some friends of mine had volunteered their couch for me to live on for a while. That's where I initially stayed. Once I got money from having worked that spring semester, I was able to share—but at that time, rent was a lot cheaper than it is [now] in San Francisco today. One thing that happens in jail is people always talk about what kind of food or drink they're going to have once they get out. Ernie knows this, because he picked me up with his friends. I wanted to have a banana split, that was my thing. Other people were talking about steaks and potatoes, but I wanted a banana split. And then you just go back to your normal life. But then I had classes, where the strike was still being talked about in all the departments. I took a history class from a woman who was the only AFT member that went on strike, because the history department was notoriously very conservative. I don't know if it still is. I remember having heated political debates. Oh no, it was the semester when I went to jail because it was fine and dandy before I actually went to jail. I had intense debates because there were other people in the class that had been involved in the strike. Other people were brand new, so they didn't know what this was all about. And then I left, because I had to go to jail. But then I went back to get my credits for that class and the other classes I was taking at the time.

I wanted to tell you—and I wrote it to you in the email I sent you—I celebrated my 19th birthday in jail. I got discharged towards the end of October; my birthday is October 3rd. And it was so sweet. Literally. You go into jail with a certain amount of money and it's in your account; you just assume that no one fiddles with it. From that money, you can go ahead and get treats. Or even hygienics stuff that you might need. So, some people had gotten me a Danish. One of the officers that was on our side, I guess, got me a candle, and sang "Happy Birthday" to me in jail for my 19th birthday! But I was really happy, because these strangers I had never met before made it, so I wasn't so sad and lonely on my actual birthday. It felt good to have that kind of connection. Once we started being more and more political, having more conversations about what was going on, they kind of understood. The things that we were protesting against, which was the government and capitalism, racism and sexism, were some of the things that they were experiencing, but in a whole different way. Anyway, I already talked so much, and I didn't let you guys ask any questions.

G.Y: I mean, it's so funny, as you keep talking, I keep thinking about young people in our classes who are 19. Being a part of the strike meant so much to you, right?

[01:40:05]

T.C: You talked a little bit about it, the solidarity aspect. I know you might've said this in the first interview, but I was wondering if you could talk more about the solidarity efforts among the different student groups. That's something that I'm always interested in because after hearing stories of the strike, there's always so many views. But at the end of the day, it could not have occurred if people did not work together. Rather [than] who did it first or initiated it, at the end, it was truly solidarity that created the College of Ethnic Studies and all the other programs. Can you talk a little bit about that and the politics of it?

L.G.G: And how it changed. Of course, at the beginning, we know that the Black Student Union was the group that had the first ten demands. And then the other ethnic group organizations had five other demands afterwards. But people were not used to working together. There had to be a real internal struggle within all the different groups to allow it to happen. Ernie says I'm wrong about this, but, by the way, where is he?

G.Y: I think he's on his way.

L.G.G: Okay. (laughs) There was a Strike Support committee. In my mind, it was called the *White* Strike Support committee, but he says I'm wrong, and it was not called that way. He has excellent [long-term] memory, I don't have that great of a memory. But it had the image of being mostly white. Whether it was called that or not. Someone like myself, who's truly multiracial, it was really difficult for me because there was separation of all the different groups at first. My mom was Caucasian and Native American, so I could've joined the Native American group. It would've been racist on my part, because I don't present in any way, shape, or form as Black, but technically ethnically, I could've joined a Black organization. Or La Raza; a lot of people see me more as Latina because my maiden name is Gutierrez. They don't know it was because the Philippines were conquered by Spaniards. Anyway, I didn't know where to go. Here I was being pro-strike, but there was not a [conscious effort] ever to recruit people like me at all. And then there wasn't a concentrated effort to get some of the younger people that were clearly only from Black [households] into the BSU. Because when you walk every day on a picket line, you start recognizing faces, and there was this one Black woman that said she kind of felt isolated, because people in the BSU weren't really trying to get some of the younger people that were coming onto the college and putting themselves on the line.

G.Y: Because it was mostly a little bit older people.

L.G.G: Yeah. Well, you know, you mostly interviewed them. I'm probably one of the youngest people you've interviewed. So, it was difficult, then, of course, there was the issue of male chauvinism, sexism. Even if you figured out a way to identify whatever group you identified with, then you kind of had to live with the fact that it was a male-dominated group, and that made it even worse. So, there was a lot of tension at all kinds of different directions: old, young; men, women; and dipping between the different so-called races and ethnicities.

G.Y: Did you feel torn because you were mixed, because you felt you could be a part of all these groups?

L.G.G: That was part of it. Partly because I hadn't really understood politically that was happening in the world. I was just thinking about my personal story. But I learned more that it really was the system calling the racial divisions: racism and all the other -isms. So, the solidarity was there because we picketed together every single day, we were arrested together, we were put in [booking] groups together. A friend of mine was so happy he was in the same group as Danny Glover, for instance.

[01:45:10]

G.Y: Was Danny Glover a star back then, too?

L.G.G: No. He was an acting student. Were you not at the 50th reunion?

G.Y: Oh, what happened?

L.G.G: When Danny was going to speak, and he spoke for a long time, one of the strike leaders from the Black Student Union said, “Danny, how come you didn’t talk like you talk today when you were around way back when? You hardly talked at all!” And now he’s a famous actor, right? He’s probably not acting much nowadays; I haven’t heard too much about him. So, we were integrated in different groups. For survival, we had to be in solidarity with each other. After a while, and I think it was really obvious, the strike would not have been successful if we didn’t have that kind of solidarity, including white students. It wasn’t just 2,000 people of just a certain minority, but 2,000 students, period. And teachers, too that were walking the line. You’re not going to have something successful if it’s just one group or another. The solidarity was the ticket for us winning, I think.

[01:46:39]

[END TRANSCRIPT]