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5-4-2016

Ron Pinkham Interview

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San Jose State University Department of Anthropology
San Jose Experiences of American Indians in the Urban Relocation Project

Date of Interview: 5/4/16

Interviewers: Prof. Jan English-Lueck, Alumna Auda Velazquez-Rivera, and Graduate Student Veronica Saldivar

Interviewee: Ron Pinkham

Interviewer: We are hoping to catch the stories of people that went through relocation and put them in the exhibit at the new museum in Los Gatos. But also, Veronica is also very deeply involved in this. Just creating a long term archive for the community. And so, we're there are kinda two pieces to the project. So, I'm going to ask you some general questions about your experience, before you relocated, I remember from our discussions at the dinner that you also lived in Anaheim and moved to San Jose. You have moved around quite a bit and including back and forth to your home land. So, I will ask you questions about your life and it's really up to you to decide what parts of your life you want to share. We'll ask you other questions from time to time. But, mostly we will just start out with, well Ron, tell us about your life.

Ron: I don't know what to say

Interviewer: Where did you come from?

Ron: I was born Luis Con Idaho, Saint Joseph's Hospital. I was a twin. My twin pass away 16 month after I was born...identical twin. Then I live with my mother and father sort of in a mountain area along a river and live with my maternal grandparents. My family separated me and my sister when we were young. I had another brother that I had not met until he was 18. So they seperated all of us. He was with my, with our paternal family and then after. So, I went to school Kamiah Idaho while my sister and parents lived in Lenore. We were about 50 some miles a part. For the reservation that's a long way. I went to first, second and third in Kamiah and then when my sister got old enough to go to school, we went to school together.

3:25-5:23

Then after that then our parents decided to go on relocation. So I was 7 and I think I might have been 8 and she was old enough to be in second grade I think, and we ended up in Garden Grove, ca. That would be 1956. Actually we lived in LA first and I would guess the BIA helped us out about a month or two. then my father got a job at disneyland and it was just opening up. So we ended up moving to garden grove, went to school there. I remember the house and everything. We lived in two places in Garden Grove. One in a field one not too far from the school. Walk to school everyday. My father worked as what do you call it, a canoe boy. And then during the summertime my sister and I ended up going to Disneyland everyday. We watched it grow. I think our picture is even in the book they used to sell, the souvenir book. I think my sister and I are in the picture. The Matterhorn ride is, used to be just a little hill. My sister and I would slide down the hill. So our picture is in that disneyland book. I think I might still have it? We went to school in many places because we moved around and then we moved around moved again. We moved to Anaheim and Fullerton. And so, we went from school to school. It seemed we had everything okay. So, in 1959, my parents separated. My father remained at Disneyland for 18 years. And my mother ended up going, going to Oklahoma with her new boyfriend. And so, we ended up back on the reservation, my sister and I with our maternal grandmother and we went back to school in Kamiah, Nevada. In 1960 my mother returned with her boyfriend, she divorced my father. They had a son first, but he passed away. Then had my sister, she was born in 1960. Just a little bit after she was born we ended up back on

relocation. It was funny this time we went to relocation they checked us out. The first one didn't do that. Not that I remember. We had to have a physical, do tests, and everything. That we were intelligent enough to survive in the city and go to school. I think that's what it was for. Cause when I remember going to the physical exam there was no indian health service in those days. It was a trailer off the side from the BIA building. That was Indian health service at that time, later became indian health. So we ended up moving to SF on that relocation, and we lived in SF for 3 years I think. When you're young... the first time...I wasn't aware of how do you say people with different...in Garden Grove it was all white people. I thought we were moving from one rez to another. But moving to SF was different. I went to school in the fillmore district. Which was all black. I never seen so many people who were black, and then the other hill if you know SF is Japantown. So the school I went to had Japanese and black people who went to it. I was in seventh grade I think when I went to school there. And had a few...the Japanese were into, they were really different people. Something else about them they spoke the language they got things from Japan. They would share it with me. The black students, I had no problems being with either one. I noticed years later that they segregated us. I didn't realize it until a long time back, with english, social studies and history classes there were no blacks in the classes. Only in PE (physical education) and shop classes did we actually integrate with other students, otherwise we were all segregated. I didn't realize that only one or two black people would be in a class like english, social studies, history, math classes. One would think if a school was 99% black you'd have all blacks in the classes, but it wasn't like that at all. I was sort of shocked after I reminded myself of that. Because during that time was issues of race and such going on. We were made very clear about it, because in that school the police would walk around the lot, looking for drugs and violent students and the neighborhood. They would come check us out. We had to strip down in front of the police with everything in front of us. They would go through our things we had in our pockets and such. It was just so common to have that done most every week. Especially when you're in the gymnasium and you had all the black students and the Japanese students and me! We all had to do that. Then they did it with the girls with their purses. They walked around with huge bags and they'd go through them. We were just seventh graders. Then we moved in San Francisco. We moved near the Cow Palace. What do you call it...Sunnyvale... Sunnyside. I forget what you called it,, but we lived near the Cow Palace in the projects there and it's always been where my sister and I always went to different school. Because she was two years younger than me. My Sister ended near the Castro where she went to school. The area of San Jose, I mean San Francisco, while I went to the Fillmore District. She went the opposite direction. And I walked everyday to school and when you walk on that street, that one street. A lot of people, the other part of the individuals that went to that school, who were my age, they were Samoans, and lived near this one section as you walked the streets of SF down into the Fillmore and towards Geary. The blacks and the Samoans and then on the hill was the Japanese. Um, I really remember those days it was interesting how black people were treated. And how I was segregated even there and not even notice it. Um, I never been around blacks before in my life, or asians. Other than going to a chinese restaurant near the rez. That was my only contact with that. Because I discovered later the reason when we went to town in Lewiston, Idaho from camp (unsure) which is about 65 miles away. We always ended up in a Chinese restaurant. Even in 1960 when we moved back, when me and my sister moved back to my grandmothers. We'd go to town and see the signs "NO INDIANS OR DOGS ALLOWED" and the only place that allowed us to eat was Chinese. So we went to the chinese restaurants to eat there cause we're not allowed anywhere else in downtown. (one sentence could not make out). In a way it's still true today. Um, we have to really be careful not to be bothered by police in Kamiah or wherever we lived. My sister when she went back home, a couple years ago she just didn't like the idea of the police following her everywhere she went. I said you gotta get used to that. She's got a California car...there she is, she's dark and black hair and being followed. She just got nervous. When my mother returned back to the reservation in the 70's. She finally got a house, but the policemen lived across the way so he never followed us anymore. Bu you kind of got to used to that. After we live in San Francisco in 63...We moved here to San Jose and we lived near the Santa Clara fairgrounds. And I went

to school next to the Santa Clara fairgrounds and because of my sister and I having two years apart, she ended up at another school. and then my stepfather still worked in SF and he'd commute on the train. My mother had a job in SF she made bracelets and things for souvenirs for the stores and whatever. We went to school separate. Then we moved in SF to the projects my family found who the other people who are our tribe, we found out who they were. went to the indian center to go there me and my sister played with the other indian kids, or young people. Then we got to know each other. My mother was very religious oriented and we went to what do you call it? Church. They wouldn't go, but we did. We went to bible study. My stepfather was choctaw, we ended up going to choctaw church where they sang in choctaw. Didn't understand a thing they were saying, but we went. We went to the indian center a lot. They did their thing, we more or less (me and my sister) did ours. We sort of raised by ourselves. We raised ourselves in the city. Got to know the bus system, travelled all over on the buses. I knew where everything was, which bus to catch. I learned the system of the buses. To this day we go to SF and my sister doesn't remember nothing. I say "we used to come here by bus, 4 or 5 transfers to get here, don't you remember". She doesn't because she was in the first grade. Well, by that time, we were older. I was in 7th and she was in 5th, so we did everything together, living near the Cow Palace we walked all over the place getting groceries; getting little things here and there at the little stores. Still a lot of people who lived near the Cow Palace were mixed. So we had black and whites. No asian... they were on the other side of the hill. The school I went to was very international. I don't think anyone that went to that school was an American citizen. That was interesting - meeting people from all over the world russians english people from all over japan, korea, hawaiians. I became very friendly with a japanese family. That's where I discovered from my friend. We did everything together, that family. His mother and father. He had a sister. The Japanese were good friends. We did a lot of things together. We went around San Francisco doing ice skating, the zoo, this that and the other. I was very surprised they took me in like that and my mother and step father did not mind that I did that with these people. And that's where I learned the history of Japanese people. My my friend, he had an older sister and we were all sitting down eating at their home. I asked her where were you born. And she said Idaho. I said you were born in Idaho? So was I, near a reservation. Where were born? And she said "internment camp." And the parents were sitting there and they start to cry. What it was like to be treated in an internment camp, I never knew anything about that through my friends sister. And, she was 2 years older than him. And it was an experience to listen to listen to what occurred. There was no hospital there. They did everything they could to help the mother have her daughter. Her name was Carol. They talked about what they went through. And years later we use to travel to a pow wow and we would go by that internment camp. I don't think any of it is left. I don't think any of it is left. It use to be all these barracks and there all in this big thing and they have a what near it. You would watch it deteriorate; fall apart. I don't think there is anything there now and it's just completely gone with no indication that there was an internment camp there. Ant that was were my friends sister was born. I use to tell people about them - interesting. And then we moved here to San Jose. And the thing here was mexicans. It had a lot of mexicans...some blacks. Again, my sister and I went to different schools. I ended up over at Overfelt (high school). We had gangs, mexican gangs, black gangs. There was only two other indian families that were there and we discovered each other. I think one of them the "Migs" family and I forget who the other one was. And then this one kid that came for a couple months and left. His last name was Sixkiller. And me the way I am I have never had a problem with dealing with people, Never, I was not raised to be prejudice or anything. So being with the mexicans and there gangs, And so you had other gangs in the school. I was friendly with everybody. One gang would tell me "if that gang ever bothered you tell us and we'll beat them up for you and the other gang would say the same thing about the one I was just with. I remember I never had problems with people or anybody else at that school. Overfelt was a overcrowded school.

[23:20]

In those days you could see anywhere. I mean literally anywhere, because it was all orchards. And they built Mt. Pleasant, you could see it being built where we were, cause Mt Pleasant high school was up the

hill a bit. You could see it. Now if you stand at Overfelt and look up that way and you can't see Mt Pleasant anymore. The Alexian Bros. hospital you could see from all over, even downtown Santa Clara and first. That tower up there, with the green light, you could see that all over. It's different now, a lot of places are not there anymore because it was all orchards. Where we lived in what people now call eastside, eastridge, was a golf course. That was a golf course, not eastridge like it is now a big old mall area. It was a golf course. With the airport nearby. We had to walk from South King to Overfelt (high school). There was no bus system in those days and being with the gang people I never had any problems with them or anyone there. We had two asian families; two indian families from India and American indians and just two other groups. That was it. The rest were white black and mexicans. And the black and mexicans didn't get along...watch them fight every day. And then when Mount Pleasant opened up, it divided the school. It really did. Overfelt was over crowded. Many famous people came from Overfelt, I do know. And I use to tell about my experience living on the reservation; about my grandparents and such. A lot of people were fascinated by it; never thought no Indians existed, now, today. I graduated from Overfelt. I went to school at San Jose City and then I moved to Anaheim and I went to school at Fullerton Junior College. I went to school there. My father still lived there and I, I moved in with him and then I went to Cal State Fullerton - State College of Fullerton. Then, it changed names to Cal State University and I got my degree there. My AA Degree was in electronics and my Bachelor's was in anthropology and I went to school there and I graduated in 1972. In 1970 was when my mother moved from here, from San Jose, she moved to back to (inaudible) reservation of Kamiah. She stayed with on her mother's land. They owned an allotment there with her mother's brother...couple of sisters. She moved there and then she her father from my personal feeling was he murdered and she inherited his land. He owned 50% and her uncle the other 50, my mother the other. She's an only child. Now where going over all that again. They, her uncles children are saying she should not inherit. So, we are going through that right now, but, through the Head Office near D.C. and we put me and my sister got a lot of information to prove my mother is the daughter and should have inherited all along. And we came with records to make sure everything is still there so that family will leave us alone. They were hostile with my mother and that was 50% of the land and because she had 50% she had a lot of power with it and now my sister and brother, there's 5 of us now we have the 50% and they do not like it at all. We are just as strong as our mother was. If we don't like certain things were not going to sign. That's 50%. So, but all that time when we lived in Garden Grove, Anaheim and Fullerton that was interesting to live there. During that time I'm going to schools because when your that age you don't see color and then when I got older we went to a school that was all black and japanese, and samoans and some chinese They'd go to another school in San Francisco where practically no one was citizens. I was shocked by that. And in dealing with the japanese family what I discovered after we talked about where his daughter was born he sued the United States for loss of land whatever that was in 1961. He was suing the US government for loss of everything and I found out about 8, 9 years ago they won their case and it only went to those who survived. That made me so mad when I heard that. Only japanese family should have gotten everything somehow. They owned a farm in Salinas. That made me so upset. Mabey the only one that lived in the camp and was born there was the daughter. The parents were probably gone by that time, 8,9 years ago. So Carol would have probably got her share and it wasn't much of anything either. I guess..if I feel sad I would like to know what happened to my friends. He was very smart always he always got A's and stuff. And then living here, here in San Jose with the mexican was a whole different group. They acted different and I seen people they all spoke spanish and going to high school here.

[31:33]

My sister and I ended up working in the fields. We worked... because this was all orchards in those days. Near where San Jose International Airport is that was all string beans. Did you know that? It was all string beans. All where those hotels and things are that was all string beans. It was tough doing that. Those bushel baskets weighed 50 pounds when you filled them up. Right where we are here this place was there where greenhouses where, flowers. Before they even build houses on the other side of the

railroad track. There were a bunch of them all plastic looking houses They were all heated up for flowers. when you went over this was it was apricots. If you went down San Jose or King Road. King Road ended right over here. Because this was all orchards right here. King Road never went any further. You crossed King Road now its Lundy. That's why the roads change the name of the roads because it use to just end right there. It was a dirt road and you went to the flea market. It ended. I never think of it, Berryessa and King. There was never really any Berryessa it went to the right or East. It didn't go that way it just ended there because it was orchard and there was a free way. Like Alma was in the middle of nowhere and Agnews state hospital was carrots right there.

[34:50]

And we ended up going to pick. So we picked the beans, the carrots, the prunes. They wouldn't allow us to do walnuts or cherries because you had to have high ladders and such. And it was during the time of the braceros, when the braceros were here. The braceros came from Mexico and none spoke English. And we used to pick with them. We couldn't communicate with each other, we didn't know Spanish. We had to relearn it very quickly to communicate with them. Because the braceros were kicked out of USA. Even though they were kicked out, it was sort of funny the next year they tried to find people to pick the fruits. They couldn't find them. They went to colleges, to San Jose State and it was funny we went to go picking. There were these students from San Jose State out there, picking fruit all white kids. Students and all they did was play with the fruits and throw it at each other. And the fruits were rotting and whatever. The farmers went crazy. The prices of fruit and such went up because a lot of it rotted in this valley. Because you had the oranges and the lemons and the limes here as well. The other one to pick was tomatoes. And all these college students were just playing with it, they weren't making money. So the prices of fruit went up here. It never went down, I want to tell you that. But the price to pick them didn't go up either. Not until Cesar Chavez started doing something, but most of the people who picked in the fields were I don't like the word "illegal" because they would pick with us. And years later the braceros came, and they did the experiment with college students and that didn't work and a lot of the other Mexicans who have been here for years, didn't want to pick again. They refused. So they had to find pickers. And then when the people did cross the border guess what they were looking for? A job. A lot of Mexicans from Mexico. A lot of Mexicans from here wouldn't pick. They refused. Their jobs were different so we would go into the fields again to pick and no one spoke English. We went to schools with Mexicans here in SJ. They wouldn't go picking. So we had to find people to speak to us in the language and have interpreters. My mother found out that we could go get on a bus, it was right here where Bank of America is on Alum Rock, there is a bank there by the freeway. That was the only building in that area with that bank, we had to go to that BOA around 6:30 am we'd catch a bus to drive up to Salinas to pick strawberries. We picked strawberries for our last years of high school. And that was an interesting trip, took 3 busses. And my mother always wanted us to bring back strawberries to her. I mean years after I graduated high school I couldn't eat or look at strawberries. I couldn't stand them anymore. It's still hard for me to eat strawberries today. They had, we had to have cards from the school to have permission to ride that bus to go down to Salinas and pick around Gonzalez where Soledad Prison is. All back in there is where the strawberries were.

My paternal grandparents were totally traditional. Total. So I ended up being raised in the church then when I turned 18 or 19 I went traditional. Because he was a chief. Because his age and such and we travelled all over and I would meet the spiritual leaders from the longhouses on other reservations through him. They just sat there and started teaching me, they taught me because in that time after I turned 18 about 1968 or 1969, the elders were afraid the culture was dying. That people weren't learning it people were being told that being of the tradition speaking the language was wrong. The Christians did everything they could make sure that the traditional people died and not do their things anymore. So a lot of traditional people on the Nez Perce reservation left. They moved to other reservations where it was accepted. Then there was only really two families to this day that still follow the tradition. That's my family and the one or two of these others. That's it, the rest are all Christian. My grandparents on the traditional

side, and even his father left the nez perce res because they were so harassed for what they were doing. And on the reservation they lived in pockets. The thinking was that if they lived there they would die out. My great grandparents, mother's side it was a traditionalist marrying a christian woman. boy that was a no. You're not to do that, not to mix with these heathens. My grandfather left nez perce, his father did, several other people did. They just couldn't take harassment anymore. That's really sad. I go to all of these ceremonies because of him being a chief. My grandmother's husband. He lived to 99. and my grandmother lived till 83. So it's sort of funny being here, Hank Lebau and a few others, ask me to do ceremonies and they do them and they think my sister knows them, but she wasn't raised with me. I wasn't raised with her. So she has no idea, only when members of our family pass we do the traditional way. If it's anybody on my mother's side we follow christian way. So i have to teach my sister how she is to dress, what to do, the protocol of the longhouse she was raised with christian one. She has no problem with that. Neither do I. But if I dress in our traditional way, I'm barred from the church, i cannot enter. To this day, I cannot. ITs that bad. I remember one of my cousins passed away in (unsure of word) he wanted to be near his mother and such and by this time people were intermixing, christian and traditional and his mother was buried at a church ceremony. But he wanted to go the longhouse way. They wouldn't let him put his body in a church ceremony. Where do we put him? Where do we put a heathen? Cause our nez perce rez is all church. Where do you put a heathen? Well where my grandma lived it's above the hill, that's where the heathens go to be buried. A small cemetery, it cannot be expanded because the people own the land. So we put him in the national park, and my uncle was the chairman of the tribe. the heathen group. You cannot say who can be buried there or not, I'm the chairman I have every right to say who can be put there.

[54:30]

So our our people are still like that. Because the Nez perce war of 1877 was a religious war really if you come down to it. Only those Nez Perce who went on the war itself were people who spoke the language and followed the longhouse tradition, knew the songs and everything and it was the Christians who said you must put em here on the reservation and be like us, and our people said no. We did not sign the treaty, we didn't sign away our land you... people are beggars and thieves and liars you hang around the fort and you guys beg for food. That's sad. When it's right across over there within a mile from where you're living, there is food right there. Go dig it. There is a river right over there, go fish. And you're begging? That's sad. Why do you think our people lived here? The food's right here. YOu guys become lazy, and you begging the people at the fort for food. And the Christians didn't like the traditions going around, doing their own thing. Hunting, fishing, digging, picking berries. Everybody was ok. But the Christians wanted them to be like them. To be begging for food and such. So that's how come the war occurred It was to bring them in to be like them. So that was , I am part of them family that didn't sign the treaties and everything, but, but after they came back from Oklahoma uh they asked them what do you want to be? You want to be a Christian oriented or do you want to follow your tradition? So a lot of our people went to the (unintelligible) Reservation. And that's where they could be who they were and some decided to live on the nez perce reservation. But after so long because the Christian's were powerful, a lot of my family, the Pinkham family left, they couldn't take the harassment anymore. So I became part of that group. That's why I know my traditions because my paternal grandmother and her husband and all their friends and um, it was sort of funny when our..my way of thinking my minister grandmother was told a lot of things about what I was doing and she told me, I want to talk to you about that. ANd it was hard for me. Being raised Christian as a little boy and everything til I was a teenager, then all of the sudden go over here to the traditional way. She told me I want to talk to ya about what you're doing. I thought my grandmother because of the history of traditional and Christian that she was going to be very upset with me. She said, well you know my Father is traditional and my Mother is Christian. They don't fight over religion, and I am not going to do that with you either. She said, when I became a minister and I was going to the teachings of the Bible I would go to my father and ask him questions. Do our people have this kind of thing? Um, beliefs or whatever you want to call it, teachings, And her father would sing to her

a song and say this is the story behind the song, and this is the teaching and she discovered it was a passage from the Bible, it was here. And he would sing her another song. Look for this in the book you cherish so much, and she would look again and find it again. and he says, he told her, I don't have to read a book to know the meaning, I sing it from my heart. These are the teachings you can, I'll sing you another song and you'll look for the teaching there. It is there. So after that, she told me that she said Grandson if you want to follow the tradition of the longhouse you sing the songs, sing them from your heart and follow the teachings. People are making fun of you and saying that you're my grandson and he's dancing and singing his way to hell. I know better, because my father taught me that the traditions of our people, and the ceremonies are of God, The Creator, The Great Spirit.

You follow that. And, I've learned and everything, and I drank and stuff, because when I was, when we were raised as children, um in the tradition of our people you never tell a child to stop or quit or yell at them. All they would say is if you want to yell, scream around the house in here, go outside and do your thing there. We won't need to listen to you. They never said stop yelling, stop doing that. If you like to do that, do it outside and watch each other, take care of each other that no one will get hurt. Let's say it's raining cats and dogs outside, all they say is sit there and be still and be quiet. But they never told you to stop what you were doing. They're the tradition that even my grandparents and great grandparents followed and I (unintelligible) was whip man, I remember when the sucker came and "Oh no" and it was about 14 all living in the same area

[1:02:08] This guy came up in his car and everything, "Oh Man! It's the Whip Man" "He's the what? He's the Whip Man. Because your own parents can not hit you. They are not to hit you, it's against the rules so you had somebody do it for you. The parents were never to hit their children with the flesh of their hand. I remember telling the American Psychological Association that when you hit a child with the flesh of your hand I told them this was a, they are all buried in there. I was at some conference and they wanted to know why Indians do not hit their children. What's the reason for it? I said well take your own hand and hit yourself *slap* so people do that and I had everyone hitting their face, I said harder. If you were hitting your child, that is who you are hitting, you are hitting yourself and it hurts. That's what you are doing to your child. That child is a part of you and you're hitting your child. Your child will not remember the reason they are being hit. And you're telling them how come they are being hit. You're the one screaming at them, and you're telling them how come they're being hit by your hand. AHh, I tell them by the time they become changing into adults they will never hear you again. They blocked you out, you've just created a juvenile delinquent, a good one because you hit your child with your hand, the flesh of your hand. I said don't make threats either to any child the way my elders would tell me. Let's say if this is your "whoop" let's say it is a paddle, put it right there and make them afraid of this and not you. Make them afraid of the whip and not you. You're going to get a whipping and you're going to tell me the reason for it. You make the child tell you while you are whipping them. It's gonna go out one ear and out the other and all they will think of you is that you are mean

(1:04:48.3) SOB. You're picking on me so when the whip man came we all stood there, watching the other being whipped, there is no favoritism the Whip Man didn't care. So when he came, my grandmother threw a blanket on the ground. I was told to strip to my underwear and lay there. But I had to confess what I did. Did I hurt or harm anybody emotionally or physically? Did I disobey my mother or father or my grandparents or any adult? And you say whatever it is and you get no more than ten lashes. He used a willow whip. And so I lay down on the blanket and the adults would pick me up by my ankles. My hands were raised up. And he'd say you're getting four. Don't cry. He says you're trying to get me to pity you 'cause your crying. You're the one who confessed. I didn't do it. You're getting one more for crying. My aunt was over there, she's four years younger than me, "he forgot to say he did this, this, and this". You're getting an extra one. And, she said, "how come". You could be lying. No tattletales here. You could be lying. So, you're getting an extra one and so is everybody else. You could've talked Ron out of doing whatever you say he just did. You're not taking care of each other. After the whipping occurred they told

us to sit down and they told us stories. What you call coyote stories about how you're to act and behave with other humans. But these stories were not humans but animals. Some tribes want to bring this back because its young people are not listening. Parents are not following the traditions and they're probably using the flesh of their hand to hit their children. And, the biggest problem amongst are people is neglect. We're getting abusers which was unheard of in my time. It's happening now, and it's very sad. Drugs are coming into the reservations. Alcoholism has sort of always been there. But in a way that is sort of dying out. Ah, I drank for three or four years really bad. I mean just constantly. I finally went to treatment and the reason, ah, I would say...they couldn't figure out the reason. I went through all the tests and everything. You're supposed to be an alcoholic 'cause of this, this, and this and none of that shows up on you. How come you here? I said I'm avoiding something. And being an alcoholic is a cultural thing. My grandmother is, both grandmothers on my traditional and the Christian side both said this, "people who are into drugs and alcohol and of this land they're losing their spirituality. That's what she said. You're not teaching your children spirituality at all. Otherwise, they'd have honor and respect for all things of creation. They will learn how to pray. These children don't know how to pray. And their parents are not following traditions of raising their children. That's how come their going this direction. And so when you come here into the relocation, like my own nephew was born and raised here. "How'd you like to go home", I says. He'd say, "this is my home". It's not on the res. This is my home right here, in this building. So you're getting a lot of young people that are like that here. And, one of the reasons, um, I learned over the years how come relocation was here and how come we went to the help, education (unintelligible) strong enough to be here was to make sure we didn't want to go home. And that we would marry non Indians and the blood quantum would disappear. That we would no longer have any feeling for the reservation. My nephew doesn't. He wasn't born and raised there. There are a lot of people like that here when I cam. So relocation we called it termination in another way. 'Cause after the relocation act occurred in '56 then 1960 was termination occurred. And a lot of people didn't know what termination was until they heard the stories that came from them. Uh, because my grandmother was a minister we use to go to camp meetings all over and we went to Klamath Falls. And, we would go there just after they got their checks. They talked to this one old lady and brought her up. And, she start talking about her check, she cashed it and put it in a Safeway bag. She went to Klamath Falls, got her check cashed and went back to where she was living. And she got out of the car and start walking into the house and the police were there and asked her, "where are you going". I'm going to my home. "Well, what you got in the bag"? She says, "money". "You just sold your house. You sold everything. Pick up whatever you need and get out of here. This is not your home". That's what termination means. You cannot be called a Klamath Indian no more. You have no right to hunt, fish, or gather foods. You cannot live here no more. It's all sold, everything. And, you must get your things and move out. She start crying. She didn't realize what that meant that sack of money. They did it to the rest of them. A lot of tribes went through that. And, they came back and it wasn't theirs. So, some tribal members got smart and pulled their money and the land went up for public auction. They bought as much as they could back. Most reservations that were terminated in the 60s had a lot of forestry land and potlatch and Weyerhaeuser bought it all. And, ah, I told my people our tribe is next on the list for 1962. So termination ended. Then I ended up working in Washington DC in the house and I learned about that. And, uh, they told me, "you're not going to do that anymore are you" about termination. I was there in '71 I think '72. And they said "no we passed a thing saying this we will not terminate Indians anymore". But I asked the other people who worked in the Congressional office because this guy was the chairman of the subcommittee on Indian Affairs of the House. He said that it's only binding to that Congressional time. If it's the 45th Congress it's only binding to them. So I'd like you to pass every year. "No, that probably won't happen 'cause the next one is coming up for ...(unintelligible) agreed to that". Okay, if you say so but I don't believe you because I know what you guys are capable of doing. It was interesting working in Washington DC. I was an intern for the chairman of the subcommittee on Indian Affairs of the House. I can describe what that Capitol building was like, things underneath it, the train to the Senate house, the Senate area 'cause the Senate is there

for six years and their offices are huge and the house is only there for two. And, only if they have, uh, lot of pull. And what it's like to see the people who come to testify before the House committees. It's really interesting watch them. There was some very savvy Indians in those days. There were some I admired but found out they were like little children before the house. I'm sort of sad. I wish they had more gumption or whatever to speak. But they couldn't do it. And, I felt sad they couldn't. They look tough when they're on TV and stuff, but when they're sitting before the entire committee they were tongue tied. Couldn't speak. And, that was sad. 'Cause Washington DC is an interesting place to see Indians walk around. Some had braids some didn't, and, uh, then my cousin, he worked at the Smithsonian. Years later in reparation of body, body parts and such back to the res. That's when I ended my...that's when I graduated from college in '72. I continued to live with my grandmother, my paternal one. And, I went to more things. I wasn't getting any jobs with my A.A. or bachelor's so I ended going to Washington State University for Guidance and Counseling degree. Here I got a Masters in Education in 1976 and I wanted to work with Native Students. To help them realize what I went through in relocation. And there's potentials out there for anyone to do whatever you can. (unintelligible) have people back you up in whatever you're looking for. But I told 'em also, I want you to come to a realization. What I had to go through. And, that was, I went before my tribe after I got my bachelors degree and when I got my Masters I walked up to the committee, my governing body and told them I'm giving my life to you. I'll work one year for free. Whatever you want me to do and decide to get programs, to get money, what direction you want to do I will help you get there. Because I know how to read and write. I have an A.A. and bachelor's degree. The chairman of the tribe told me, "you see that door over there". I said, yeah, I see it. "Go". And I thought well, when I got my Master's degree it's a different chairman. I did it again. 'Cause my thesis was on what the tribe desired for the future. And, he said the same thing, "see that door over there. Walk out". I never really had jobs 'cause I had long hair. People were prejudice and such wherever I went. I am now retired as of 1962 and Social Security sent me things, and I barely worked 7 years in my entire life. I worked all over. I learned a lot of things. The longest I ever worked was, uh, 5 school semesters, or, uh, 5 years at Madras High School working with the Warm Springs...the Warm Springs Paiute and Wasco Indian students. I worked with them at the high school...14 miles away from the res. I worked for my own tribal school, Nez Perce tribal school. I didn't like the way it was run. I worked for the Yakama tribal school. I didn't like the way it was run. You get experiences here in the city. How programs operate and such and how they're efficient as they can be. And you come to the reservation and no one has an education. No one knows how to operate a program. And coming to my own tribe I watched how my Nez Perce tribal school was operating. I wanted it changed. I worked at the Yakama tribal school and I wanted it changed. None of it was computerized. None of it was this that and the other. Ah, so I tried to change it all to be more efficient and to ensure that the students...the tribal schools were designed for the students who couldn't make it in the regular school. Because of the cultural differences and the way they were mistreated. Prejudice in the public school system. That was the reason for the tribal schools. And the tribal schools had a reputation of those students who couldn't make it in the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools were kicked out because of drugs, alcohol, or couldn't be controlled. And they ended up going to their tribal school. And the Yakama tribal school was across the field and there was the public school right there. Ah, the Nez Perce tribal school was on either side of us. About two blocks away was where the public school system was and we had the system. The tribal schools, Yakima tribal schools wanted to teach language, the history of the tribe this that and the other and then to read and write. The same with my, uh, Nez Perce tribal school. Because working in the public school system in (unintelligible) I discovered some interesting facts about the public school system. And it's true to this day. Did you know most high school students can't read passed the eighth grade. And that the only reason those who are going to college can read tenth grade? They're the only ones who can make it. Most high school students cannot read passed an eighth grade level. And the proof of that is the newspaper. It doesn't go to the ninth grade level. A lot of people don't know that. But, when I went...when I was working at Madras High School they did studies on Indian students from birth to twelfth grade. They were giving them tests

to see where they were lacking, English, social studies, civics, whatever it was and if all students were not getting good grades in let's say, history, they knew who to blame. That history teacher is not dealing with this student, the Indian student. What do we do about it? That's how come they started setting up tribal schools. I don't like, uh, teachers who are prejudicial and they hide it. They're the worst. An Indian student can deal with an individual who says I hate so and so and so and so and I hate those tribes and I hate niggers and this that and the other. Indian kids can handle that. But when the person is hiding it, that they can't handle. There's...I was a counselor at the high school and I decided where the student went. And what teacher they went to. I made sure certain students in the high school never got an Indian kid. Never. And I'd go talk to them. I want you to see what you are doing and how come I'm avoiding you by having no students in your class. I know what you are. You're a racist. You're prejudicial. You have these stereotypes against my people and you're using it ...you're not teaching. You're not willing to teach. And that is sad. And the other teachers I didn't like that were what I call coach coaches...coach teachers especially football and basketball. Coach teachers just put a paper in front of you, read that and follow the instructions. And sit there and design plays. I didn't care for coach teachers. They did not interact in a friendly style to any student. They were the boss and you had to call 'em coach. And they were not in a coach class. I didn't care for coach teachers. So I would sit in the classrooms and try to teach the teacher. How to be a teacher. I did it when I was in Washington State University. I told them the differences are cultural, culture. How do you get in touch with an Indian kid because it happened to me. I lived out here on relocation. They didn't know what I was. You didn't see differences like that. You may have seen Black, and Mexicans, and Asians, but to see a Native student, different. And I was treated like the rest of them, but, uh, maybe I learned something. And here on relocation how to interact with people that are different. I have no problem with it. Um, I always...none of my differences my parents made sure I knew I was of my tribe and my grandparents on both sides said never cause us any shame. You're shaming all of us not just you by yourself. So act honorably amongst the people out there. Because it reflects on us here and such. So I learned that from my grandparents. The other things that, uh, when I use to teach and be a counselor a lot of people would test me. I came from my grandparents who never spoke English that much, spoke the language, and the other thing they didn't do was cuss. They didn't cuss. My grandmother didn't...made it sound funny, my traditional one. She lived in a huge house and everything 'cause she was in a wheelchair. She had a stroke. And she was doing something and she was yelling, yelling all the four letter words. And, there's 45 of us grandchildren and about 20 of us are there, "Grandma, where'd you learn that". She was saying, "God damn", the f-word, all kind of words. She said I hear it from you. I don't understand how come you say these words. Is it to cause you to feel better? 'Cause I don't. I don't feel better yelling these words. I'm trying to understand you. You're my own grandchildren. We looked at her and said, "Grandma, I didn't know you listened". I love you because I do and you're speaking those words. And I'm one of the older ones. He doesn't talk like that pointing to me. How come you don't talk like that grandson? I says, "well, you know my other grandmother is a minister. She doesn't talk like that. You outta here her daughter though". My aunt. She learned that in school and came home with it. But, that's really interesting...the way I was treated out here on relocation since I been 8 years old, graduated from San Jose, went to college here in San Jose, went to college in Fullerton, fullerton Junior College...Cal State Fullerton. It's interesting to learn all of that stuff and what I had to go through and being different as a Native 'cause I would tell people that's what I am, and (unintelligible) Nez Perce tribe. I'd have people tell me, "never heard of it". I said yes you have but you don't know that. I said Chief Joseph. "Oh yeah, he speeches this that or the other. Yah, he's my great great uncle. "He is, huh"? His older sister is who I come from. Their parent was Old Chief Joseph...(unintelligible)...There's a picture of them taking him to Wallowa Lake. On the end of Wallowa Lake there's a picture I think Edward Curtis did of them taking Old Chief Joseph's body into the lake. And, I showed my grandmother that. She says that's me right there. You were there? She says, "yeah, that's me right there in the picture, just a little girl". Oh, how old were you? "Probably about six. I went with my grandfather. That was my grandfather, Old Chief Joseph". They buried him someplace else so he wouldn't be robbed of whatever and they took him

to the end of Wallowa Lake. But, what occurred was somebody took his skull. And his skull was (unintelligible) and used as an ashtray. And the tribe wanted it back. He wouldn't give it up. I don't know if they have it or not. But I asked my grandmother what does (speaking in Nez Perce language) mean? The older one. I said, okay. And the son, the one that became famous, (speaking name in Nez Perce language) was Chief Joseph of 1877. And asked her well what was your mother's name? And we sort a figured it out. Her name was (speaking name in Nez Perce language). Or Chief Joseph's wife what was her name. She said I think it might, I have her name is (speaking name in Nez Perce language) Woman-traveling-through-mountains-crying. **[1:32:40]** As we're little children the elders don't say our white man's name. They say our Indian's name on the res. That's the way it use to be. And, so my name was (speaking name in Nez Perce language). My grandfather on my father's side was a medicine man. They said I acted like him. So, uh, they added "little" to his name. And, my brother who I didn't know until he was about 17 years old I finally met him. And one of the reasons I lived with my my paternal grandfather, her husband, because they lost a child and guess who was living with them? My brother. So I got to know my brother really well. He turned 19 and passed away in Lawrence, Kansas where Haskell was. And I wanted to make sure my brother knew his biological mother and his father. I made sure he knew who they were. 'Cause you know you have do closure on that kind of thing. And, made sure my sister met him as well. I said this is our brother. This is what he looks like. We were all busy and everything so she really couldn't talk to him or anything. So my brother passed away in Lawrence and then we brought him back. And he graduated from Chemawa. He went to Chilocco al the boarding school system. And, then when we had his funeral both our parents came and my grandparents were both there. And, it was really interesting because he was a leader. He was a very amiable person. And I use to tell my brother you are a descendant of chiefs and were not how you say appointed by the government so you could have a lot of signers. Majority rules. So they put all these people together to sign the treaty and give 'em money for it when only 5 people were there, the actual chiefs. (unintelligible). That's how the treaties were done. A lot of people don't know that and intimidated as well. So I said I told people learning a lot of information here as a student going through the system how people are different here and don't be prejudicial towards anyone. And I use to be part of a group here in San Jose to teach that. Don't be prejudiced based on ethnicity, culture, language, style of dress um, oh, their religion. Don't be prejudicial. I wasn't taught that. You put students together that came from different whatever to make sure they understood each other and not be prejudice and stereotypical of one another. Stop that. The other one was on male female gender. Another one was one gays and lesbians. And the other one was police. That's what we taught. Male female gender issue was really something else. You're all whores and bitches, you know that (laughing)? And guys think with their dicks. And gays and lesbians were really something (unintelligible) too. No one feels okay about being out. And some people you can tell what they are, real flamboyant this that and the other. And women who...I mean get crew cruts and everything. She's different, you know. And she must be a lesbian and how they would treat her. Um, I was part of a group that did that. And, I liked it.

Interviewer: What group was that?

Ron: Uh, Camp Anytown.

Interviewer: Yes, Camp Anytown. It's very famous.

Ron: It's been here for years.

Interviewer: Yes, I was wondering if that was it.

Ron: I heard there were others but that was the one that succeeded a lot. And, uh, because I tell people back home how different it is 'cause they don't see these large groups like that. Interact with them. They all see it on TV. And everything with all Black, all Mexicans, and this that or the other. And here I deal with both groups. Here in Oakland and in San Jose. Because, uh, the Mexican group here really hides itself very well. In other words, those who are illegal they cannot have these kind of things here. They could be spotted easy. And, be removed from the United States. 'Cause one of my friends told me his mother passed away. And he went to Mexico to her funeral. But can't get back in. And, he has family here. I said that's sad. Uh, when Obama wanted them to go sign up for this that and the other, I told him don't do it. They know where you live now. They're going to change it so that now they're going to find out where you're living and remove you all. I wouldn't sign it. [He said] so why do you say that? I said when I was working in the fields, remember you had to be paid after every day. The migro would come and they parked their buses there and check everybody's ID and then they end up on the bus. My sister and I and my aunt got mad. You didn't pay 'em. So we laid in front of the bus. You pay 'em first before you take 'em away. We did that kind of protest. And I tell the Mexican people here that's what kind of person I am, my sister too, my aunt. You took advantage of these people, you're hardly paying us anything, and then you called the immigration, put 'em on buses and you're not paying them. That's not fair. So we laid in front of the buses and laid in the back. You're not going anywhere until you pay these people off. I had to do that a couple times. If we had the knowledge then we could have called the Farm Bureau to make sure we had toilets and water everyday. 'Cause you guys were told when they were going to come and all of a sudden they'd appear. And we'd all sit there and look at each other. Ah, the Farm Bureau is coming to do an inspection. All of a sudden there's toilets and jugs of water. I use to get very surprised by that. Because when I go back home on the reservation I find out the prejudice is still there. I taught in Kamiah and I was a counselor at many high schools. So I knew what it was like. And when I worked there the Spokane School District it was all the students they couldn't handle ended up with me. [1:41:30] And those students who needed more assistance in dealing with the or comprehending the work, there were teachers there. (unintelligible) three hours a day and such so that's what I did in Spokane. Most of the students there were half breeds. Usually it was their fathers that were Indian and their mother's were White. And then they got seperated because the father's drinking and so the kid couldn't be handled. And so they ended up going to this after school system that we had. I helped design the system and everything. And this lady was taking credit, uh, this that and the other. Said screw you. Uh-uh. No it doesn't work that way. I had it closed down after the contract was up. I don't like the way you're handling this. You don't know what is going on. You're not involved. You need to see what this program is capable of doing and you're taking credit for something totally different than what's actually happening. And you're pushing me away. I'll go and so will this program. She didn't think I could do it. I have a master's degree. Even my own tribal school, the Nez Perce tribal school, uh, the BIA called me and I know people in the BIA. And, uh, he says, "Hi Ron, how you 'doin". Okay. "The reason I'm calling you is because you talk the truth. I'm going to ask you several questions and I know you'll answer the truth". And, uh, so go ahead, ask. He asked me questions and I told him what the reality of it was. (unintelligible) send an investigation committee to (unintelligible) Idaho and have the school closed down. You don't lie, not to the U.S. government. you're saying things that are not happening. And, I was doing everything to make the school more efficient and to make it more worthy. And that when a student graduated from that school they were of the standard of the school we were next to of the state. The students who graduated from boarding school they're high school diploma meant nothing. They were not up to standard. They probably couldn't even read 5th grade level. When it 8th grade here (laughing). 'Cause I know that. Because when I went to school at Overfelt I was in the upper 3%. I was in the college prep classes. I wasn't with everybody else. So I know how the system works and everything. And then when I taught school I made sure..when I taught a classes I saw the dynamics of it. And then when I ended up going to these other schools and seeing these cultural differences I knew what to do. 'Cause my guidance counselor from Washington State University taught me, those differences. People were hands on and those who were here, two

different folks. That kind of thing, the learning styles. And when I ended up graduating and going to the other schools, you need to understand you guys were taught to be teachers. Weren't you told that? Those were hands on, who can hear better or those who see. Those are three learning styles. And you're not putting it to use. Here in San Jose, uh, when we went on a trip to Albuquerque just a couple of days ago. We go places. There's no Asians (laughing). There's no Mexicans, all White. It's sort of scary. You get use to it being here, you know, how diverse San Jose is. Because in our time, the 1960s, it wasn't like that. I mean you had one or two Asian families here and that was it. San Jose was half Mexican and half white. And each had their way or a side of this area. East side was Mexicans and the other side was rich white people. That's what is was and the forest in between and the orchards. They never mixed. And it's really something. I said, I tell people how different it was here. Even my nephew doesn't listen to me, "ah, you're taking in the past" and I said, yeah, but look at it now. Ah, 'cause I went around and taught people not to be prejudice. I did that. 'Cause I wasn't. Both my sides, my grandparents were not like that. My grandmother would say let's get down on our knees and pray for them...that they learn not to be that way, be hateful and spiteful, whatever. Don't they know the bible is love? And in the longhouse the main word is love? And respect the mother earth, the sun, and the water. What's going on here. You know people not learning. And they sit wondering how come their families are breaking down. 'Cause the elders would say they are not learning the spiritual things. Not learning to pray. Not learning to sing. I don't care what song it is they're not learning to sing and be happy. They're brought up in misery. And it's by their own folks and their own people. And they sit wondering how come the family is breaking down. Our people are fascinated by it. Now, it is happening to us. And, like the ones who are born and raised here, no connection to back home. That's the only sad part about it. My nephew only know his grandparents.

Interviewer: Do they have connection to each other here within the community?

Ron: Uh, well, when PJ was born my mother was already back home. So, ah, she take him up there and leave PJ with our mother and PJ went all over with grandma. 'Cause my grandmother was into powwows and into hand games and he was just a little boy and he would sit there with his grandmother. And there they were singing Indian songs this that and the other. He just sort of got use to it being with his grandmother like that. And they travelled all over. Ah, I asked PJ now do you remember that? And he said, "yeah, sort of". 'Cause he would run around on the powwow grounds doing this that and the other. We never worried about him. Ah, 'cause he's with other Indian kids. Who's going to hurt him? And whatever, maybe he went to go watch the war dances for awhile. But he knew where grandma was where the stick games and hand games were occurring. And he'd look for her and sit next to her and then fall asleep. Ah, he sort of grew up that way until he was about 9 years old. And then they didn't travel anymore for awhile. Uh, But other than that that was really his connection. That was it. And he had none with our father's side practically none at all. I think he did visit my grandmother, be his great grandmother. She had long braids and everything. And I think we might've taken a picture of the two, the two of them together. Uh, I'm not sure, but my grandmother on my father's side and her husband were rich. I mean they owned a lot of land. And the land was leased out to white people. Between the two of them they made over \$200,000 dollars a year. And a lot of people thought the reason I was living with them was because of that. Not so. I didn't get a dime from them. And everybody thought I was there to, ah, because I was taking care of them. They were getting on in age that the land they owned because that's the reason they're rich, I was gonna get it. That didn't happen either. I said, I told 'em, I did their wills. When you do a will you cannot receive what you're doing. So I know I'm not getting anything from her husband. I'm not getting anything from my grandmother and that's my grandmother. I did their wills. I don't get nothing. But people still mistreated me as if I were. I said do I sound like that? I'm a greedy Indian kid, you know? I've been with her since I was 18 years old. My grandmother passed in '87. No, yeah, she passed in '87 and he passed in '86. I did the ceremonies that were required of me to do all that. And you sit there and think I'm going to receive something from them? [1:52:34] I says no. Then after the hearings and

everything occurred. I did get nothing. And where my grandmother lived because they're rich he built her a beautiful home. Because she was in a wheelchair. And, uh, I made sure and he wanted it too 'cause he was born in 1889 and so he received an allotment. And that's where they lived on, his allotment. And he wanted to give it to her. He says I'll probably die first 'cause I'm ten years older than her. I'll give this to her. And, he did. And, he died first. And, then 9, 10 months later she died. So we has to make sure she got that 40 acres but his children didn't want her to get it. So they has to fight that battle and after they won then I made sure the brother and sisters to my aunt that lived there with Grandma got it. I said I want you guys to be fair with her. She helped take of an invalid. She had a stroke. She couldn't move on one side of her body. If no one was around I did it. He was an old man. He was in his 90s. Do you want to take care of an old man? Bathe him everyday 'cause he urinates. He craps all over his bed and all this that and the other? Are you guys willing to do that? You guys want something in return. I didn't. I did it out of love for them so I took care of them. And then you sit here and tell me that that's what I did it for. No, I didn't. But would you do it for the same reason I did it? I did cry about it. 'Cause I did say I didn't get nothing from these two. And, uh, my aunt said, "you know how to sing the songs". I said, yeah. "Do you know how to conduct the ceremony"? Yeah. "Do you understand our language"? I said yeah. "I think the knowledge is better than money". I wish I knew what you knew and those are my own parents (laughing). My father said the same thing. It's like my sister. Everyone thinks my sister knows the same thing as I do. No, we were raised different, separately. And, uh, I always get a kick out of that. I think sometimes the wisdom of being on relocation taught me a lot about how things are run here, and the prejudice that is here, and how little of its there but only about white people to Indians. Today i go around (unintelligible) and I'm shocked when someone says hello. Whoa. Usually they avoid you on the street, look at you funny, and throw rocks at you. That's how it was when I was young. But going back to (unintelligible) someone says, "hi. How are you doing". I'm shocked by it. Ah, just going back home. So I learned what the prejudice here is here and and what it does and everything. But I've always been friendly to everybody. So I never had any problems like that.

Interviewer: Ron, I wanted to ask you a question.

Ron: Mmhhh.

Interviewer: You were talking about on the reservation how there is a difference between traditional and Christian. And sometimes these are opposing. Ah, on relocation did you find more tolerance between Indian families? I'm talking about Indian families from different tribes coming together at the Indian Center. Was there more of a tolerance between traditional and Christian practices blending?

Ron: A lot of times I never really realized that. 'Cause I got really involved in the Los Angeles Indian Center and they use to have fights, a lot of it. About what kind of services and who they were giving it to. If a traditional group had control of the Indian Center the prejudice would be with they are only dealing with other traditional type Indians avoiding the Christian ones. That came up sometimes. Uh, the other one was my father since he lived there since '56 watched all the other ones come in along with him. And he learned a lot of the groups who they were and who their leader were. And so when I moved in with him in '68 he showed me who these people were. And the tribes there did it by, by tribes. You'd all Lakotas, all Montana Indians, all Oklahoma Indians, let say a Navajo group, Cherokee group. They all had their little groups in Los Angeles and even had their own powwows and everything. So you figure those who had powwows weren't really Christian oriented or it wasn't that strong. So, if you're dealing with another set of Christians 'cause when I lived with my mother we went to the churches here. Where Indians went in San Francisco, went to a Choctaw church. And here we went to a church off of 21st street here in San Jose. We were the only darked skin blacked hair people at that church. Um, But the, some of the other Indians who were really church oriented, they're here. 'Cause I run across then all the time here even with

this group here. Uh, Hank is Episcopalian. This other guy is a Baptist minister. And here I am. And, everybody knows that I don't deal with the Christian group at all. But, on both sides of my family on the reservations said we should not argue about how one follows their faith. Never argue over it how they worship God. you get into trouble with that. So don't do it. So I've learned that since I was a kid. And then when my grandmother told me how she talked to her father when she was going to the Indian thing. And then on my traditional side how the Christians treated them. Mistreated them. And then coming out here I never really saw it. Um, 'cause a lot of the young ones who came out in the 50s were young and guess where they went? To the bars. They weren't into going to church and stuff like that. And when the groups started rising in numbers in the cities then they started creating Indian Centers. They started creating the powwow circuit 'cause in Los Angeles there is a powwow in certain areas. [2:00:39] Each one had their weekend. And me and my father would go to them and he knew who they were. Because he'd been there since '56 so he learned who these people were. I got to know these people with my father. Like Iron Eyes Cody has his own powwow. They discovered after he died he was Italian. Not a drop of Indian blood in him at all. And then meeting his son, Robert. I know Robert Cody. He's a good friend of mine. Plays the flute. He was married on the Umatilla Reservation and such. Meeting Jay Silverheels, my father knew him. Another actor that became for awhile off and on in many of the things was Little, uh, Eddie Little Sky. There were groups that came into Disneyland and worked there during the summer and did powwow dancing and the singing. I got to meet those people who came in during the summer time. 'Cause my father worked there in the Indian village. And, then after Walt Disney passed away it was wiped out. Gone. Became Bear Country and other things. It was all devoted to NAtive Americans, Frontier Land that one section of it but after Walt passed away, boom, it was gone. And then the other was Walt's wife was from Lapwai, Idaho. Her last name was Braun and my grandfather and his sister lived down the road from her. Then after Walt died she ended up living back in the Lapwai area. And she wanted the Wonderful World of Disney on the TV, in a nearby station. It didn't happen. So she bought the station. So good. And she knew about the Indians and everything and at Lapwai High School she put in a track and a football field and a place to sit. And Walt even came to look for my father 'cause my grandfather, my father's father, knew him and his wife. And he come searching for my father. Say Walt Disney is here. He's looking for my father (laughing). Everyone was shocked. "Ah! How do you know him?" "Oh, he know my father but I never met the man. (unintelligible). Uh, you know, that's my father's connection to Disneyland and the only reason he lost his job is because he got drunk and got in jail for 6 months. And I had to take care of the place we were living and I was going to school, college. And, uh, after '72 I left. Come to my graduation at Anaheim COnvention Center. But to see the differences between the groups of those who were traditional Indians into the powwows and those who weren't, I really didn't see it. They just didn't mix at all. But to hear anybody go against a group now I didn't hear that either. Because they were taught the way I was taught as a young person you do not argue how one worships and whatever faith they go to. Because in the longhouse...longhouse they will ask can we come in the longhouse and do some preaching? The only thing the longhouse people will say, don't talk of hell. There's no such place. Don't talk of fear. You're religion is really based in fear and of hell. We don't want that here. You're bringing it into the longhouse. We want it to remain out there. Otherwise you can't preach. But where ...where a person does do services of tradition and Christian usually the traditional one goes first. But then in the morning they want the body to go to the church at 10 o'clock. Well, we already did our services. It starts at sunrise and so they take the body to church but, they don't allow us in. We already did our thing. Why do we need to go in there if that's the way they are, it's sad. That they have that kind of prejudice against us who are traditional oriented. Um, but when here, when I do it's three of us. Hank understands his tradition of his Lakota people. The other guy used to be married to a Nez Perce. Then I'm being asked to...

Interviewer: Is that Shawnee?

Ron: Mmhhh. To do a prayer. Me and Hank tried to say we're not prejudice against anyone whatever faith you follow. We're still praying to the creator. But, uh, sometimes just in the small group of the adults here maybe it's assumed there should be a prejudice against one another. Ones who follow tradition and ones who Christian. All the years I lived I never really seen it. And when I stayed in California or, uh, Los Angeles area I didn't see them mix. So I never saw it.

Interviewer: When did you leave Idaho and come back to San Jose:

Ron: Hmm, I lived all over the place after 1972. Got my degree in '76, my Masters. Moved here and all over the place again. Uh, I never really had jobs at all. I worked for Madras High School, Yakima Tribal School, (unintelligible) old school. I also, uh, worked as an alcohol and drug counselor for my tribe. That hardly lasted a year. Uh, and I worked with the program Anytown and never really had a job. I was only given per diem and such. Uh, That was about it. Like my sister worked over 30 years. Oh my God. I barely worked 5 years at one place. How can you do that? 30 years in one place. Ooh, scary. Uh, 'Cause a lot of people would see me go around traveling all over the place here and there and everything. How do you do that? I don't know. They look for the knowledge I carry and everything. I'm a counselor. I'm a speaker. I'm a teacher. And a lot of people see me that way. They might give me a little money and ask me to go there. And, I'll go there. I don't care if you pay me a lot of money for this, uh, it's what my elders taught me and the songs and everything. It's all there. You just have to listen to them. And when you're in certain kinds of situations and you're home or whatever and I come in and start talking to you. (unintelligible) I want you to see for yourself what you're doing. That's all. And, and you don't know how to pray or do this that and the other. You're not following any faith because it's really something to work with Indian students. [2:09:20] In Madras High School where you had people that were longhouse, those that were totally Christian oriented, and those who were nothing at all. Neither one. It's something to see what happens to those students as they grow. These students who don't go to longhouse or to church, they're parents drank all the time. And then the parents sit there wondering how come my kids doing that. I says they're following your tracks. Then you have the kid that goes to the longhouse. He'll experiment with it. But they have something to fall back on, longhouse. Well, the Christians argue to much. My faith is better than yours. We're going to heaven and your not. The kid gets really conflicted with that kind of message. And when they go out drinking and stuff they go to the max. I see this...I seen that. It's really interesting to see that in Indian kids who live on the reservation, to see those three different groups. And...I... no longer worked since 1983 and I'd run into these students today. "I'm a grandparent now". Whoa. 'Cause I see on 'em at the ceremonies I attend. But, what about this other one who's Christian or had no...went to church only. The only church they ever went was to a funeral or a wedding. That was it. They're barely...they're struggling with the alcoholism, with the drugs. Because the students always came to me for advice and such and how to handle some of these things. And, how can we get the parents involved to see what they are doing to themselves and their children are following it. I mean I go to the hospitals and see kid practically dying. Couple kids died at the high school from drug overdoses and I'm the counselor. (unintelligible). It was difficult for me when I worked there. I attended funerals a lot of Indian teenagers. The various reasons and the elders asked me to dress the boys so I became a dresser of the dead. By the time I left zero was dying. They said, " we attribute it to you. You listened to the students. You cared for them. You gave them such advice that we're tired of hearing your name. Pinkham said this. Pianham said that." But it must of worked. And on my reservation was suicide. My aunt helped deal with the suicide thing out of Washington DC and created that whole program because her son did it. Too many suicides on the reservation. I remember working with my tribe in the alcohol and drug program. All of a sudden I'm called out of the room. I said what for. "There this person who going to commit suicide. Go talk to him". So we did. I dealt with suicides in the colleges. (unintelligible) HEP High School Equivalency Program. I dealt with the Indian kids that came in, migrant workers. I mean it's really something to see all that and everything dealing with suicides. Knock on a kids door and their he is. Has a

noose around his neck and he's starting to kick the chair. I've been there. I've seen that. Or a kid standing on a ledge in a dorm room 8 stories up ready to jump. I had to be there. Not talk 'em out of it just to understand what their doing. And, and I went to the training but these were Indian students. I had to culturally look at that. What's doing that? I remembered what my elder's told me, my grandparents. They're losing their spirituality. They're not connected. They're not connected to God, Creator, the Mother Earth, the Son, or the Water. And that's the connection. How do you get a person out of depression? You hug the sucker. Make them feel your energy. Our people have different ways of doing things from a cultural perspective and a spiritual one. And I try to teach people, uh, the counselors. That's not going to work. You can tell them everything is going to be fine. Sure. Try to teach them to believe that. And I said believe? They need to know and be connected. I've been a counselor for too long and the elders taught me a lot. You don't know what you're doing. And, 'cause I been there. Where students were, ready to do it. I didn't tell a kid get off the ledge and then I'll talk to you. Or try to reach them before they jump. I said, no. I told them this is how you connect. I told that kid I said, there's a medicine man on your reservation. You need to go visit with him and he's going to do a ceremonies with the crystals with you. If you jump now you'll never see that and experience it. You need to connect. He was far away from home. In WSU (unintelligible) Washington. He come from Navajo reservation. He went home . The other kid, uh, I met him years later about 25 years. He came up to me. He changed. I mean uh, basically, people get older. And I was on Alcatraz and he walked up to me, "hello Mr. Pinkham. It's good to see you." I looked at him. I've been with a lot of people and met a lot of people. Who are you? And he named himself. He's the one that had the noose around his neck. Says, "I want to thank you. I never thanked you for what you did that day. And he hugged me. And, uh, I said well thank you...for the hug. And he told me in about 2 minutes what happened. 'Cause over 25 years ago that it occurred when he was doing that. And it's...it's something that I learned out here then going back home learning the knowledge the elder's have and to use it. The experiences here from relocation and then going back and forth and then using all that together. 'Cause everybody says gives you greater wisdom. I said yes it does 'cause people don't learn by the experiences of that and you come out with wisdom. You have to learn how to cut the other stuff off. Because you're not getting anywhere. And then, uh, I've travelled around too. 'Cause even my cousin ask me, "how do you do that". I don't know. The money just seems to appear. And, I go. And some people...uh, after they amputated my right foot I didn't go anywhere. I'm unable to drive a car. I'm trying to get rid of the word can't, unable to. I'm teaching you something here. I'm getting you off of the word believe. Learn to know Seek truth. That's what I teach people 'cause you're seeing and misinterpreting a lot of things. You're becoming blind 'cause you're not seeking it, the knowledge. You have too many beliefs. You see on the TV all the time. I sit there and laugh. I think it's funny. Oh, you take this medicine right here . It'll everything for you but the side effects that go with it. What's the use of taking the medicine for. The side effects will kill you. Then you got to take another medicine for the side effects. Me, I use to take 9 pills for the diabetic I am. I threw them away. The doctor got mad. I said I only want 1 or 2 pills not 9. I said there's a conspiracy going on here. They probably have a cure for diabetes and they're not telling you or one for cancer or one for HIV. HIV from my point of view and our people is, uh, biological warfare that got away. Because at the elder's gathering they showed us the records that came out of that. How it was made and everything. And who was first injected with it. And then they tested it. What occurred to it after they infected people. They injected them. It was in a hospital, guess where, in Africa. They watched them die from HIV AIDS . Then the hospital staff didn't wear any gloves and they got infected. They buried the bodies not very deep. And the monkeys ate 'em up and it spread around but the monkeys didn't get sick. Everybody thinks AIDs came from Africa. No, they were infected so they can watch what happens to them. Well, how did it get here? Okay, I'll tell you. They wanted to get rid of American Indians on the reservations and take their land for whatever purposes for the corporations. Got that, mmhmm, so they infected the Indian male who happened to be gay who happened to go to New York City and make love to an airline pilot who went all over the world. Guess where his next stop was? San Francisco. That's how it got around. They got the Indian guy. Didn't know he was gay and thought he'd infect every Indian

in this country. 'Cause Indians are very promiscuous, uh. And that's why the United States never did anything about it even after what's-his-name passed away. They didn't go all out to deal with it. 'Cause it's the United States who did it. It's there biological warfare. Sometime I think that Zika one with mosquitos is biological warfare. I tell people, uh, they have things on bumper stickers, if you trust the United States government ask an Indian. I get a kick out of that. But, you know, it's something to learn because the Indians all over. I said the prejudice is here, even here. 'Cause when my stepfather got picked up for drunk driving here or whatever, no bail bondsman would get him out. He had to stay there. And I think it's still that way. (unintelligible) and even back home they're not going to pay the fine. He's just going to sit there. Where the hell did they get the money to drink and get drunk and picked up for. 'Cause I been in jail but you just sit there. You don't have the money to pay the fine. And I worked in alcohol and drug program and talked to the judges and talked to the prosecuting attorney. I tell them what the hell do you want the Indians sitting in your jail for. It's costing you money. "It keep them off the street". Yeah, that too but I'm here to put them into treatment. How come our people have the larger fines and the longer jail terms. You need to shorten all that. No one is going to pay it. "(unintelligible) he's going to sit it out in jail or she will".

How about putting them into treatment and wiping away the jail term and the fine. And, I hope it's very successful. And they went along with it. I like dit. And the attorney general at that time when I was a drug and alcohol counselor was a Native American in the state of Idaho. I says it's not doing you guys any good. It's taking up your space and your money to feed and house the sucker. Get him into treatment. Or do something like that. Or an Indian who's arrested to whatever laws cannot go to a state penitentiary. Only they don't. They go to (unintelligible). Because they're wards of the United States government. Um, a lot of people don't know that one. But I know some people are doing it but in state prison and it's because the laws of the tribe allow the state to arrest an Indian. And then they can go to a state prison. But if a person goes to tribal court, the tribal court says you're going to jail for 6 months. The tribe has to pay for that time if they don't have no jail. And most " You don't pay your bill". Good it keeps people out of jail. 'Cause the tribe doesn't pay it or they're too slow on payments or something like that. And then here with the prejudice of the Indians coming into the Santa Clara County jail it's a whole different thing too. We know you won't pay the bill. You'll probably skip out and go back home to the res. That's the way it was in the early days. They picked up PJ and he's lived and born here. Might be a different story, you know. Most people get picked up and get out of jail and back to the res and can't touch 'em. So, there's that prejudice there. You don't pay the bill and the bail bondsman is out whatever they put up. So, it's there. Anything else?

Interviewer: Boy, I think we covered everything.