

Oral History Portfolio: April 2nd, 2024 with Veronica Godinez in Henderson, Colorado

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HIST-480A9: Community Oral History

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On my honor as a student at CSU, I pledge that I have neither given nor received any
unauthorized aid on this assignment.

Veronica Godinez was born during 1972 in Los Reyes, Michoacan, Mexico. At about 18 years old, she migrated to the United States with her family. She first arrived in the town of Brush in northeast Colorado, a rural community ten miles from the closest neighboring city Fort Morgan. Veronica changed residences every few years, the last time in about 2013 when she and her family left Brush and moved to Henderson in the northeast Denver metro area. This latest location differed from both Los Reyes and Brush in that it was predominantly urban. Throughout her life as a mother of four children, Veronica has supported her family by cooking for them at home and by working occasional jobs related to the formal and informal food industry. As of 2024, most of her children have grown up and left home. She continues to live in Henderson across the street from the Mile High Flea Market.

During her youth in Los Reyes, Michoacan, Veronica recalls that her family obtained much of their food from local community members, some of which managed vegetable fields. Still, her father maintained a garden of his own at home where he grew vegetables like corn, beans, and peppers. After Veronica's family consumed all usable parts of these plants, they gave the scraps to animals as feed. These animals sometimes belonged to neighbors, but she recalls her father also had cows, horses, and pigs. Veronica's mother kept hens for eggs and a variety of pets. People sold food out of their homes nearby, but restaurants were sparse—only the wealthy sought them out. Veronica notes that the food in her hometown was memorably fresh and organic. She was mentally prepared to adapt to a new food lifestyle as she migrated to the United States.

Although Veonica did not find the transition to the United States too difficult, she immediately encountered new kinds of constraints in Brush, Colorado. The rural town provided

little access to Latino products and frequently restricted residents to preserved or processed foods. Veronica shares that she and other Hispanics found culturally meaningful products on infrequent outings to Denver an hour away, although these foods remained processed or preserved. After moving to Henderson, she noted easier access to foods even if the quality did not match what she knew in Los Reyes. Veronica typically buys groceries from supermarkets like Walmart and King Sooper's. She recalls noticing more restaurants in the United States and excitedly tried McDonald's for the first time in Fort Morgan upon first arriving in Brush.

Veronica noted that locals in Brush consumed high amounts of red meat, due in part to the nearby Cargill meat processing facility, which employed many residents and offered them discounted products. She herself did not work there. While in Colorado, Veronica has instead tended to work at restaurants, including some Mexican eateries and fast-food chains like Chick-Fil-A and Hamburger Stand. People within her social network have also hired her to prepare banquets and desserts for celebratory events. Although her children have since grown up, Veronica continues to cook for her family during family reunions. She enjoys new foods and recipes while sharing her experiences online, especially on her Tik Tok and Facebook accounts.

This oral history project was conducted by her only son Oscar during the Spring semester of 2024. Under the guidance of Dr. Leisl Carr Childers at Colorado State University, Oscar recorded two oral interviews with Veronica but chose to only finalize the second for the sake of time and clarity. This second interview reflects much of the same subject matter as the first. Although the first interview occurred in person at Veronica's home in Henderson, Colorado, transportation limitations constrained the second interview on April 2nd, 2024 to a video call over WhatsApp. Oscar screen recorded the video, converted it into an audio file, and split it into

two files small enough to individually feed into Microsoft Office's automated transcription tool. The first transcription drafts were verified for accuracy and legibility, shared with Veronica for minor edits, and then synthesized into one transcript. The interview was conducted in Spanish to allow Veronica to speak more naturally in her first language. In the transcription below, English translations are provided in brackets. Additional brackets denote changes or addendums after Veronica's review.

Much of Veronica's interview reflects her experience and priorities as a consumer. She maintains an attitude of health-consciousness towards the ingredients she uses. Additionally, Veronica holds a spatial awareness of the rural/urban divide in terms of food access and therefore obtains most of her ingredients from large-scale grocery stores. On page 25, this portfolio features a photo of Veronica's four children at their home in Brush, which was about 10 miles from the closest major grocery store, the Walmart in Fort Morgan. Veronica's experience reflects that of other community members across the United States whose access to the basic needs of food rely on corporate retailers. Veronica's interview is therefore relevant to economic history approaches because it shows a ground level navigation of current circumstances of corporate influence that developed over time.

While economists and other soft-science specialists have typically maintained influence over the discourse and interpretation of American capitalism, historians have increasing opportunities to contribute more towards this subject-matter. The interpretations of historians can highlight the progression of economic and political factors that other professional

perspectives like those of economists may overlook¹. In the case of corporate food in the United States, Veronica's oral history provides a consumer perspective that emphasizes the desire to access organic products with limited options. Although she mentions grocery shopping at various stores throughout her time in the United States, Walmart stands as the biggest chain in her list. Historically, Walmart Inc. established and sustained its immense economic power through soft monopoly strategies. Into the 21st century, Walmart has also engaged consumer health-consciousness with varying sincerity and effectiveness. Veronica's navigation of this Walmart-dominated food landscape along the rural/urban divide and her concern with obtaining fresh, natural products for her family demonstrates how everyday consumers participate in the economic history of the supermarket chain.

According to business historian Harold Livesay, the first Walmart opened in 1962² under a model of aggressively discounted pricing³. Founder Sam Walton established eighteen locations by the end of 1969 while following an expansion strategy that prioritized installing stores in small towns and densely spreading out from the central headquarters. This combined approach aimed to geographically monopolize these communities and succeeded in doing so⁴. By 1971, just three years later, Sam Walton had opened thirty-eight locations⁵. He would set his sights on urban and suburban communities during the 1980s. Accordingly, Walton updated his strategy to construct distribution centers first and continue surrounding them with retail stores. He began

¹ David Kyvig, Marty A. Myron, and Larry Cebula. *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You, Second Edition*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, p478, 2019.

² Harold C. Livesay. *American Made: Shapers of the American Economy, Second Edition*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc. 2007, p273.

³ Ibid, p277.

⁴ Ibid, p278.

⁵ Ibid, p281.

opening Sam's Wholesale Clubs in 1983, which inspired retail grocery integration and resulted in the first Walmart Supercenter in 1988⁶. This same year, Walmart locations numbered at almost 1,200⁷. Since the 1980s, Walmart has significantly taken power from manufacturers and producers in deciding what is displayed on their retail shelves⁸. The supermarket chain has also continued to express its economic power in its engagements with food health movements of the 21st century.

Walmart began improving its food quality in response to perceived market opportunities, not necessarily consumer pressure. According to investigative journalist Arun Gupta, the chain sought to capitalize on a wealthier demographic than its standard consumer base. Walmart began offering organic products in 2006 to appeal to the values of food advocates who might hold higher incomes. Although the move ultimately failed to capture immediate profits, Walmart thereafter hosted over 1,600 organic grocery products. It also emerged as the leading retailer to offer organic milk.⁹

The company's inventory expansion has continued to grow alongside consumer health-consciousness, but this has occurred with some controversy. For example, the same year Walmart started hosting organic foods on its shelves in 2006, the research group Cornucopia Institute caught the supermarket mislabeling products as organic¹⁰. Walmart's sincerity has come into question even in recent years. In 2023, for example, consumer John Wertymer filed a

⁶ Ibid, p282.

⁷ Ibid, p281.

⁸ Arun Gupta. "How Walmart Threatens Organic Food." *In These Times*. June 23, 2014.
<https://inthesetimes.com/article/how-walmart-threatens-organic-food>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

class action lawsuit against the corporation for mislabeling its Great Value brand honey as raw and organic. Wertymer alleged the honey was too processed to be considered raw and “that the Walmart honey contains a type of added sweetener that is regularly found in industrial sugars”¹¹.

From this economic history interpretation, Walmart Inc. has maintained hegemonic power by exploiting the rural/urban divide. It has also made attempts to cash in on growing, 21st century food health movements, especially those pertaining to organic alternatives. Walmart shares a complicated relationship with its consumers as its sincerity and honesty in offering organic foods has repeatedly come into question. Even so, many community members in rural spaces like Brush and urban spaces like Henderson continue to frequent the supermarket due to its soft monopoly. Contextualized within this framework, Veronica’s oral history opens the door for further investigation into how consumers experience the business decisions of corporate giants over time. Economic historians can continue to investigate the development and impacts of disproportionate corporate control over the flow of essential goods like food, and how consumers pursue the products they find important.

¹¹ Anne Bucher. “Walmart Class action alleges Great Value Organic Raw Honey falsely advertised.” *Top Class Actions*. October 18, 2023. <https://topclassactions.com/lawsuit-settlements/lawsuit-news/walmart-class-action-lawsuit-and-settlement-news/walmart-class-action-alleges-great-value-organic-raw-honey-falsely-advertised/>

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ORAL HISTORY
Interview with Godinez, Veronica
April 2, 2024, Henderson, CO

00:00:00 Veronica Godinez

Ya hasta me siento famosa.

[I even feel famous now.]

00:00:03 Oscar Godinez-Avila

Hoy es el segundo de abril, el año 2024. Estoy haciendo esta entrevista sobre WhatsApp porque no pudimos en persona. ¿Como estas?

[Today is the second of April, the year 2024. I'm conducting this interview over WhatsApp because we couldn't meet in person. How are you?]

00:00:26

¿Muy bien, gracias usted, cómo está?

[Very well, thank you, how are you?]

00:00:28

¿Muy bien, hoy me gustaría hablar un poco sobre tus experiencias con la comida, preparándola o trabajando con la comida o así como sea, pero para empezar ¿de dónde eres?

[Very well, today I'd like to talk a bit about your experiences with food, preparing it or working with food, or however it may be. But to start, where are you from?]

00:00:44

Yo soy originaria de México, del Estado de Michoacán.

[I am originally from Mexico, from the State of Michoacan.]

00:00:50

Del Estado de Michoacán, ok. ¿Y, qué recuerdas de la comida allí? ¿Cómo la preparaban en tu casa?

[From the State of Michoacan, ok. What do you remember about the food there? How was it prepared in your home?]

00:01:02

Pues mí recuerdo que yo tengo, era original la comida, la preparación muy natural los ingredientes que utilizábamos para preparar un platillo era sobre todo libre de químicos.

[Well, my memory is that the food was original, the preparation very natural, the ingredients we used to prepare a dish were mostly free of chemicals.]

00:01:24

¿Dónde consiguieron esos ingredientes ahí en México? ¿De los vecinos? ¿Conocían a gente de la comunidad?

[Where did you get those ingredients from in Mexico? From neighbors? Did you know people from the community?]

00:01:34

Ah pues, había mucho producto que los vecinos cultivaban. Ahí mismo en la comunidad había sembradíos de vegetales, que esas personas se dedicaban de cultivarlo y luego lo cosechaban frescosito y salían a venderlo. Y era la era la manera de conseguirlo fresco.

[Well, there was a lot of produce that the neighbors grew. Right there in the community there were vegetable fields, and those people were dedicated to cultivating them and then harvesting them fresh and going out to sell them. That was the way to get it fresh.]

00:02:05

¿Qué tipos de comida le gustaba a tu familia?

[What types of food did your family like?]

00:02:15

Vegetales, tipo calabazas. Como había ahí una verdura, no sé si la conoces que se llama chayote... calabaza, zanahorias, cilantro. Muchos tipos de verduritas, así de que aquí las compramos en el mercado. Sí, muchas veces no nos imaginamos ni de dónde viene ni cómo la cultivan.

[Vegetables, like squash. Like there was one vegetable, I don't know if you know it, called chayote... squash, carrots, cilantro. Many types of little vegetables, like the ones we buy at the market here. Yes, many times we don't even imagine where it comes from or how they grow it.]

00:02:54

¿Ahí en Michoacán, primeramente, los ingredientes fueron cultivados allí cercas, o sea, locales?

[There in Michoacan, primarily, the ingredients were grown nearby, that is, locally?]

00:03:04

Locales sí, exactamente.

[Locally, yes, exactly.]

00:03:08

¿Y tu familia criaba verduras o plantas o frutas?

[Did your family grow vegetables or plants or fruits?]

00:03:16

Mi papá sí le gustaba mucho cultivar-- lo que eran como chiles, yo recuerdo que él tenía un pedacito de su jardín donde encendaba ejotes, chícharos, y maíz. Él también sembraba los elotes.

[My dad did, like to grow—what were like peppers, I remember he had a little piece of his garden where he grew green beans, peas, and corn. He also planted the maize.]

00:03:42

¿Qué tipo de comida preparaban con esos ingredientes?

[What kind of food did you prepare with those ingredients?]

00:03:48

Con esos ingredientes, por ejemplo, los elotes se preparaban unos tamalitos de elote que eran con el elote tiernito. Hay otro tipo de tamalitos que se preparaban utilizando las hojas de la planta. No las hojas del elote, las hojas de la planta del elote, el maíz. Todo se aprovechaba desde la planta hasta el fruto. Aparte, cuando ya cosechabas todo lo que la planta-- que ya quedaba sin fruto-- era para los animalitos, se la daban a la... Siempre si uno tenía una vaca. Si el vecino tenía un chivito ya se le regalaba todo eso, todo se aprovechaba. Nada se desperdiciaba.

[With those ingredients, for example, the corn ears were prepared as little corn tamales that were with the tender corn. There were other types of little tamales that were prepared using the leaves of the plant. Not the leaves of the corn ear, the leaves of the corn plant. Everything was used from the plant to the fruit. Besides, when you already harvested everything that the plant—that it was left without fruit—it was for the little animals, it was given to them... Always if one had a cow. If the neighbor had a little goat, it was gifted to him, everything was used. Nothing was wasted.]

00:04:47

¿Nunca tenían animales allí?

[Did you ever have animals there?]

00:04:51

Mi papá yo recuerdo como un sueño que él sí tenía vacas y tenía sus caballos. Y marrano solamente-- uno compraba para ponerlo gordito y luego para comérmolo en un *party*. En una fiesta, qué íbamos a tener, compraba el marrano bebé, lo criábamos, y ya que para cuando era la fecha de que lo queríamos el marranito ya estaba gordito, ya lo mataban y no lo comíamos en carnitas.

[My dad, I remember like a dream that he did have cows and he had his horses. And pigs only—one bought to fatten them up and then to eat them at a party. At a party that we were going to have, one bought the baby pig, we raised it, and when it was the day that we wanted, the pig was already fat, they slaughtered it, and we ate it in carnitas.]

00:05:35

¿Tú mama nunca tuvo animales?

[Did your mom ever have animals?]

00:05:39

Sólo sus gallinas para que le dieran los huevos, y luego tenía un guajolote, es un pavo, pero ese era como su mascota ahí con las gallinas lo tenía. Y su perrito y su gato. Oh y a ella le encantan los loros y tenía a sus loros. Son un tipo de aves que hablan—pericos-- que hablan.

[Only her hens to give her eggs, and then she had a turkey, it's a turkey, but that was like her pet there, she had it there with her hens. And her little dog and her cat. Oh, and she loves parrots and had her parrots. They are a type of talking bird—parakeets—that talk.]

00:06:17

¿Ahí en Michoacán, había restaurantes?

[There in Michoacan, were there restaurants?]

00:06:24

En aquel tiempo-- porque te estoy hablando de muchos años atrás-- allá se acostumbraba que la gente vendía comida afuera de su casa. Era comida callejera, decíamos, que todavía existe, como los tacos, las enchiladas y eso. En aquel tiempo casi no había restaurantes y en aquel tiempo, pues solamente la gente que tenía dinero eran los que [iban a] restaurante.

[At that time—because I’m talking to you about many years ago—there it was customary for people to sell food outside their homes. It was street food, we used to say, that still exists, like tacos, enchiladas, and such. At that time, there were hardly any restaurants, and at that time, only the people who had money were the ones who [went to] a restaurant.]

00:07:02

¿Qué años pasaste en México, te recuerdas?

[What years did you spend in Mexico, do you remember?]

00:07:09

Yo viví en México como hasta la edad de 18 años.

[I lived in Mexico until I was about 18 years old.]

00:07:20

¿A dónde fuiste después de salir de Michoacán?

[Where did you go after leaving Michoacan?]

00:07:26

Cuando yo salí de Michoacán fue cuando yo emigré a Estados Unidos.

[When I left Michoacan was when I emigrated to the United States.]

00:07:33

¿Dónde llegaste primero aquí?

[Where did you first arrive here?]

00:07:37

Yo llegué a un pueblito muy pequeño que se llama Brush, Colorado, en el estado de Colorado, un pueblito que se llama Brush muy pequeño.

[I arrived in a very small town called Brush, Colorado, in the state of Colorado, a very small town called Brush.]

00:07:52

¿Cómo te acostumbraste a la comida diferente de Brush?

[How did you get used to the different food in Brush?]

00:08:00

Fue un proceso poco a poco porque ya tienes la mentalidad que va a ser algo diferente y tú del momento que decides dejar tu país tienes que meter en tu mentalidad, que te tienes que acoplar a lo que venga. No fue tan difícil. Poco a poco fuimos asimilando y adaptando a nuestra vida.

[It was a process, little by little because you already have the mentality that it's going to be something different, and you from the moment you decide to leave your country, you have to put it in your mind that you have to adapt to whatever comes. It wasn't so difficult. Little by little, we were assimilating and adapting to our life.]

00:08:28

¿Cómo cambió la comida? ¿Tenían que cambiar lo que compraban lo que preparaban?

[How did the food change? Did you have to change what you bought or what you prepared?]

00:08:36

Pues sí, porque en aquel tiempo aquí, no vendían muchos productos latinos. Ya sí ibas a comprar, por ejemplo, en aquel tiempo-- yo te estoy hablando de 30 o más años acá y en un pueblito pequeño lejísimos de la ciudad-- si querías unos ejotes tenían que ser de lata. Y ya todo

ya está procesado, o sea, tratábamos de preparar los alimentos lo más parecido a lo que estamos acostumbrados, pero nunca sabe igual.

[Well, yes, because at that time here, they didn't sell many Latino products. If you went to buy, for example, at that time—I'm talking about 30 years or more ago here in a very small town far from the city—if you wanted green beans, they had to be canned. And everything was already processed, I mean, we tried to prepare the food as similar as possible to what we were used to, but it never tastes the same.]

00:09:21

¿Dónde obtuvieron sus ingredientes o sus comidas en Brush? ¿Te recuerdas de las tiendas o de unos vecinos que conocían?

[Where did you get your ingredients or your food in Brush? Do you remember the stores or some neighbors you knew?]

00:09:33

Ahí nosotros procurábamos las tienditas pequeñas donde vendían productos que nosotros utilizábamos. Había una bodega como de cebollas, por ejemplo, alguien que trabajaba ahí nos regalaba cebolla. Ahí cultivaban mucho como betabel. Había algunos vegetales, pero los transportaban a las tiendas grandes para acá, para la ciudad también. Pero la mayoría era enlatada lo que usábamos porque no había mucho. No había variedad ni había mucho natural, no había.

[There we used to look for the little stores where they sold products that we used. There was a store for onions, for example, someone who worked there gave us onions. They grew a lot of beets there. There were some vegetables, but they transported them to the big stores here, to the city too. But most of it was canned that we used because there wasn't much. There wasn't variety or much natural, there wasn't.]

00:10:30

¿Cuánto tiempo pasaste en Brush?

[How much time did you spend in Brush?]

00:10:38

Yo creo como unos 16, 17 años.

[I think about 16, 17 years.]

00:10:45

¿Sin salir en todo ese tiempo?

[Without leaving in all that time?]

00:10:48

Muy poco frecuentábamos la ciudad. Sí, muy poco frecuentábamos la ciudad que veníamos a pasear. Dábamos una vueltita y ya acá nos daba gusto porque encontrábamos otro producto parecido a lo que estábamos acostumbrados, como te digo, no sabe igual porque ya tiene químicos. Pero esa era una salida al mes probablemente.

[Very little did we frequent the city. Yes, very little did we frequent the city and came to take a stroll. We took a little spin and here we were happy because we found other products like what we were used to, as I say, it doesn't taste the same because it already has chemicals. But that was an outing per month probably.]

00:11:18

¿Encontrando esas comidas más latinas en la ciudad, cuáles tiendas visitaban cuando iban a Denver?

[Finding those Latino foods in the city, which stores did you visit when you went to Denver?]

00:11:30

Había unos mercaditos latinos que procurábamos. Yo recuerdo que uno se llamaba Avanza, o luego ya nos pusieron unos que se llamaba El Rancho Liborio. Era un mercadito bien surtido ya de productos de diferentes-- pues eran productos latinos en general, ya cada quien buscaba sus... el mexicano buscaba los frutos mexicanos, el salvadoreño, los salvadoreños, el guatemalteco-- había un poco de todo... Y luego también veníamos a comprar productos al Mile High Flea Market. Ahí también vendían frutas y vegetales que venían-- al parecer ese producto viene de California. Y ya de ahí llevábamos lo que se nos antojaba, que allá no había, pero teníamos que manejar como 2 horas para llegar a-- ya cuando regresábamos a la casa ya llegaban los productos un poco marchitos.

[There were some Latino markets that we would use. I remember that one was called Avanza, or later they put some called Rancho Liborio. It was a well-stocked little market of different products—well, they were Latino products in general, each one look for their... the Mexican looked for Mexican fruits, the Salvadoran, the Salvadorans, the Guatemalan—there was a little of everything... And then we also came to buy products at the Mile High Flea Market. There they also sold fruits and vegetables that came—apparently that product comes from California. And from there, we took what we fancied, that there was none here, but we had to drive like 2 hours to get to—when we returned home, the products were already a little wilted.]

00:12:51

¿Ya no vives en Brush, verdad?

[You don't live in Brush anymore, right?]

00:12:53

No.

[No.]

00:12:56

¿Dónde vives ahora?

[Where do you live now?]

00:12:58

Ahora yo vivo en Henderson, en el mismo estado de Colorado, es donde he estado todo este tiempo en el estado de Colorado y ahora vivo en Henderson, pero cerca de la ciudad de Denver, cerca ya de una ciudad grande donde podemos encontrar de todo. Obvio, no es tan natural, pero...

[Now I live in Henderson, in the same state of Colorado, it's where I have been all this time in the state of Colorado, and now I live in Henderson, but near the city of Denver, near a big city where we can find everything. Obviously, it's not as natural, but...]

00:13:28

¿Durante tu tiempo en Brush o en Henderson o otras partes de Colorado, trabajaste con la comida?

[During your time in Brush or in Henderson or other parts of Colorado, did you work with food?]

00:13:38

Sí, sí, yo trabajé en restaurantes preparando comida, sirviendo la comida a la mesa de los clientes, manejando comidas. Si trabajaba. Igual en comida rápida.

[Yes, I did, I worked in restaurants preparing food, serving food to customer's tables, handling food. Yes, I worked. Also in fast food.]

00:13:56

¿Te acuerdas de los nombres de unos de los restaurantes?

[Do you remember the names of some of the restaurants?]

00:14:01

Si, por ejemplo, Mi Pueblo Market, trabajé en un restaurante que se llama La Botana, un restaurante mexicano. Trabajé en un Chick-fil-A, en un Hamburger Stand, y también trabajé en las loncheras que son trozos carritos de comida que venden.

[Yes, for example, Mi Pueblo Market, I worked at a restaurant called La Botana, a Mexican restaurant. I worked at a Chick-Fil-A, at a Hamburger Stand, and I also worked in the lunch trucks which are little food carts that sell.]

00:14:27

¿Dónde empezaste a aprender a cocinar?

[Where did you begin learning to cook?]

00:14:35

Yo aprendí por mi voluntad. Yo aprendí a cocinar un poquito en México, y ya aquí fui avanzando en mi conocimiento en la cocina.

[I learned by my will. I learned to cook a little in Mexico, and then here, I advanced my knowledge in the kitchen.]

00:14:54

¿Cómo empezaste en México? ¿Trabajabas con ingredientes específicos?

[How did you start in Mexico? Did you work with specific ingredients?]

00:15:05

En México cocinábamos, como te digo, muchos vegetales hacíamos guisados, hacíamos comida tradicional que a uno acostumbra. Y ya aquí ya mezclamos de lo que haiga. Aquí ya tu cocina ya

no es tan tradicional, ya es lo que se te antoja comer y lo preparas. Ya no es original, vaya de tu tradición.

[In Mexico, we cooked, as I say, many vegetables, we made stews, we made traditional food that one is accustomed to. And here, we mic whatever there is. Here, your kitchen is no longer so traditional, it's what you feel like eating and you prepare it. It's no longer original, it goes from your tradition.]

00:15:45

¿Hay tiendas allí cerca de Henderson que te gusta visitar para encontrar las comidas que te gustan?

[Are there stores near Henderson that you like to visit to find the foods you like?]

00:15:55

Sí, por ejemplo, aquí también se cultivan muchas verduras, y por ejemplo, a mí las verduras y eso me gusta comprarlas en-- para mí lo favorito de lo más fresco es como King Supers. Igual compro mis ingredientes en Walmart, en Save-A-Lot.

[Yes, for example, here many vegetables are also grown, and for example, I like to buy my vegetables in—for me, the favorite of the freshest is like Kind Soopers. I also buy my ingredients at Walmart, at Save-A-Lot.]

00:16:34

Entonces llegando aquí a Colorado encontraron más restaurantes que en Michoacán, ¿verdad?

[So, arriving here in Colorado, you found more restaurants than in Michoacan?]

00:16:45

Sí, sí que en Brush también.

[Yes, yes also in Brush.]

00:16:51

¿De cuáles te recuerdas más, probando los restaurantes de aquí o la comida americana?

[Which ones do you remember more, trying the restaurants here or American food?]

00:17:01

Pues primero todos queríamos conocer McDonald's. De comida rápida todavía es mi favorito.

[Well, first, we all wanted to know McDonald's. Of fast food, it's still my favorite.]

00:17:10

¿Recuerdas la primera vez que fueron a McDonald's?

[Do you remember the first time you went to McDonald's?]

00:17:14

Fue en Fort Morgan, Colorado la primera vez que yo probe McDonald's.

[It was in Fort Morgan, Colorado, the first time I tried McDonald's].

00:17:29

¿Tú preparas comida para tu familia, verdad?

[You cook for your family, right?]

00:17:32

Sí.

[Yes.]

00:17:34

¿Regularmente, qué te gusta hacer en la casa?

[What do you regularly like to make at home?]

00:17:39

A mí me gusta preparar tacos. Me encanta el pozole es mi favorito. Y si me antojan unos tamalitos también los preparo. Igual me gusta preparar un ceviche. Infinidad de cosas porque amo la cocina.

[I like to prepare tacos. I love pozole, it's my favorite. And if I fancy some little tamales, I also prepare them. I also like to prepare a ceviche. Infinite things because I love cooking.]

00:18:02

¿Regularmente preparas comida para adultos, o niños también?

[Do you regularly prepare food for adults, or children too?]

00:18:09

Pues regularmente es para adultos, porque ya no tengo niños. Cuando tenemos reunión, procuro que haiga diferentes cositas para que haiga una opción, también para que los niños coman, por ejemplo, algo que no es tan picoso. Y ya más o menos se que les gusta. Procuro mezclar para adultos y para niños para que todos coman agusto.

[Well, regularly, it's for adults because I no longer have children. When we have a gathering, I try to have different little things so that there is an option, also so that the children eat, for example, something that is not so spicy. And I already know more or less what they like. I try to mix for adults and for children so that everyone eats happily.]

00:18:39

¿Cuando tus hijos estaban más pequeños, qué tipos de cosas les preparabas en la casa?

[When your kids were younger, what types of things did you prepare for them at home?]

00:18:48

Cuando mis hijos estaban pequeños yo siempre, siempre, siempre pensaba en que sea nutritivo, lo que yo preparó, por ejemplo, un caldito de pollo con sus verduras. Unas sopitas. También le

pongo sus verduritas, un arroz. Si, cositas así que—pero siempre pensaba en que sean nutritivas porque están pequeños y para que agarren como nutrientes y las vitaminas que necesitan para comparecer su salud, sus huesos, todo.

[When my kids were little, I always, always, always thought about it being nutritious, what I prepared, for example, a chicken broth with vegetables. Some little soups. I also put in their little vegetables, some rice. Yes, little things like that—but I always thought about it being nutritious because they are little and so that they get nutrients and vitamins they need for their health, their bones, everything.]

00:19:29

¿Regularmente cocinas sola o ha sido una actividad que has hecho con amigas?

[Do you usually cook alone, or has it been an activity you have done with friends?]

00:19:39

Regularmente yo preparo la comida yo sola. Ya cuando es en un trabajo obvio que es en equipo.

[Usually, I prepare the food alone. When it's a job, obviously, it's in a team.]

00:19:51

¿Has hecho comida como para las fiestas privadas de conocidos o así?

[Have you cooked food for private parties for acquaintances and such?]

00:19:59

Sí, he preparado, por ejemplo, un banquete para una quinceañera. He preparado ensaladas, postres, para eventos si llegué a preparar. Por ejemplo, he preparado una birria para dos cientos personas igual que una birria para me familia nada más.

[Yes, I have prepared, for example, a banquet for a quinceañera. I have prepared salads, desserts, for events I did prepare. For example, I have prepared a birria for two hundred people the same as a birria for my family alone.]

00:20:23

Siguiendo tengo unas fotos que quiero pedirte sobre el contexto. Aquí dame un momento, deja te los mando. Hay que empezar con esta.

[Next, I have some photos that I want to ask you context about. Here, give me a moment, let me send them to you. Let's begin with this one.]



Veronica's four children Sandy, Gabriela, Oscar, and Wendy in their home at Brush, Colorado, circa 2007.

00:20:27

Cuando te llegue, ¿puedes explicar un poco del contexto, de como sacaron esa foto?

[When it arrives, can you explain a bit of the context of how this photo was taken?

00:20:37

A ver déjame hacerla en grande. Oh sí esta foto... son mis cuatro niños, cuatro hijos cuando estaban pequeños. Y ahí es una un momento que ellos estaban teniendo... diversión jugando todos juntos... con la bebé. Si es una foto muy chistosa ahí.

[Let me make it bigger. Oh yes, this photo... it's my four children when they were little. And there's a moment where they were having... fun playing all together... with the baby. It's a very funny photo there.]

00:21:13

¿Y dónde la tomaron?

[And where was it taken?]

00:21:15

Esa foto fue tomada en Brush, Colorado en la casa en que vivíamos en ese momento.

[That photo was taken in Brush at the house where we were living at that time.]

00:21:27

¿Comían bien tus hijos en Brush o había cosas que no les gustaba?

[Did your children eat well in Brush or were there things they didn't like?]

00:22:35

Pues, por ejemplo, pues cuando son pequeños, hay cositas que no les gusta, por ejemplo, ellos no comieron un pescado, ellos no comían muchas cositas que ellos no se atrevían a comer.

[Well, for example, when they are little, there are little things they don't like, for example, they didn't eat fish, they didn't eat many things they didn't dare to eat.]

00:22:04

En ese tiempo en Brush... ¿te recuerdas qué tipos de comidas les gustaban a la gente de allí?

¿Viste una diferencia entre Brush y Denver?

[At that time in Brush... do you remember what types of foods people liked there? Did you see a difference between Brush and Denver?]

00:22:26

Ahí yo me daba cuenta, como hay una planta procesadora de carne, que la gente comía mucha carne roja, porque era una planta-- es una planta procesadora de carne de res. Entonces es donde trabajaba la mayoría de la gente. Les daban un descuento en comprar cajas de carne. Y la gente comía mucha carne roja allí. [Mi esposo trabajaba en una planta de tomate llamada Sumblest Tomato Plant y en un feed lot llamado Pinneo ubicados en Brush.]

[There I noticed, like there's a meat processing plant, that people ate a lot of red meat, because it was a plant—it *is* a beef processing plant. So that's where most people worked. They were given a discount to buy boxes of meat. And people ate a lot of red meat there. [My husband worked at a tomato plant called Sumblest Tomato Plant and at a feed lot called Pinneo located in Brush.]

00:22:25

Aquí tengo otra foto, ¿si me puedes dar contexto?

[Here I have another photo, can you give me context?]

00:23:09

Sí, ha ver, horita que me llegue.

[Yes, let me see, as soon as it arrives.]

00:23:09

Ya lo mandé.

[I sent it.]



Veronica's son Oscar helps prepare a batch of tamale dough in Denver, Colorado circa 2001.

00:23:13

Ok. Esta foto fue tomada en Denver, Colorado y es mi hijo preparando unos tamales de dulce de fresa. Bien recuerdo que le gustaban muchos los tamales de fresa. Siempre que yo hacía

tamales, hacía de dos; tamales dulces y tamales con carne con Chile. Y ellos siempre les gustaba ayudarme. Allí mi hijo me está ayudando preparar tamales.

[Ok. This photo was taken in Denver, Colorado, and it's my son preparing some strawberry sweet tamales. I remember well that he really liked the strawberry tamales. Whenever I made tamales, I made two kinds: sweet tamales and tamales with meat and chili. And they always liked to help me. Here my son is helping me prepare tamales.]

00:23:51

¿Todavía preparas los tamales de dulce?

[Do you still make sweet tamales?]

00:23:56

Raramente porque ya te crecieron mis hijos no muy bien se los comen, pues ya no he preparado casi de dulce.

[Rarely because my children have grown up now and they don't eat them much, so now I have hardly made any sweet ones.]

00:24:09

Aquí hay otra foto. ¿Puedes explicar quién está en la foto?

[Here is another photo. Can you explain who is in the photo?]



Veronica's cousin celebrating her daughter's baptism in California

00:24:20

Aquí en esta foto es-- son fotos de una prima mía de California. Ella me envió esa foto y están celebrando el bautismo de su hija. Es un banquete que tienen están celebrando que bautizaron a su niña y ella me envió esta foto, pues de recuerdo nomás.

[Here in this photo is—these are photos of a cousin of mine from California. She sent me this photo, and they are celebrating her daughter's baptism. It's a banquet they are having to celebrate that they baptized their girl, and she sent me this photo, just as a keepsake.]

00:24:48

¿Tú has ido a otros banquetes en persona?

[Have you been to other banquets in person?]

00:24:53

Sí también.

[Yes, also.]

00:24:53

¿Cómo pasan?

[How are they?]

00:24:55

Pues igual, hacen su comida, muchas veces se la prepara alguien de la familia, muchas veces la compran.

[Well, like, they make their food, many times it's prepared by a family member, many times they buy it.]

00:25:11

¿Y bebidas? ¿Regularmente que has visto en los banquetes?

[And drinks? What have you regularly seen at banquets?]

00:25:16

Oh, que no falte la cerveza. En los míos, para mí, mi favorita es el agua de horchata hecha en casa, aguas frescas de frutas naturales.

[Oh, beer is a must. In mine, for me, my favorite is homemade horchata water, fresh fruit waters.]

00:25:33

¿De qué otros tipos de aguas frescas te gusta tener?

[What other types of fresh waters do you like to have?]

00:25:39

De piña, me gusta preparar de piña, de fresa, de pepino con chía, de mango con naranja-- también se combinan. La agua fresca de naranja con piña también... tamarindo, Jamaica.

[Pineapple, I like to prepare pineapple, strawberry, cucumber with chia, mango with orange—they're also combined. Orange and pineapple fresh water as well... tamarind, Jamaica.]

00:26:02

¡Muchos tipos!

[Many kinds!]

00:26:05

Si, muchos tipos.

[Yes, many kinds.]

00:26:06

¿Sigues aprendiendo de la comida, como prepararla o recetas nuevas?

[Are you still learning about food, how to prepare it, or new recipes?]

00:26:15

Sí, sí. Me gusta probar también, tratar cosas nuevas. Ahorita con las redes sociales puedes hacer casi cualquier comida mientras encuentras los ingredientes. Si se te antoja, busca la manera y tú la preparas y ya tu le pones un toque a tu gusto que te-- le quites o le agregas algo que a ti te gusta.

[Yes, yes. I also like to try new things. Right now, with social media, you can make almost any food as long as you find the ingredients. If you fancy something, find a way and you prepare it and then you put your own touch to it that you—remove or add something that you like.]

00:26:42

¿Tú compartas tus recetas en línea? ¿O lo que preparas?

[Do you share your recipes online? Or what you prepare?]

00:26:47

A veces sí las comparto en Tik Tok para que otras personas también puedan tomar unos *tips* de ahí.

[Sometimes I do share them on TikTok so that other people can also get some tips from there.]

00:26:56

¿Si te dan likes y vistas ahí en el Tik Tok?

[Do you get likes and views there on TikTok?]

00:27:00

Oh sí. Muchas tengo, tengo muchos seguidores,

[Oh, yes. I have many, I have many followers.]

00:27:02

¿Como cuántos?

[Like how many?]

00:27:05

Creo que ya le llegué al 5000.

[I think I've reached 5000 already.]

00:27:12

¿Son mucha gente hispanohablante o cómo es la audiencia?

[Is it mostly Spanish-speaking people or what is the audience like?]

00:27:25

Sí es latino y el que se interesa por mirar mis recetas. Son los platillos que yo comparto en las redes sociales. Como a mí me gusta mirar de otros, me gusta compartir los míos para que otra persona también lo—toman un poco de ahí también.

[Yes, it's Latino and those who are interested in looking at my recipes. They are the dishes that I share on social media. Just as I like to look at those of others, I like to share mine so that another person can also... get a little something from there too.]

00:27:56

¿Entonces solamente usas Tik Tok o también como Facebook?

[So you only use TikTok or also like Facebook?]

00:28:03

Sí, solo Facebook y Tik Tok porque no me familiarizo mucho con los otros. No lo sé. [INAUDIBLE]

[Yes, only Facebook and TikTok because I'm not very familiar with the others. I don't know.

[INAUDIBLE]]

00:28:20

Tengo una foto más que quiero preguntar contexto. ¿Puedes explicar de esta foto?

[I have one more photo that I want to ask context about. Can you explain this photo?]



Veronica's first three children Sandy, Gabriela, and Oscar and her niece Nadia during the Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe celebration in Michoacan, Mexico, circa 2000.

00:28:30

Si, esta foto fue tomada en Michoacán, México. Es una tradición religiosa que se celebra allá. Muy en grande, es la celebración de la Virgen de Guadalupe, el 12 de diciembre se celebra. Las personas se visten con un traje típico tradicional mexicano del estado de Michoacán que utilizan-- es una vestimenta que utilizan los indígenas. Es original vestimenta de unos indígenas que son muy originales. Y ese vestimento lo usan uno el día 12 de diciembre. Va uno a la iglesia, le llevan mañanitas a la Virgen, hacen su misa y luego se hace una peregrinación. Es una caminata donde llevan a la Virgen cargando y toda la gente va cantando y rezando. Llegan a la iglesia donde la ponen y allí hacen su celebración y ya en la tarde, en la fiesta de la Virgen, toda la mayoría de la gente se viste así. Y luego hay mucha comida, venden mucha comida, música por donde quiera, pero es una celebración católica tradicional.

[Yes, this photo was taken in Michoacan, Mexico. It's a religious tradition celebrated there. In a larger sense, it's the celebration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, which takes place on December 12th. People dress in traditional Mexican attire from the state of Michoacan that indigenous people use—it's clothing worn by the indigenous people. It's original clothing from some indigenous people that is very original. And this clothing is worn on December 12. One goes to the church, you sing "mañanitas" to the Virgin, have a mass, and then a pilgrimage is made. It's a walk where they carry the Virgin and everyone sings and prays. They arrive at the church where they place her, and there they have their celebration, and in the afternoon, at the Virgin's party, most of the people dress like that. And there's a lot of food, they sell a lot of food, music everywhere, but it's a traditional Catholic celebration.

00:30:10

¿Qué tipo de comida tienen en esos eventos, te recuerdas?

[What kind of food do they have at those events, do you remember?]

00:30:16

Pues en esos eventos venden mucha comida mexicana, por ejemplo, tacos, que no falten los tacos. Y venden comida callejera, como enchiladas, tamales, pozole.

[Well, at those events, they sell a lot of Mexican food, for example, tacos, you can't miss tacos.

And they sell street food, like enchiladas, tamales, pozole.]

00:30:33

¿Algún tipo de postre?

[Any type of desert?]

00:30:46

Postres como churros, venden churros, venden aguas frescas. Sí venden muchísimas cosas de comer porque es una celebración enorme donde va mucha gente de fuera. Y va mucha gente que-- muchos migrantes Estados Unidos van a visitar en esas fechas. Es una fiesta muy grande que se hace una celebración muy grande para la gente católica.

[Desserts like churros, they sell churros, they sell fresh fruit waters. Yes, they sell a lot of things to eat because it's a huge celebration where a lot of people from outside come. And many migrants from the United States go to visit on those dates. It's a very big festival that becomes a very big celebration for Catholic people.]

00:31:14

¿Sigues tradiciones católicas ahora mismo?

[Do you still follow Catholic traditions now?]

00:31:22

No mucho. De religión y de política, no sé mucho, pero sí raramente asisto al-- una misa de vez en cuando.

[Not much. Regarding religion and politics, I don't know much, but I do rarely attend—a mass now and then.]

00:31:45

Recién pasó el Easter se me olvidó cómo se dice en español. Easter Sunday.

[Easter just passed, I forgot how to say it in Spanish. Easter Sunday.]

00:31:55

Es la Semana Santa. Es el día De la resurrección.

[It's Holy Week. It's the day of the Resurrection.]

00:32:02

¿Y, cómo pasaron ese día?

[And how did you spend that day?]

00:32:05

Pues nosotros lo celebramos aquí porque aquí nacieron mis hijos. Entonces hicimos una comida familiar, les escondimos los huevitos para que los niños nos buscaran.

[Well, we celebrated it here because my children were born here. So we had a family meal, we hid little eggs for the children to find.]

00:32:20

¿Dónde hicieron esa celebración?

[Where did you have that celebration?]

00:32:25

Esa celebración la hicimos-- este año-- la hicimos en la casa de mi hija, en un pueblito que se llama Platteville... Ahí fue donde nos reunimos esta vez y ahí hicimos... sí-- ya de religioso, pues no, no hicimos nada porque como no practico mucho la religión, pues no sé... ni me di cuenta de los eventos que hubo hasta que ya pasan ya que los miro aquí en las redes sociales.

[We had that celebration—this year—we had it at my daughter’s house, in a little town called Platteville. That’s where we gathered this time and that’s where we did... yes—in terms of religion, well, we didn’t do anything because since I don’t practice religion much, I didn’t... even realize the events that were happening until they were already over, since I see them here on social media.]

00:32:59

¿Ha pasado casi 30 minutos, pero tienes algunos comentarios o alguna cosa que quieres decir para acabar esta entrevista?

[It’s been almost 30 minutes, do you have any comments or anything you’d like to say to wrap up this interview?]

00:33:15

Pues solo que... puedo decir que... el amor hacia los alimentos a preparar tu comida es muy importante. Es muy importante que comas cosas que son muy bien para ti, no que se vean bonitas, sino que son nutritivas. Y que pruebes-- un consejo o un comentario-- prueba cosas diferentes, trata cosas diferentes. Y si las cocinas tú mismo qué mejor. Es el consejo.

[Well, just that... I can say that... love for food and preparing your food is very important. It’s very important that you eat things that are good for you, not just things that look nice, but

things that are nutritious. And try—a piece of advice or a comment—try different things, try different things. And if you cook them yourself, even better. That's my advice.]

00:33:59

Muy bien, pues muchas gracias por darnos este tiempo.

[Very well, thank you very much for giving us this time.]

00:34:04

Gracias a usted.

[Thank you.]