AN INTERVIEW WITH ANGELA CASTRO

An Oral History Conducted by Stefani Evans, Cecilia Winchell, Kristel Peralta, Nessa Concepcion and Ayrton Yamaguchi

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Reflections: The Las Vegas Asian American and Pacific Islander Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV
University Libraries
University of Nevada Las Vegas

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The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of Reflections: The Las Vegas Asian American and Pacific Islanders Oral History Project.

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PREFACE

"My grandmother is a strong woman. My mother is a strong woman. God, I love her. I've also had strong women bosses, and it's amazing. It is amazing to be empowered."

The women in Angela Castro's family are strong, loyal to family and grounded in their Catholic faith. These traits trace to her grandmother, who kept the family together in Guam during the Vietnam War. Castro was born in Guam and moved to Las Vegas in 1998, one year after her dad, a U.S. Navy veteran who chose to retire in southern Nevada. Castro blazed a trail as the first woman in her family to leave Guam and start a family elsewhere, attend college (earning a bachelor's from UNLV and a master's from Regis University), and rise to leadership in the public sector. As Chief Strategy Officer at the Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) of Southern Nevada, Castro sets an example for her daughter and young people in general on how to defy and overcome discrimination against women and minorities.

However, Castro shares that leaving Guam means countless sacrifices. On the 36-mile island of 150,000 people, time moves slower, family is everywhere, with much of the clan growing up in the same "compound" that her grandmother built up after the War. Religious traditions like saying rosaries and worshiping the Santa Maria Kamalen statue are priceless; and meal traditions including cherished recipes, ingredients and family debates are hard to reproduce in Las Vegas. But Castro's father prepared her to shine, paying for a private Catholic education and encouraging her to always make her voice heard. He was her best friend, and Castro insisted on a touching prerequisite when she met her future husband. Dad, in the event he ever required long-term health care, had to be considered part of their future.

UNLV and Las Vegas have been a land of opportunity for Castro, offering friendships, faith, employment and a better quality of life for her daughter. She acknowledges some discrimination against Asian Americans, but notes that it pales compared to racism faced by her Black friends and colleagues. In sum, this conversation repeatedly revisits the notion of culture, family and faith—and how decisions parents make define how their children grow up, and have ramifications for the generations that follow them.

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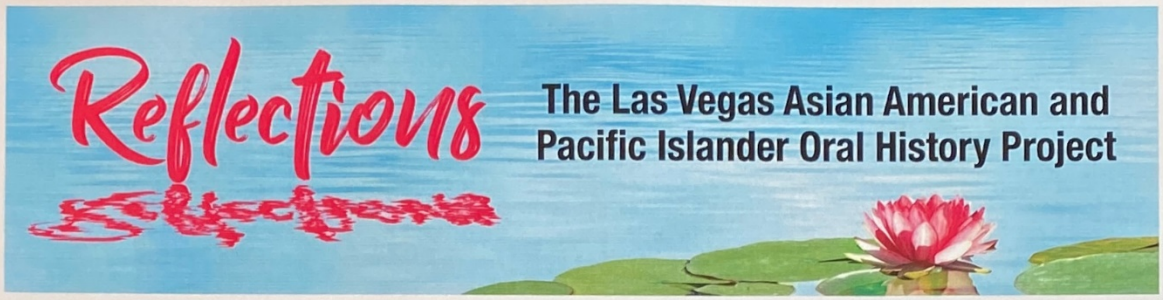
November 5, 2020
in Las Vegas, Nevada
Conducted by Stefani Evans



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Good morning. This is Stefani Evans. Today is November fourth, 2020.

It's November fifth.

It's November fifth. I lost a day; I worked at the polls.

Oh yes, right?

I am here with four students from the Reflections: The Las Vegas Asian American Pacific Islander Oral History Project. They are Cecilia Winchell, Kristel Peralta, Nessa Concepcion and Ayrton Yamaguchi. We are here with Angela Castro. Angela, can we begin by you spelling your first and last names, please?

Sure. It's Angela, A-N-G-E-L-A, and it's Castro, C-A-S-T-R-O.

We're going to start at a place where everybody is really comfortable. Tell us about your childhood and your family.

I was born and raised on the island of Guam. I am the middle child of three. My mother was born and raised in Guam, and my father was born in Utah. His mother was from Utah. His father, though, lived on Guam but was in the Navy. My parents met on Guam and then they had me, my brother and my sister.

Tell us about Guam. What is that like?

Guam is in the Pacific. It is very similar to Hawaii, but it is much, much smaller. There are about 150,000 people that live on Guam. It's about thirty-six miles, I want to say, long, is the best way to say that. When you think of the dynamics of Guam and you think of how do people get there, it goes way, way back. It was during the Vietnam War; also, when the Japanese invaded Guam, and there are a lot of Hispanics as well. When you think about where you from and you are look at the dynamics of people on Guam, a lot of them have Filipino ancestry, Hispanic ancestry. Even our food and the way we do things, it's kind of culturally mixed together as well.

What did you do for fun when you were little? What kinds of games did you play?

It's so interesting because I was just looking at some research that said this generation—so for you in the room, your generation—is probably the first generation that most likely won't do better than your parents. I think that's interesting when you say, "What did you do for fun?" What does that mean? When I look at you, I just think of that now because I just read that probably…two weeks ago, and for me that gave me pause as I have a six-year-old daughter. Am I going to have to take care of her? But I'm going to get to your story. I'm deflecting because I just thought of that.

That's important. Thank you.

For fun for us…The reason why I said that is I did not have what my daughter has when I think about fun. We were very poor—not very poor, but we just didn't have the things that we have access to out here. My parents were divorced, and so I spent weekends with my dad when my mom would let us go, and fun for that was going outside and playing or waiting for him to finish golf to hang out with us on a Saturday. *Fun for us* was going to the corner store with whatever money that we had with the other neighborhood kids and being able to buy… On Guam, everybody seems to own a corner store. We would go to the corner store and buy snacks and treats, and it was riding our bikes and just playing outside and going to the beach because we're an island and that's what you did. We went to the beach every weekend. That's kind of what we did.

Did you ever leave the island for vacations or…?

Yes. I was fortunate, and I say that because when my parents were separated, my dad was in the military. Because he was in the military—and I really believe, one, because he was in the military, and, two, because my grandmother was born and raised in Utah (we call it "the

mainland" and "going to visit the States")—going to visit the States was something that we always did. Plus, I went to a private school, and so we would always plan trips. Guam is very close to Japan. I was involved in a lot of clubs, and so we would fundraise and go to Japan. Every summer from middle school to high school I was able to do something. I either went to Japan or I went to another island, which was Saipan, or I went to Hawaii, or we would come and visit family in California.

Where in California was that?

The Riverside area is where our family lived, a lot of our family members, so we would go to [the] Riverside/L.A. area.

Tell us some of the stories that your grandparents told you about their lives.

My grandmother, my mom's mom, and my grandfather both participated in the Vietnam War. They were engaged when my grandfather was in the Vietnam War. I think for them it was very—when the Japanese invaded Guam, my grandfather was in the military; my grandmother and my grandfather really didn't have anything…I think for my grandfather a lot of his participation in the war, and even my grandmother—they would talk about it but they really wouldn't talk about it. They would share some of the stories. She has, I believe, her survival skills that has gone down from her taking care of her brother and her sister, buying property, and building her empire, which is what we call it because we live in a compound. She owns a lot of houses and a lot of real estate. I think she did it while my grandfather was… It was very different and it's probably why I'm as intense and strong and opinionated as a woman, because my grandmother was that. In some cultures, you have the male who is very dominating. It wasn't. My grandmother was the boss. She was, and what she said, went. Now, my grandfather, when he spoke it mattered, though, because he was very silent. But when he spoke it was, *you're done*.

But my grandmother was very active. She worked her entire life. She was in politics. She worked for the governor's office and would do everything for him. I'm a lot like her now that I think about it. She always did everything not only to protect her family, but even to protect—she was incredibly loyal. That's the word, incredibly loyal. And she did well because she could take very little and make it a lot.

She was rich in her faith. She was Catholic. Everything revolved around going to church, so I went to church all the time. We prayed. She is really big… Guam is really big… about rosaries, so we would pray the rosaries every night. We were a family that was deeply grounded in faith, but also a family that was deeply grounded in being together. My mom and dad both came from big families. My mom had six brothers and sisters, and my mom is the oldest of them. Despite the inner fighting of that family, my grandmother was the glue that kept everybody together. We never had to worry about food because she always cooked a big pot of whatever. Everybody would go in and out of her house eating every day. How she set it up was pretty impressive as we grew up because I would never do this. I would never live with my family members, ever, like this. We all lived within. There was apartments and houses, and we all culturally lived there. That was the compound, and you never had your privacy. It was, "Go to Auntie Marie's house and get eggs. I don't have anything." Or "Go to Grandma's house." After school we all went to Grandma's house, but you walked home because it was right there. Grandma's house was the flagship. You go there in the morning, you eat breakfast there, you pick up your lunch there, and then you go to school. And then you come home and you hang out there with all the other kids. You do your homework, you eat dinner, and then you go home. She just ran it like it was her own daycare with all her grandkids. It was great because I got to hang

out with all my cousins and we got to play and we got to get in trouble together and we got to do our homework.

I was fortunate because my parents were separated and as part of the separation my dad had to pay for my private school, so I was the one that went to private school while everybody else went to public school. It was very different, very different.

How was the private school different from the public schools?

I think that's where you really get—there is a big difference on Guam between the quality of education from a private school to a public school. I went to a private Catholic school my entire life. I just think the difference is where out here you can put your kid in a public school and they'll get a decent education…on Guam it wasn't the same. If your parents weren't involved and engaged, then I don't know what you learned. I just don't know what you got out of it. I'll say that because I brought my niece recently out here to help me from Guam. She graduated from high school and we had to put her in English and math classes before I could put her in CSN. She graduated there, but it wasn't her strong suit…remedial math. I needed another set of math and English to get her through. She has graduated now and is on her own, but it took [time]…That's the difference in the quality of education.

What and where was your later education?

Growing up, my dad always explained to me—he recently passed away, a year ago, and he was my best friend; I told my husband that if [Dad] didn't remarry, then we're stuck with him, so we might as well figure it out now. I would not marry him until he agreed to that. He was really helpful, amazing. But growing up, because my Dad was in the military and he was exposed to things, he explained to me since I was a little girl that there are two strikes against me and there can't be a third. I said, *Okay*. He would be like, "One, you're a woman, and two, you're a

minority; therefore, you're always going to have to work extra hard when you're in a room talking to people. You're always going to have to prove yourself, and you'll always have to be the first one in and the last one out. That's just how it is. It's unfortunate, but that's what is up against you." He said, "The only thing I can give you as your father is an education because no one can take that away from you." I will tell you he would repeat that from third grade, fourth grade, fifth grade, parent-teacher conference, over and over again.

I never understood it until I graduated from UNLV. I went from UNLV with an undergrad in communications. But because of his drive, always telling me, "What do you want to do? You need to get experience in that." He was a recruiter for the Air Force for so long, so he knew. He's like, "Okay, you want to major in communications. Go get an internship. Go get experience." And so, I did. I worked at the Water District throughout my entire college. And they pay the best, so if you're looking for a job, go find that. I was surprised. I said, "I'm going to be a Water District intern; I need that job," because they paid good money and I got experience. That's what I did. That's where I got my undergrad.

I was like, *Oh my gosh! I'm in marketing*. It was during 9/11. *How am I going to get a job?* Now, the Water District offered me a position. They said, "Hey, we'll take you on. Why don't you stay with us?" I did not want to be a government employee the rest of my life. Why didn't I do that? If I would have stayed, like my friends, I would be very close to retirement. But I chose, *no, I don't want to do that*. It was dumb.

I instead went to MGM Mirage. At the time it was MGM Mirage, the property, and I did public relations for them. I knew then that I wanted a master's degree. And the reason why I knew then that I wanted a master's degree is because I had never wanted anyone to discount me or discount my abilities. My dad always told me that I was going to be discriminated against and

that I was going to do this, and so the only thing that I could do is have an education that would check the box, right? That will continue to help me to compete in the workplace.

I got my master's degree at Regis University while I was working. Now, you can't work in the hotel industry and try to go to school at the same time. Because I was in entertainment, what was I supposed to tell everybody at six o'clock? This is reality. Everyone is still on their computers and working. *Oh, I have to go to my class?* I'm going to walk out; they're going to look at me like, *who do you think you are?* And so that became very clear to me.

I remember turning in my resignation because I thought, *Okay, now I need a government job*. I know what a government job is like because I worked at the Water District. I was like*, I have to find that environment.* I remember securing a position and going to my boss at that time. She said, "Why do you need your master's degree? I'm going to promote you, anyway. Just give me some time." And I said, "It's a personal goal. This isn't about a promotion here, but it's my personal goal and I just need to go do it." That's what I did, so that's how I got to my master's. I did it at Regis University and I did it in business.

How do you identify ethnically?

It's so interesting because I used to get really upset when I would not see "Pacific Islander" in the box. I'm like, *I am not Asian. I am a* Pacific-fricking-Islander *and I want to see it in the box, to the point where I actually would put* "other" *and put "*Pacific Islander" *on there.* Just so you know. That's how I define myself. That's how I see myself, and that's ultimately the box I want to be in. And I get insulted when I don't see it. Just saying. And I will tell people. So, yes.

Good. You've partially alluded to this, but tell us the migration story, your family's.

My dad, he retired and said, "I'm moving to Las Vegas." And I said, "Okay, you're moving to Las Vegas."

This is when he retired from the military?

Yes. He retired in 1997 from the military. When he retired in 1997, that was one year before I was graduating from high school.

How I got to Las Vegas is an interesting story. I was supposed to go to school in New York. I got accepted. I graduated third in my class. On Guam, everybody knows your business. You only have a hundred and fifty thousand people. I was expected—and anticipated—to go to a larger school, a better school, and I was well on my way. I think the challenge I had, though, was I didn't feel that I was ready for New York. I did not—and I couldn't—go where my boyfriend went. He went to Hawaii at the time. My mom said, "You're not going where your boyfriend's going." She did not speak to me for six months when I told her that I was going to go stay with my dad and go to UNLV. Six months! I always remind her now of that, because she was really insulted.

That's how I got here, because my dad was here, and then that's how I ended up going to UNLV. It was the best decision I have made. I still live here. I won't move. I love Nevada. Nevada is what I consider home. It's funny, because we've talked about, "Do we want to move back, or do we want to move somewhere else?" My husband is also from Guam, born and raised. We've had opportunities. We've had job opportunities in other states. We just don't. Nevada has been good to me, even during the recession, even now during a pandemic. It's really the land of opportunity. I always say, if you can't make it here, you can't make it anywhere.

What were some of the hardest things to leave behind in Guam?

Family, especially family. Family and culture was really, really hard. It's a decision that I struggle with as a mom. And I say that because I am choosing to give my kid opportunities of a better education, of more opportunities of quality of life, while leaving behind… I don't have

childcare help the way I do on Guam. I pay, and in our culture, you would never do this: I put everyone on my payroll system to help me raise my child. That's just the reality. I would not struggle nearly as much. And I would have, I would say, more family time and quality time if I just went back home and raised my child there. I see it all the time when family comes to visit—my life is not their life. They are like, "What do you mean you're leaving at four o'clock to go to the gym?" I'm like, "I'm going to work out, and then I'm coming home, and then we're eating breakfast, and then my kid's getting ready, and we're going to school, and we'll be back at five o'clock." At that time, five or six o'clock. "And we're doing homework." Then, our day starts again. That's not the island-style way. The island style is you get up whenever you want. [There are] five or six people, you leave your child [with] if you want. It's just very different.

I never thought about it until I had my own child, and then it changed. It's like, *What are you doing and why are you doing it?* It was important to me that my husband and I were very intentional in the conversations, and that we acknowledge what we're doing and why we're doing it, so that we can one day explain it to her. It's funny. I took her home last year and she was tattle-telling on the other kids. You'll appreciate this. I said, "You better be careful. They're going to throw you in the jungle when you tattle-tell on them." She's like, "What?" I said, "They're going to throw you in the jungle because that's what they do. You don't come and tattle-tell on them. You just don't do that." (laughter)

She's like, "What? Mom, what is all of this sweat?" At the time she was four. I took her home every year, but now she could really comprehend and see it. She says, "Mom, it's so hot. Why do I keep sweating?" Or she's like, "The beach!" She doesn't get "cousins." There's not cousins [here] that she can play with. Not in that same sense. That's what I miss: our sense of family, because it was really big, and now she knows that it's four of us and our culture. Culture

to me is one of the hardest things, and so I'm teaching her; I'm trying. We're trying to instill it in her, but there is going to be that void no matter how hard we try.

What are your fondest memories when you look back on Guam that you would love to recreate for your daughter? What is the fondest thing?

For me, it's that sense of genuine love and camaraderie, being with people; that is the bottom line to it. That memory of my grandmother, and spending time with my cousins, and playing outside, and just having that feeling that you don't really recognize until you live out here. My brother and my sister and all of us playing, all of us knowing each other, and all of my friends being able to come into my house and climb through the window. There are just so many different memories of really real—not mean—genuine and authentic relationships that you get amongst your friends and family that I fear I've mainstreamed my child's life. I only have one, which in my culture you don't just have one kid, and I only have one. That's the first strike against her; there is only one of her. That feeling of never being alone, unfortunately, is what I think is my fondest memory that I miss the most and [that] we're going to struggle with a little.

That sense of "we."

Yes, that sense of "we."

What was the political atmosphere in Guam?

When you talk about politics on Guam, it is a democratic system. There is a governor and there is a senate and then people vote. There are Republicans and there are Democrats. The difference, though, is…it's kind of like the Republicans on Guam are Democrats, and the Democrats on Guam are Republicans. There is not clear delineation of a value-based system the way you see in American politics. In American politics, they're about pro-business; a lot of the Republicans are very conservative, very pro-business, very little to no social services. They think you create

freedom in your own wealth and there should be no restrictions, no limitations. The Democrats are very…so, they're far-right, far-left, in my space… where on Guam it's all blended together. I don't even think and… because I do policy for a living, sometimes I [ask], *What is your platform?* They're like, *What?* I say, *Never mind, never mind.* Or, *What do you stand for? Okay, you're going to create this, but how?* I have friends on Guam that are running for office and have run for office, and we will have these debates. I'm like, *How are you elected?* (laughter) I don't understand. It's mind-boggling to me. It's just mind-boggling. I get politics everywhere. Some of our politicians here who I work with are the same way. But at least they have smart people underneath them that can get them to where they need to be. Yes, that's politics. There is a political system, though, and it's very interesting. The things that I thought just happened on Guam actually happened out here, too. It happens in American politics. It's the same. It's a much larger scale out here, and easier to hide.

When you say, "easier to hide," what does that mean?

I think on Guam you can very clearly see. If there is political corruption, you could clearly call it out and identify it. I think out here, because of rules and guidelines—it's much larger, bigger — there's less eyes and oversight than over this little [island of] 150,000 people, where everybody knows your business. It's harder to control.

Did you have to go through immigration?

No, I didn't because Guam is a U.S. territory, so I avoided that.

Do you ever have any problems traveling?

No. What I do, though, have is—for people who don't know that Guam is a U.S. territory—I get uneducated questions. That's the best way to say it, not because they're dumb, [but] because they don't know. They just don't know. Having to explain to people, sometimes it's easier to say I'm

from the Philippines than it is to say I'm from Guam, because people understand I'm from the Philippines versus I'm from Guam. There's less conversation there. It just depends. Sometimes it depends on how much I want to have this conversation or how long do I need to be in this conversation.

It's funny, because I am Angela; my maiden name is Torres, and my husband's name is Castro. So, people expect me to be Hispanic when I walk in, and they're like, [whispering] *She's not Hispanic*. Then, people expect me to be Filipino, and I'm like, *I'm not Filipino*. They say, *What are you?* I have done it this way; where am I going and what do I need to be, and I'm going to be that. It's so interesting. I go into a room and I'm like, *No, I'm not this*. They'll say, *Are you Japanese? Do you have some Japanese?* I'm like, *I'm mixed,* and I just leave it at that. I also used to get some Hispanic groups that were really frustrated that I wouldn't own it, [but] I can't even fake it. It has been very interesting throughout my journey, needless to say, very interesting.

In what settings do you get those conversations? Is it more in business? Is it more socially? Is it more here than in other locations in the U.S.?

It spans, and it just goes back to how far back do we want to go? I have lived here since 1998 and I think it has spanned various different settings. I am not shy, so I'll talk. I will talk to people, and I will bring out conversation. I am one that it's okay to agree to disagree; it really is okay to disagree. I like to understand people's lives and people's experiences, because then you can better understand who they are. That is the reason why I can have these conversations about culture, about diversity, about inclusion, about struggles—because I feel that if we can communicate about our present, our past, and our future goals, then we can better compromise. As a leader of multiple different departments and teams, that has been the most effective

approach for me in understanding why you may see something from that perspective and I may see it from this perspective. When you take time to understand the way they learn and the way they're wired, you become more respectful and empathetic to how they're moving about. So, because of that, that's the reason why I have had conversations like this more so than, I would think, the average person. I'm okay about it, and I'll bring it out. I think that's how I'm wired to understand how to effectively lead.

When you arrived in Las Vegas, where did you live?

North Las Vegas. When I arrived in Las Vegas, I lived in North Las Vegas, because my dad's house was in North Las Vegas, and I went to UNLV.

What was the most difficult thing about moving here?

Making friends. Oh my gosh. Finding my sense of identity. I say that because I love UNLV; I really, really do. UNLV is my passion and it's given me opportunities. The challenge I have with UNLV, though, for people like me who don't live on campus, it's difficult to find that sense of friends. Today, I don't have college friends. I have friends that moved with me from Guam and are here. I was friends with them on Guam. We went to middle school and high school together and then we went to UNLV together. We graduated and we're still here and our families are still here. That has been my journey, where I grew up in a private school that was small and I had a lot of friends; and I lived on an island and I had a lot of friends. Then I come here and I [wondered], *Where do I meet people? Where do I meet people?* That was hard. It was really, really hard. My first two years here I hated it. Oh, I hated it.

Who do you remember helping you and making it better?

My dad. I think it was my dad. [Also], I don't know where she's at…She's probably retired now. I worked in the Environmental Engineering College under Shawn Gerstenberger at the time.

There was a lady that I worked under; her name was Susan, and she was different, but she was fun. Yes, she was my one friend, my one really good friend. It was weird, working in the Environmental College and us just becoming friends. But, yes, I think it was her that really just made me feel…that came out of a place of comfort.

You've talked about your family. Tell us about your work in Las Vegas. You've alluded to what you did, before. Tell us what you're doing now.

I work for the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, which is a government agency. We oversee public transportation, roadways, and traffic management. My title is Chief Public Strategy and Marketing Office. I work directly for the CEO. I oversee the government affairs department, the media department, and the marketing department. Right now, I'm preparing for the legislative session. [On a] typical day, I might call over here, "Where are the election results?"—so I know who is going to be on my board or who is not going to be on my board. "Is Councilman Anthony moving into that district? Who's doing what? Where are they going? What do we need from the presidential perspective?"

If Donald Trump continues to win, or if he maintains the presidency, there is a set of policies from a transportation perspective that we're ready to implement. If he doesn't, and Joe Biden wins, there is a set of policies that we're ready to implement. But those policies need to be clearly defined in terms of what are the presidential opportunities, threats, weaknesses, within each administration that I've clearly outlined—and my team have outlined—and we're ready to go. But our fundamental role is to educate not only our executive team, but also to educate our department managers of policies, marketing, media, etc. Any given day I'm in between them. I'm in between the political realm—*Okay, what hat am I wearing, what hat*— and the media

world and dealing with crises there. Essentially, it's easier to explain as chief of staff to the CEO, but then I run my own departments. So, that's kind of how that works.

Is the RTC as diverse as it could be?

Absolutely. And I say that because at one point—I have had the privilege—listen, I am all about women, okay? I think women are put on this earth to help other women. Even when we don't like each other, we need to help each other. Sorry. I'm looking at you just to tell you that. The RTC has done a great job. My grandmother is a strong woman. My mother is a strong woman. God, I love her. I've also had strong women bosses, and it's amazing. It is amazing to be empowered. Whether it's diversity and inclusion—one thing I want to make sure of, and this was really big most recently with all of the political unrest and all of the issues and challenges, is even defining to the team—I had to stop and say, "Everybody, what is diversity and what is inclusion? Are we making sure that we as an organization are, one, accepting people for their differences, and then creating opportunities for them despite their differences; [and, two,] creating enough space that despite their differences they are accepted?

I think the RTC has done a phenomenal job in recognizing that, but [I'm] also recognizing I'm having issues with my own nieces who are mid-twenties, early thirties with tattoos and nose rings. *What's going on? No one is going to hire you!* But that's not true anymore. I'm sitting across the table and I say, "Why would you do that?" And my six-year-old is like, "Yes, why would you do that?" And I'm thinking, "Keep quiet because you're going to be in that space soon." Then I'm like, "Don't ask." But that's diversity. That is diversity.

"Why would you [get] a tattoo? You teach kids. You're a third-grade teacher. Why would you put a sleeve on your arm?" I don't get it. I don't get it. I struggle with that. But that's diversity and inclusion for you—it's accepting people for their differences because they feel that

the tattoo on their arm doesn't take away from their brain in the sense of what they include. But I'm like, "Put it on your back; at least people can't see it, and now you need to wear a long-sleeve shirt all the time." But we are very big on diversity and inclusion, very. I don't think I would work there if we weren't. I'm very valued based.

Have you experienced discrimination in the workplace?

Oh yes, absolutely.

Tell us about that.

I've had it all. You know what was really good? It's something that I will do with my daughter—which my dad always told me was going to happen—so when it happens, [she's] not upset. Well, I was upset. The ability as it's happening to you, I'm like, *Okay, this is what he was talking about*. The first time was—and I am Asian, so I come across young. Everyone is like, *how old is she?* I'm young, but I'm not that young. That's the problem I have. One, I'm short and I look young. When I open my mouth, they're all like, *Oh*, but prior to [me being] in the room? I learned how to use my voice and I learned when to speak and when not to speak. Early, early on in my career I would sit in a room with a bunch of men and women. No one would ask me my thoughts or opinions. I had to learn there that I had to speak up and fight for my place. This is corporate America. This is as real as it's going to get. If I wanted to be heard, I had to make myself heard; that's how I felt, but respectfully.

Then, moving on, I was passed up for a position that I damn well knew that I could do better. The person that they promoted instead wasn't as good. I worked twice as hard. I came in. I did everything that my dad told me to do. I should have gotten that position. I feel, really wholeheartedly feel, that it was a religious move versus anything else as to why that person was promoted versus myself. I was okay with that. I was like, *There's no way!* I need[ed] to

understand how this person got promoted and how I didn't. So, I asked, in tears. I asked my boss. What's interesting is that she now works for me. That's interesting, right? I know. She now works for me.

What was [your boss's] response?

"Oh, I have something for you." I wasn't going to get promoted at that level, but it's right underneath it. "I'm still giving you something." That was the response. But I took it. I understood it. I took it and I trusted the process.

Even when the *#MeToo* movement came out, I'm like, "Oh. I am not … that's a whole other conversation. We're not going to have that conversation." There are ways I think I'm just different in that I'm very opinionated. I'm very strong in terms of being vocal, but I think that that's intimidating for some people, so it works in that essence.

I have been discriminated against, but I didn't handle it where [I thought], *Oh my gosh, I'm going to go file a suit.* I didn't do that. Or, *Oh my gosh, I'm going to be mad at the world*. I didn't do that. Or, *Oh my gosh, I am owed this and I'm going to make a big stink of it all the way through*. Did not do that. I knew that I was better, but I also knew my time would come. My time will come. And it did, it very well did.

The best advice I got about being a minority—and she wasn't even trying to tell me this—but when you're in a room with people, you should always be present and ask one question so that they know you're there. Just pick one question because then they'll know. I was like, *Oh, that's good! That is really good advice*. When you're in a room with people, as they're speaking, ask your one question. Ask your one question because they will know that you're there. I thought that was interesting and it's worked.

What kinds of traditions or festivals are important in your family?

Thanksgiving is a really big deal. Even on Guam and even out here we carried it on. When I lived with my dad in North Las Vegas, my grandmother lived with us, too. Every Thanksgiving she would make the main dishes and everybody else would bring a dish. Every family and the neighbors and everybody would come. That we did all the time, every Thanksgiving and every Christmas. People would come to your house or you go to somebody's house. You eat and you see your family and you do these things. I remember one Thanksgiving my aunt said, "We're done." I was renting a house with roommates. "What do you mean you're done?" She said, "If you guys want a Thanksgiving, you plan it. Otherwise, I'm going to eat a turkey meal, a Thanksgiving turkey potpie." I'm like, "That is not Thanksgiving. What do you mean you're done? Fine…I'll host." I don't even know how to make a turkey. I called my dad and said, "Your sister just told me she's done, and I need to keep Thanksgiving going." It was a big deal. I tell him, "Are you going to make the turkey? How are we going to do this?" He said, "I'll do the turkey." Okay. That's all I needed, and I figured everything else out.

Then my husband, who is from Guam, he was in the military; he and I are not married yet and it's his first Thanksgiving. We bought the townhouse. I have a townhouse and I say, "Okay, we're going to do Thanksgiving." Now, he left Guam, went to war and has been in Europe and did all of these things. He never really understood how my sense of family and his sense of family are two different senses of family. I'm like, "Your mom is coming. Your sister is coming. Her boyfriend is coming." He's like, "Where are we putting all these people?" In my culture you sleep in the bathroom if you have to. You figure it out. You make this stuff work. Who cares? He is stressed and I'm not stressed. *They can use the bathroom. I don't really care. You know what room I have. I'm sleeping on my bed. You guys all figure it out.*

He's like, "Angela, you have your family, my family, Auntie Nora. You have seventy-six people coming. What are we feeding them? What are we going to do? Where are we going to put them?" I'm like, "The garage." He's like, "Who has Thanksgiving in the garage?" I'm like, "Me." Right? You have Thanksgiving in the garage. I'm like, "You bring out the tables. Everybody bring a dish. We'll figure out what we're going to do. We will do the main dish; that's it. We'll do the turkey. We'll do everything we do well that we want to eat, and then everybody else can bring whatever they want to bring." We did it for three or four years. Now we're small, and we're going to go somewhere else. Those are the traditions.

Do you still get together with family on Thanksgiving and Christmas?

Yes. It's different because with my husband having his family and with his sister having a house, we're going to go spend Thanksgiving with them, yes; but it's smaller. Every time they come to my house it's a big shindig. It is, because then I invite everybody. If you don't like each other, you pretend. Everybody is invited and whoever shows up is great, and if they don't like each other and they don't want to come, they don't have to, but I open it up.

For Christmas we'll open it up. We'll do certain things. I do Christmas Eve. We go to church and then we eat out somewhere fancy because it's just the five of us and we're done. Then we do Christmas Day. We stay in pajamas all day—I already bought our matching pajamas—we stay in pajamas all day. We invite everybody to come over in pajamas. It starts at brunch and it just goes throughout. My girlfriend, who I'm the godparent of her kids, drops her kids off to me every Christmas morning. I watch her kids while she goes to church, and it's peaceful [for her] at church. That's how…my house flows. We do that for Christmas. We typically do it for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

I think losing my dad was very hard for me. It was one year…last Thanksgiving. I'm okay giving it up for now; I'm okay going somewhere else, because it was his favorite holiday. We were so close that he wouldn't leave me to go to Guam until after Thanksgiving. Then, he would go home and spend time with my brother and my sister and all them. He would always come back before the legislative session. I'm like, "I don't care what you do, don't care when you go. You just have to be back by February first." He would come back because he would watch my daughter. I have not been able to recover yet, so I'm willing to go wherever they want to go for Thanksgiving.

What foods?

We do red rice. We take the rice, the sticky rice, the Calrose rice; we do that. We will cook chicken to 85-90 percent. We would barbecue the chicken outside and then people would bring in and we would cut it up, chop it up, and the remaining ten percent we cook with lemon and add onions and coconut—it's so good—and black pepper. That's a chicken dish. We would barbecue chicken outside and barbecue steak and spare ribs outside.

Everybody would be drinking beer, all the grandpas and the poppas. Then my meat would be burnt and I'd be pissed when it comes in. Every time! One year my dad's brother, my dad, all of them come in and they're grilling my chicken. I think they forgot to turn the grill off of the chicken, so this barbecue pit becomes—I don't know. It flames up. They are in my kitchen drinking beer. I'm like, "Is that the barbecue pit?" It flares up. My favorite uncle is coming from New Mexico comes in the next morning and I'm in tears. "They burnt the barbecue down and they messed up the pool." I'm his favorite and he went and bought me this really cool barbecue grill that I still have because it was really big and expensive and really fancy. Everyone is like, *Ugh, she's such a drama queen.* It was. We had to bring out the fire extinguisher. They just

forget. My uncles drink Budweiser and they forget. I'm like, "Dad!" Then they would argue because, culturally, they just don't know what we're doing. This is the truth. My dad and uncles cook meat until they burn it. I don't know. We just never do anything wrong. They cook meat.

Then my father-in-law, who is American, my husband's stepdad, is a real cook. He does everything precise… the onions. In Guam we don't do that. You just bring it and throw it all in. You have two different cultures embarking in the kitchen. I really had to set boundaries because my uncle wants to help, but my father-in-law wants it done a certain way, and it's not the way my uncle is going to do it. He's doing a turducken, and my uncle is like, "What's that? You just do a turkey, and you just throw stuffing in it; that's what you do. You don't do a turkey-duck." [My husband's stepdad] is fancy. He's Ina Garten fancy and my family is not that way. My family is used to our traditions. Then my husband's family comes in and they want to do their tradition. It becomes this big issue. He makes some type of chorizo sausage, and my family is like, *I just want the old-fashioned Guam stuffing, which is potatoes and apples.* You cook it the night before.

It becomes very interesting that I had to set boundaries. I had to [say], "Uncle Jim, Dad, that's enough. Leave him alone. Let him…I know in our culture you don't sit back and watch; you help. You're going to be disrespectful and you're going to sit back and watch because that's helping him. Let him be." That's what they would do when they would come. They would do their dishes. Feel free to make your dishes. Leave him alone and let him do his dishes. Or I would tell my father-in-law, "Start now before they come, so they don't have to help you." It became very clear after my first year of Thanksgiving with them that that's what we needed to do, and it works. It worked out great, but I had to communicate for them so that there was no

sense of passive aggressiveness that was about to be thrown down in that kitchen. I was starting to see it. I don't need this.

The one person that is the worst is my mom, so thank God she didn't come. She doesn't come out as much for Thanksgiving because she's on Guam. Having my mom, my dad and my father-in-law was just a disaster. Oh my gosh! It was hard because differences of cultures and differences of foods. He does mashed potatoes and certain things his way, and then he would be offended—I'm all about steak sauce in my life, and he's offended that we would use steak sauce. I said, "Stop. Why are you offended?" I really called it out, so everybody knew what the boundaries were. It was hilarious. It was fun and still is fun. When you take two different sets of cultures and you bring it under one, it was very interesting, interesting. And fun.

Are there things that you love to eat in Guam that you can't make here because you can't get the ingredients?

Yes. I have them ship [to] me. There's not a lot. The difference, though, is you need the red dirt, the humidity to cook certain things. It's just not the same. When you grill a parrotfish on Guam outside on the beach or you fry it, it tastes different than when you do it out here, and I've tried that. I've tried to recreate that multiple different ways and you just can't, so that's the first thing. There are some dishes I can try, but it just isn't the same. But I always get a shipment of hot pepper [and] lemon powder, because we cook with a lot of lemon. Those are the two things that you can't come see me—you can't stay with me unless you have packed me hot pepper and lemon powder. I have it stashed away at my house way up top and I don't share. I just don't. Those are the two things that you can't see me unless you bring me. With COVID I'm going through a dry spell. I'm like, "Mom, you just need to mail it to me." She's like, "Are you sure?" I'm like, "Yes, just mail me some." But everybody knows those are the two things. They [ask],

"You don't want a Guam shirt?" I say, "No, I don't need a Guam shirt. I don't need any of that. I just need hot pepper—and specifically the Red Hot brand—and my lemon powder; that's it." That's all I ask for.

What are a few of the most significant events in the history of your family?

I would say the first one was me graduating from college because I was the first college graduate on my mom's side of the family, and I was the first for my dad. My sister just—we're two different individuals, I would say that—me graduating college was a big deal for my dad's side of the family and my mom's side of the family because I was the first to graduate. But that also signified, I think, hope to my cousins on Guam and to my sister's kids; like this is what you're supposed to do.

Actually, I take that back. Moving away, because everybody didn't think I was going to move. You've got to be brave to move away from that comfort zone. I think moving away, graduating from college, getting married, having my daughter, and then losing my dad; that's the order. That is the order.

What do you see as the greatest differences in daily life between Las Vegas and Guam?

Time. In Guam, it's very slow-paced. The days go really slow, and you have a lot of time. I even see this difference, though, if you want to compare Reno to Las Vegas, same thing. In Vegas, it's very hustle-bustle and you move really quickly. There's always something to do and you're always busy. I think it's quality of life and time. I have to honestly say it's time.

What about your religion; is it different here than in Guam, the way you practice it?

Being on Guam, because of the Spaniard emphasis, it's predominantly Catholic. I went to a Catholic private school. I came out here and I taught. That's what you do; you give back to the church, so I taught CCD [Confraternity of Christian Doctrine]. But I met my husband and he did

it for a year with me, and then he said he wasn't learning anything, and so we had to readjust and it wasn't Catholic. I said, "We can't do Baptist," which was his preference, "And we can't do Catholic," which was my preference, and so we go to a Christian church and it works. I sometimes feel bad because my daughter is not going to have… Religion is religion regardless and she knows and understands there's a God because I put her through the Christian [Sunday school]. That is what my husband and I decided, and I will stay true to that. We will still go to a Catholic church, and we have friends that are from Guam that are Catholic that don't understand it. I was in my girlfriend's church wedding. Because she didn't get married in a church originally, she wanted her kids to see it. She got exposed to the Catholic Church. But having those conversations is very interesting.

My faith is what got me through the craziness and the noise on the island. I came out, never did drugs, managed to stay away from a lot of things because I was grounded in my faith. I think the difference, too, is Catholicism on Guam is—you just say the rosaries. You do pray to statues, which makes my husband crazy, but you do do that. You do light your candle. I have a friend that passed away and we're saying a rosary this Saturday on Zoom. It's what you do, and that's the first thing they asked us to do. We have a friend that passed away, and my classmates are like, "Who is going to set up the Zoom call so we can start the rosaries?" That's what you do. I was like, "Okay, I guess I'll do it," because I'm the one that hosts everybody on Zoom. But that's the difference.

Is your daughter being exposed to that?

Some of it. Not all of it, just some of it. She'll go to a rosary and she's like, "What is this, Mom?" I'm like, "Just let's go. Do not talk until after we're done." I have not sat down and had—she's six. I think it's more uncomfortable for my husband to sit down and have a

conversation with her about it than it is for me. Putting her in my girlfriend's wedding was the first time that she got to—where I think the four-, five-, six-year-old is—the questioning part. We've done it in the past; we've taken her to a Catholic church because when my Grandma Sister comes, you go to Catholic church, and so he had to go because my Grandma Sister said, "Take me to church." I looked at my husband and [said], "We are going to Saint Francis. You got it?" He's like, "Okay," and he just goes. To your point that religion and that respect, especially for your elderly, I [think], *She ain't coming to our church. She's going to roll over and not know what to do at our church. We've got to take her to her church, so we're going*. We spent our Sunday…But my daughter didn't comprehend that and we hadn't had anybody come where we had to go.

We did do this, though. My husband was raised Baptist. He is one of the few people on Guam where his parents were really Baptist. When they came out we had to figure out a Baptist church that we could go to. My niece was so confused during Christmas Day church that she went to the Baptist church. We changed our mind. We were like, "Forget it. They're visiting. Our church is fine. I want to spend Christmas…" My husband and I made a last-minute decision to go back to our church and to call it a day. It wasn't worth it. My daughter was young. She was going to be like, what is this, when her grandma asks her and she's not going to be able to answer. I was like, "Let's just go back." We tried it and we could not all fit. My niece was picking up my husband's brothers and we were going to go to church, and we ended up at two different places.

Church is a big deal. I have not explained to her yet because it's going to be a lot of questions. My husband and I need to have a very clear understanding of how we're going to explain it to her. He was uncomfortable even when we left the church when she said, "Mom,

why don't we go to this church? Why do we go to this church over this church?" He's like, "See, what you started." And I'm like, "We've got to talk about it." We will talk about it. It's just a matter of how do we explain it to her in a way that makes sense.

Do you see the way you practice Catholicism here different from Guam?

Yes. Well, it's just more…they are ***in*** it on Guam. I can give you an example. We're on a call. What month was this? It wasn't December. We were on a call, I think Easter Sunday. All of my Guam friends are on a call, and they're like, "Hey, Santa Maria Kamalen is coming around!" They take the saint and the baby Jesus on Easter Sunday and they go village to village to village to village because He's risen. They do a parade. All the kids, whatever you're doing, you go outside and you wave and you see baby Jesus and Santa Maria Kamalen. I forgot about it until I'm Facetiming. They're like, "Hey, Santa Maria Kamalen is coming." We're all on a call, and they're like, "What village is she in? She's leaving Yigo and she's going to this village. Make sure you're outside." It was so cool, because we got to see her go from village to village while we were on a Zoom call. I think for us on Guam it is a celebration.

Going to church every Sunday is the cool thing to do. Going to rosaries, you always know somebody has passed away. A hundred and fifty-six thousand people, everybody knows somebody. In nine days of rosaries when someone passes away, nine days of rosaries where you cook, you feed them. You can't go to a person's house without bringing them anything, and you can't go to a person's house without eating their food. Those are the two disrespectful things you could possibly do is not eat their food and not bring something. It's deeply rooted in everything you do. The Catholic religion is deeply rooted for the majority of those on Guam.

For people who have never been, what do you want them to know about Guam?

That we are very hospitable, and that people come from a place of love, family, human kindness. We're rich in culture and tradition that surrounds the "we" versus the "I," I think is the big thing.

What do you like best about living in Las Vegas?

I love the opportunities that Las Vegas has created, not just for me but for my family. I'll never take that for granted. This community is definitely a place where whether you're young or you're old, you have the ability to go to work and you have the ability to get a job. It's affordable so you can have that American dream; you can get that house that you want. You can afford it unlike in California or being somewhere else. Right now, we have greater opportunities here than I've seen anywhere else. It's how do you seize on those opportunities?

Aside from Las Vegas, which is our industry, how do you feel about—not the gaming industry—how do you feel about gambling, and is that a problem on Guam?

Yes, gambling is a problem. *Illegal* gambling is what we're going to call it, because it's not gambling. Is it a problem? Yes. Is it a problem out here? It can potentially be a problem, yes. I think it's like drugs, like alcohol. Just put gambling up on that mix. But that same issue of gaming—I don't want to call it gambling—of gaming, there's two ways to look at it. It can be a problem if you participate in the problem, or it can be an opportunity in terms of education and things that it could pay for depending on the economy that it comes from. I think it's different. There's different ways to answer that based on what the intent is, I think.

I'm trying to draw a distinction between the gaming industry, which is a business—

And gambling-gambling.

—and gambling as a habit.

Yes. There is gambling. There is cockfighting, which is a form of gambling. There is poker games as a form of gambling. The problem you have is that people on Guam and in our culture

don't see it as a problem because you are all together. They don't see it. It's not me by myself; it's me going to bingo with grandma. The six of us are going to bingo after lunch or after dinner. It's us spending the evening together. The dad, the grandpa, the brothers, all of them, fighting chickens. While it may seem like a problem, they don't really see it as a problem. That's the way I look at it. I've never been involved in it, so I don't really… It's so weird.

A group activity doesn't necessarily have to be a problem.

Right. But it can be a problem. It can.

When you were growing up, did you learn of any hierarchy in the Pacific Islands? What's the founding story of how people ended up on Guam?

I have to go back and check that. I've got to get back to you on that one because I want to try to get that right. [Otherwise] I'm going to speculate and I don't want to get it wrong.

We talked a little bit about discrimination. Have you noticed an uptick in it since the pandemic began?

I think discrimination has always been there. I just think during the pandemic the reason why—and this is my opinion—at least on my part, I have faced discrimination and every minority, someone is going to have a story—or a lot of people are going to have stories about discrimination. Being on the other side, I think the reason why you've seen an uptick in discrimination or you're seeing—I don't want to even call it an uptick—there's more awareness being generated about discrimination.

It's everything from the president of the United States calling it the virus from China. That's the first rhetoric, the conversation that starts it, that then stems from people believing it. It's irresponsible at best. That's an irresponsible comment that generates this conversation about ethnicity and diversity. There's that. But then you also have the African American community

and their story. I think for me, especially in speaking to my Black friends, it's very important that we don't bring it together.

I understand my place. I understand that I've been discriminated against. But they have their place as well, and they've been fighting for a very long time to get to the place of equity and accessibility. Equity is a big deal to them. I don't think we should ever combine the two. I think it's inappropriate. It doesn't do justice to the George Floyds, the Breonna Taylors of the world that have struggled. My Black friends are empathetic to that because I hear it; we talk about it. Unless you understand that—I understand from being a Pacific Islander [who is] sometimes put into the Asian [category] and sometimes put into that with COVID; there's *that* and then there's *this*. I don't think that the discrimination conversation should ever be combined together on that, because those are historical systemic issues and challenges that the Black community has faced and continues to face that date back even prior to me. It just continues and continues and continues. Versus COVID, them blaming the Chinese and everyone else; that's different. Now, do we deal with similar discriminations? Yes. Is discrimination discrimination? Absolutely. But I just think they're very different.

You anticipated my next question, so perfect. Why is it valuable for us to collect an interview such as yours?

Especially at this time in history and where we're at, I think more than ever it's important that we tell stories that we teach our children and we teach the next generation that not everyone is going to think alike, be alike—that we come from different lifestyles and families and we all have different histories. I think being able to capture that in the work that you do is incredibly valuable so that my daughter can not only have a record of where she comes from, but also that this generation can see—and the next generation, and the generation after her can see—that this

is how the world is; this is how the world is made. There are many different people of different qualities of life. For the Pacific Islander, for the Asian Pacific Islander, our story is not told. We are the minority of all minorities, for crying out loud. There's so many of us here. There's so many of us here in Las Vegas. Whether it's my story or somebody else's story, our voices also need to be heard, and so does everyone else's. It's something that I support. It's something that I think is really important.

[Colloquy not transcribed]

Now I am going to put all of you on the spot. If you have a question for Ms. Castro, would you like to ask it?

KP: I actually had a comment.

You're Kristel.

KP: Sorry. My name is Kristel. I'm Filipino and I just found it so interesting that your story is similar to my mom's story, and the perspective that you told from it is really eye-opening. You have a daughter who is growing up, and I just find it so interesting, because I see a lot of similarities from your story and how my mom came here to the United States. I just think it's really inspiring, and so thank you for opening my perspective to how my mom has kind of… She's also that strong woman type figure, and so it's just really inspiring.

I think it's important the sacrifices that are made. Your parents choosing not to be home and to be with their family is a sacrifice that's made so that you could have bigger opportunities and you could see the world differently than maybe she has, right? I never realized that until I am a parent and I have to make those decisions. *Do I take her home? Do I raise her here? What do we do?* Either way we'll be successful whatever we do, and so that's good.

NC: Adding on to that I relate to what she just said and how you were talking about being mixed, because I'm also mixed. My dad is Filipino, and on my mom's side, she's half Filipino, and so they had a similar story about coming to America and settling in Vegas, too. They still live here, too. It does add up to understand why a lot of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders choose Vegas as a home, I feel like, because of the opportunities.

I think it's the opportunities, but also it's small. It's not really small. But I do think the weather—because I always say the same thing, "Why is everybody here? Why does everybody come here?" But I think, one, because of the opportunities; but, two, it's because we're still a small town. You still get that small-town feeling versus a bigger city. That's my thought.

AY: I really appreciated your story. I'm Ayrton, by the way, for the record. I'm Hawaiian so I'm kind of the melting pot of everything. I have that Filipino influence that came over to pick the pineapples in the pineapple fields. My great-grandmother disapproved of my mom because she was Filipino and my mom was Chinese, and you had that cultural clash. Anything I would have to ask you would be, if you could sit as a fly on the wall, would you want to just listen to your great-grandparents or grandparents speak about just their life story? And is there something from their life that you didn't necessarily learn that you would have wanted to?

Yes. I'm sad. I'm sad now that I'm older, smarter, wiser and I have greater appreciation for history and culture, I'm sad I didn't unpack their life, their story. I'm sad I didn't sit and say, *Explain this to me; explain that to me.* I know my cousins have it. I know my sister for real has it. I can sit down with her and ask her. But I should have been more involved. If there is anything that I can leave you with based upon that is spend time understanding—while they're alive if you can get it—understanding your culture and your history because there's no better way. It doesn't make sense unless somebody else is living it. You can read it in a book and you're like, *Ah, okay*.

But when you hear it from someone and you can experience it, it's very different. If you have grandparents that are alive, and you can, go write that stuff down. You know why you should do that? Because you don't have kids now. When I was your age, I didn't care. But now that I have a daughter, I'm like, *How do I explain this to her?* That's why I think your work is so valuable. I think your work as a historian in capturing this is so important because somebody is going to have to figure out what the responses are. I agree, yes.

CW: That's really great. I'm Chinese. My mom lives in China, in Beijing, and so she got to experience a lot of what happened in '89, for example. It's always been really interesting talking to her. I think our parents have such a big influence on our lives. Of course, they're our parents. But I was just curious, why did your father choose to move to Vegas and retire here?

Taxes. He said, "I'm done working. I'm retiring. I don't want to live on Guam anymore. You guys are growing up. I'm going to go where it's cheap, where I can afford a house and live off of my retirement." His sister lived out here because they were retiring, too. They all decided to come out together and settled in Las Vegas, and that's how we came.

What's interesting, another thing too, when you talk about your mom and you talk about your parents and you talk about their experiences—I'm in my forties now, and I see behaviors in myself that remind me of my mom and my dad, good and bad. [Laughter]. Good and bad. To your point of that influence, again I didn't realize. I don't know why it's in your forties do you start to realize. My twenties and thirties, I was too busy: twenties, I was definitely partying; thirties, I was trying to find who I am and build my foundation. In my forties I now am like, *You know what?* You begin to look back. Is that right? Is that what happens?

Yes.

Yes? Okay. You begin to look back and you begin to… *I'm like, I'm so old. Why?* You start being able to look at things.

You just sit there and I'm acting like my mom, or this is like my dad. I'm citing stuff he says like, "You need to know your place in this [family]." It's really hard because when you empower women—I empower my nieces to speak their mind. I empower my daughter, too. We can agree to disagree. I need you to speak. Use your words. That sometimes backfires on you. My dad used to always tell me, "You need to know your place in this family chart, where you stand," because that always meant you're being borderline disrespectful. When we would agree to disagree or we would have a heated conversation without starting with *We're going to agree to disagree*, then he would say, "Angela, watch your place. Know your place in this family." Now I have my niece that I'm struggling with. I recently have told her, in the last two months, "You need to know your place in this family," as Poppa would say. Isn't that sad? That's why I'm like, *Oh my gosh, what is happening?* It has happened, just so you know. It will happen to you guys, and you'll be like*, I remember this lady sat in this room and she told me this and I'm here*.

Angela, thank you so much.

Thank you. It was fun.

This was amazing.

Thank you. I think I get so caught up in my day-to-day life. I was like, "I'm just going to do this." They're like, "What are you doing?" I'm like, "I don't know." They're like, "What do you mean you don't know?" I'm like, "I don't know," which is very rare that I don't know. I'm like, "I'm just going." He's like, "What are you doing?" I'm like, "I don't know." I needed this just as

much as you. Whatever. I just needed the time to not answer my phone, not deal with the politics outside, and just be able to share. I appreciate you guys. It's a gift to me, too.

Thank you so much.

You're welcome. If there's anything that you guys need, let me know.

[End of recorded interview]