The Oral Legal History Project
University of Pennsylvania Law School

Transcript
Interview with Justice Cruz Reynoso

conducted at the Biddle Law Library
on Friday, March 2, 2001
by Will Proctor
Will Proctor: Good afternoon. I'm Will Proctor and I'm hear with the Oral Legal History Project of the University of Pennsylvania. Today we are interviewing professor Cruz Reynoso. Today is Friday, March 2, and we are in the law library at the University of Pennsylvania.

Moira O'Keeffe: Oh, we are doing the release.

Will Proctor: He's done, so ...

Cruz Reynoso: My wife used to say I couldn't keep a job. [laughter]

Will Proctor: I was really impressed reading ... I saw a video tape that was on the web of last year's address at the public defender's ... your keynote address at the public defenders annual conference.

Cruz Reynoso: I didn't know they had taped that. I'd like to get a copy of it.

Will Proctor: I can give you the web site. I can send your assistant, Ms. Turnbull, the link.

Cruz Reynoso: Oh, good, good.

Will Proctor: I understand your wife doesn't travel by plane.

Cruz Reynoso: That's right, she just travels by train. (laughter)

Will Proctor: I understand that.

Moira O'Keeffe: We're ready to roll anytime you want.

Will Proctor: Okay. I'm just going to jump right in with questions, if that's okay.

Cruz Reynoso: Certainly.

Will Proctor: We're taping?

Moira O'Keeffe: We're all set, yes.

Will Proctor: Good afternoon Professor Reynoso.

Cruz Reynoso: Good afternoon. Pleased to be here.

Will Proctor: Thank you for joining us. To start out I would like to ask you a little bit about your childhood and early life. You were born on May 2, 1931, in Brea, CA. Can you tell us a little bit about how your parents' heritage and their experience shaped your childhood in Southern California?

Cruz Reynoso: My parents came from Mexico, from a state called Jalisco in the highlands — in Spanish its called los altos — the highlands of Jalisco. They were small independent farmers in that area. They came in the twenties during a time or shortly after a time ... there had been a counter revolution in Mexico. They had just gotten married. They weren't doing too well. The revolutionaries would come. It was a religious revolution against the government. And so they would take a cow in the name in the name of Christ and then the federal government would come by and take a horse in the name of the federal government. And they were left with nothing so they figured they'd better come to this country and they did.
Eventually ... My dad was a farm worker when I was a youngster. Eventually I ended up having five brothers and five sisters. We grew up in Orange County, California at a time when it was very different than today. It was rural. As I indicated my dad was a farm worker, mostly an irrigator in the orange groves. Most of us when we got a certain age started working in the orange groves picking citrus — very young. Sometimes at nine or ten or eleven. We would go work with our older brothers. We would be referred to as *ratos* (rats) because we would nibble around the trees, I assume. Then in a few years we would be big enough to carry the ladders.

We spoke Spanish at home. We went to celebrate Mexican national holidays. At age seven we moved from the little town of Brea, where there were very few Mexicans and Mexican-American families, to a rural *barrio* [neighborhood] in the outskirts of a town called La Habra. We lived in a segregated area. I went as a youngster there in La Habra to a segregated school. At that time there were schools called “The Mexican Schools,” as there were black schools in the south. And so for a few years from two to grade six I attended a segregated school.

There was no question that we were a people different from those who ran the town, who ran the schools, and so on. So I grew up very much understanding that I was an American, but very much a Mexican in terms of culture and ethnicity and religion. I learned ... I saw the problems poor people have, the problems that those who don’t speak English well have, the problems of those who don’t have a lot of political and social power. That clearly has influenced me because one of the matters that made me determine as a lawyer to work on behalf of the folk who didn’t have that political, and economic and social power.

**Will Proctor:** My understanding of geography in southern California isn’t that great, but I understand that La Habra is near Whittier ...

**Cruz Reynoso:** Yes, La Habra is next to Whittier and Brea is next to La Habra. It’s all in the same northern Orange county area. Whittier is actually in Los Angeles county, but they are all together.

**Will Proctor:** ... and I understand that Whittier is a fairly Anglo area.

**Cruz Reynoso:** It was at that time. Its not now, but at that time it was quite Anglo. Indeed while I indicated my background in terms of growing up as a person of immigrant families. Incidentally in Brea however there were so few Mexican families, that everything we did out — we spoke Spanish at home — but everything we did outside the home was in English. We fought with the kids in English, we played in English and so on, so I really grew up bilingually.

When I was in high school a time came when a brother of mine and I had to leave home. I left home. Went to live in Fullerton where I was attending high school. And then my art teacher and her husband, who was then my part-time employer, an artist — at that time I was an art major — invited me to go live with them. They on the other hand were completely Anglo. In fact — this was Mr. and Mrs. Randall — Mrs. Randall could trace her family tree back to the Mayflower, if I remember correctly. Through them, particularly — aside from matters that I had picked up obviously growing up — I learned very much the life of an Anglo family, and I consider them like my second parents. I lived with them while I was in high school, through college. While I was in the military I still considered that my home, until I got married while I was in law school. So I’ve had a quite a distinct sort of upbringing.

**Will Proctor:** Would you say upbringing was typical of a Latino in southern California?
Cruz Reynoso: Up until the time I went to live with the Randalls, very much so, including our starting to work very young. During the summers we would go — we used to say “up north” — we would go to the Central Valley, particularly to the Fresno area to pick grapes, to pick plums, which we called prunes for some reason, and so on.

In some ways — and you never know quite what makes a difference — I was determined to go on with my schooling. I don’t really know quite when that developed. As a youngster, I remember when I was in the segregated school, Wilson School, I tried vary hard not to do well in my studies. I tried to do not poorly because then you got harassed, and not well, because then you got to be harassed. I tried very hard to be in the middle. But despite my best efforts, during the fifth grade if I remember correctly, or maybe it was the sixth grade — no the fifth grade — I started doing well.

I don’t know … I remember getting very interested in a whole series of books having to do with dinosaurs. I started reading and reading. And I guess all that reading helped me do well with grades. And sure enough all the kids started calling me el profe, which means the professor. And that was big insult. So I don’t know how many fights I had to protect my honor when they called me el profe.

But somehow during that time … I was one of those youngsters who really believed what folk in authority told you, including my teachers. And the teachers did speak to use about the value of education, about democracy — being able to serve the people, being a servant of the people not the master of the people — and I believed all those things. So I think in some ways that inspired me affirmatively to keep on going.

Then you ran into negative experiences. One time when we were in the Sanger area picking grapes I asked the field foreman how long he thought the season would last. He said “Well, I don’t know. Why are you asking.” I said, “We always go back to school late, we have to work doubly hard to catch up, and I was just wondering.” I remember he looked at me — he said [gruff tone of voice], “Why you’re the first Mexican kid I ever talked to who was interested in education.” We’ll he must not have met too many of us. But I remember feeling furious inside. And I remember thinking to myself, “Someday I’ll go and look him up. I’ll have my college diploma in my left hand and poke him in the nose with my right hand!” But as you might have guessed I read about Mahatma Gandhi after that and about non-violence, so I never did look him up. But I remember that was sort of a negative impulse. And I was determined to show that folk in my condition of life could do well.

Will Proctor: And was your foreman Caucasian?

Cruz Reynoso: Yes. In California we call them Anglos. Everybody who is not Latino, or back or Asian is called an Anglo. One time I meet with the then-chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and he was Jewish. And he said, “Is it true that in California I’m called an Anglo?” I said, “Sorry, that’s true.” He said, “I can’t conceive of it!” [laughter].

Will Proctor: Did you have any other incidents of conflict with Anglos or was that pretty atypical?

Cruz Reynoso: Well, conflicts, sadly came up sometimes institutionally, sometimes in a personal — but not personal in terms of my experience. I don’t know if I was simply oblivious to issues of discrimination in terms of me personally, but I certainly saw it around me. I saw folks in the barrio being arrested when they shouldn’t have.

On one occasion, we children were picking walnuts. There was some walnut groves near the barrio of … our barrio was called Alta Vista, which means “high view” — the poorer the barrio the fancier the name. And the ranchers would allow us to go and pick walnuts
after the walnut picking season came to an end. So we would pick walnuts. We would take them home and sell them to buyers who would come by seasonably. And on one occasion — I don’t know whether there had been a sale of that ranch — but a gentleman came by and ordered us off the land. Most of us left, but I had a rather stubborn older brother, who said, “We’ve got a right to be here. We’ve always been permitted to be here.” And so of course the police came and arrested him.

Another time, sad to say, I saw my dad arrested. He was a very gentle man, and as he was being put into the police car he was kicked, physically, by a police officer. He wasn’t hurt, but I remember just the indignity of it.

I was asked to be the head — the supervisor, the leader — of a junior high Y group that was all male and Mexican-American from the barrios near the town of La Habra. There were several barrios near the La Habra. And on one occasion I saw two of my young boys — they were mid-school boys, I suppose ten or eleven or twelve in through there … maybe thirteen up to fourteen — Anyway, I saw two of them standing in front of a hall — a hall that was the boy scout hall in La Habra on main street. I was driving my old Model A [Ford]. I stopped. I went to ask why they didn’t go in because it was a school sponsored dance.

And they said, “They won’t let us in because we are Mexican.”

I said, “You’ve gotta be wrong. This is a school sponsored dance.”

I went in and the fellow in charge was a fellow we called “Red,” because of his red hair, who was a scout master and I had been in his troop.

So I went in and I said, “Hey Red, there are a couple of my kids outside and they say they aren’t allowed to come in because they are Mexican. Surely that’s gotta be a mistake.”

He said, “No that’s right. We’re afraid there’ll be problems if we let them in.”

So I found out who was sponsoring it. It was a service club. I found out who the officers were. I went to see them to suggest to them that maybe that wasn’t the best thing to do. It was my first experience in being asked to leave people’s offices. (laughter) They weren’t very happy to hear from me.

But there are too many incidents like that, including of course the segregated school, where issues of discrimination came up. The segregated school for example. I thought the teachers were good. I liked the school. But the whole atmosphere of segregation was an atmosphere that told us who we were and we were expected to be in our place.

Sad to say in some ways, most of us in the Latino community in the barrio sort of accepted that. That is most of the youngsters that I went to school with in the segregated school didn’t finish high school. None so far as I know went on to college. And so on. It became what was expected by society. There were of course the economic pressures to work to help the family. In some ways at that time I was exception to have finished high school and then gone on to college.

**Will Proctor:** On a more national level — we’ve spoken a little bit some of the events on a local and regional level that influenced your childhood — but on a more national level there were other events going on. For example, you were born during the depression and during your formative years World War II was taking place. How did those events influence your childhood?
Cruz Reynoso: We were actually fortunate that my dad apparently had a good reputation as a being hard worker. So even though things were very hard, my dad worked all the time. And during the Depression there were hobos, as we called them — homeless people — we called them hobos then, who would come and knock on the door, seeking food. And my mother was always more than accommodating. And she would set out this great feast for them with *tortillas* and *carnitas* (meats dishes), and *frijoles* (beans), and *arroz* (rice) and all that.

We children would complain to her that she feed the hobos better than she fed us. She never denied it. She said we were lucky to have a father who was working and we had a roof over our heads and clothing on our shoulders and food on the table. And we had a duty to share it with others. And I’m sure that those teachings became very much a part of me.

Interestingly my dad was not much of an organization person. I heard about a strike that was going on during the Depression in the citrus groves and my dad was a non-participant. He supported the strikers but didn’t go out and picket and so on. I’m not quite sure how that influenced me because I turned out to be a far more activist person.

Then during the Second World War, you have so many experiences that influenced you. For example, for a while my dad left being a farm worker and went to work in the shipyards. You know what he did in the shipyards? He did complicated electrical work. He couldn’t even speak English. He had only gone to school for a few months in Mexico. Yet they needed workers. So they did a grid with colored electrical wires, quite complicated, and they would show it to him — my dad was smart enough I guess to do that — and they say look follow this grid and work on these ships, it was in the shipyards.

And so I was always interested in how, when society really needs something, they can find a way to have it happen. And I’ve been impacted by those memories in all of the discussions that we have of affirmative action in employment, the standardized test that we have that have a tendency of excluding so many people and we declare them unqualified. And my experience has been, beginning as a youngster, that so often those processes are used to exclude people, not to include them. So I’m sure those experiences impacted my thinking.

And then when … the War was a war to bring democracy to the world. It was a war, we were told, for the highest ideals. And folk were of course brought into the military by law. And were they were brown or black or white, they went abroad. And when those soldiers came back — and I knew many of them — they came back with a very different attitude. A friend of mine bought a home — who was raised in the *barrio* — bought a home, we used to say “downtown” in La Habra, where there were very few Mexican and Mexican-American families. As soon as he bought a home he told me his Anglo neighbors offered to buy it from him for twice the money he had paid. He said, “Wait a minute.” He said, “I went abroad. My life was endangered. My buddies’ lives were endangered. Some were killed, others were injured, so we could have the right to live any place we want to. I’m going to stay here.” So it brought a different attitude and I’m sure that that captured my own interest.

Then there were institutional matters. I saw that the *barrios* where we lived didn’t have side walks, had paved streets with big holes in them that weren’t cared for the way other areas were, we had no sewer system (we did have running water) and I just saw the inequalities of how folk were faced in our society.

One story that I tell has to do with the post office. We used to have to go to town to pick up our mail. At one time the son of a large rancher in the area, a Basque immigrant by the name of Bastanturi — You still see roads named after him, and my dad used to work
for him when we were young and living in Brea — But his son, who had grown up, built a house about two blocks away from our house in the barrio in the orange grove. And by golly the rural delivery person would drive all the way through areas that weren’t populated to deliver rural delivery mail to him — would not go an extra couple of blocks to deliver to our barrio. So I went to talk to the postmistress and I asked her if we could get rural delivery. After all he was getting it why couldn’t they just go a little bit farther? And she said to me, “Well, that’s none of my business. That’s up to Washington, D.C.”

Well, in retrospect I sort of doubt that that was true. But I said, “Well, what do we need to do to get rural delivery?”

And she said, “You’ve got to write to the Postmaster.” — At that time there was a Postmaster.

I must have been about thirteen or so at that time. So I figured, “Well, if that’s what I’ve got to do, that’s what I’ll do.” So I went around and I prepared a little petition and got all the adults in barrio to sign it and I sent it off to Washington with my forwarding letter.

And sure enough I got a letter. And it was type-written. And it said, “Dear Mr. Reynoso,” — first time I had ever been called Mister — and they said, “We got your letter. We’re going to check it out.” They said, “Unfortunately we couldn’t find the petition you referred to in your letter.” That worried me for years until I worked for the government many years later and figured it out — they’d lost my petition.

Nonetheless, two or three months after that ... incidentally when I was going around getting the petition, many adults would smile and figured that I was wasting my time.

My dad used to say to me, yes I got involved in some of these issues, he’d say, “Ah, Cruz ¡Qué metiche eres!” — he’d say, “Cruz, what a metiche you are!” — A metiche is a person who puts his nose in other people’s business. He figured that government is other people’s business. And, as I say, I really believed what I was reading and hearing in school — Government should be responsive. So anyway, but I think most adults agreed with my dad incidentally.

So nonetheless I sent the letter off. I get this letter back. Two or three months later we get a note in our boxes saying please prepare to receive rural delivery service. I went in to thank the postmistress for what I had imagined was all her efforts on our part. And I have never been received as icily. I think what happened was in Washington they didn’t know about barrrios, they didn’t know about Chicanos and Mexican-Americans and all that. They just knew that somebody wasn’t being served who should be served. And I think she got a talking to. And that’s why she received me so icily.

But we got our rural delivery. And to me, I remember that was an early ... I remember being enthusiastic about the notion that government if petitioned really could respond. I’m sure that all of those experiences really influenced to eventually decide not to be an artist, and be a lawyer because it is lawyers who deal with all those issues.

Will Proctor: You’ve spoken at length about the inequities you faced as a child.

Cruz Reynoso: Yes.

Moira O’Keeffe: Just give me ten seconds. We are having a little trouble here. (pause). And whenever you are ready.

Will Proctor: You’ve spoken at length about the inequities you faced as a child. And also your role as an activist during your childhood. Are these the things that propelled you to attend college?
Cruz Reynoso: I think so. I became clearly determined early on that for those of us who were poor and in the situations in which we found ourselves, about the only opportunity that we had to help ourselves and help those around us — to go on to college. I thought about being a teacher, I thought about being an artist. I thought about other possibilities. But I saw education as the way to help my community, and to help me personally.

Will Proctor: And did you continue as an art major through both your associate’s degree and your bachelor’s degree?

Cruz Reynoso: No, I just continued as an art major in high school. Even by the time I got to junior college I was beginning to consider the law as a career. And I recall trying to be sure that as an undergraduate I took the courses that would qualify me to go to law school.

Will Proctor: And was your family supportive of your decision to go to college and then on to law school?

Cruz Reynoso: My mother actually was disappointed that her boys ... in our family we had a group of boys, my brothers, and then a group of girls, my sisters, then it got mixed up, brothers and sister. And she used to say, “Ah, ¡Que flojos me resultaron mis hijos! En vez de estar trabajando andan leyendo libros.” — “Look at how lazy my boys have turned out to be! Instead of being out there working, they’re reading books.”

So she was rather disappointed that we didn’t quite school at age sixteen and she would say, “to help her raise our girls as they should be raised,” as she would say, by which she meant that they would have enough money to buy some nice dresses. I remember one of my sisters fell and broke her tooth. We didn’t have the money to send her to a dentist. And those were the things my mom hoped for for the younger children. So I was the third child. So I was pretty high up in terms of age. And so she was hoping that we would quit and help the family economically as was needed. And so in some ways she was disappointed.

My dad used to say, “A mí no me importa a lo que hagan después que no sean ladrones.” He’d say, “I don’t care what you do when you grow up, so long as you don’t grow up to be thieves.” By which he meant, “so long as you do something honorable. And he was quite proud of being a farm worker and working hard and helping bring forth the citrus and the fruit that would help feed the people of this state and this country and this nation and this world. So he always just looked at being honorable in terms of what one did to support one’s family. So he had no objection to our proceeding.

But neither did they have a concept of what it meant to go to college. That was not their life. Their life was not a life of books, and literature. There life was a life of hard working farm folk, basically. So for example, I don’t think either of my parents attended my graduation from the community college, or from college, or even from law school. And it took a long time for my parents ...

I remember my mother, having a sense of pride, in what I was doing. I was visiting one time at home when I was in law school and a neighbor came over and she mentioned to my neighbor that I was studying to be a lawyer. And I thought I noticed a glint of pride as she said that. That was the first time I had noticed that.

My dad ... I remember somebody else told me that he had been honored by an organization that he belonged to for being the father of the first Latino judge, state supreme court justice in California. And they told me that tears welled in his eyes as he was being honored, so eventually they got there, but I can’t tell you they were really there early on.
Will Proctor: You mentioned a bit about your mom’s expectations that you’d help out with your sisters. Did you continue to have family obligations while you were in school? Did you have to help out in terms of doing farm work, or bringing home money to still help pay for your sisters’ dresses?

Cruz Reynoso: Until the time that I left home … first as a farm worker and then later I worked as a pin boy, pin setter, in bowling alleys. In those days there wasn’t equipment that picked up the pins. There were boys and men that picked them up, and then set up the pins for the bowlers to continue playing. And during all the time that I was at home, I would be helping financially with the expenses. When I left home then I did not. I was then supporting myself. And I was able to support myself even in high school and college because I would work long hours on weekends basically.

Will Proctor: You also mentioned that your mom had expected your older brothers to help out as well. Did they attend college or pursue higher education?

Cruz Reynoso: I was actually the first in my family to go on to college. My oldest brother married young. My next oldest brother left home about the same time that I did. I remember we had some disagreement with my mom. I even forget now what it was. I do remember that he left right away, slept in jail the first night because he had no place to sleep, and joined the military the next day.

I was a far more methodical person I suppose. At that time I remember that I decide that I have to leave, but I waited until such time as I could leave home and continue with my education. So I went to live in Fullerton where the high school was. A young friend of mine had invited me to go live with him. And so I went and lived with him for a semester until the Randalls, whom I mentioned earlier — Irene and Forrest Randall — invited me to go live with them. So I think I was a more methodical, thoughtful person than at least my older brother. Because I knew, as I indicated, early on that I need to get that education. So I think I did make decisions that permitted me to continue.

A time came though, when I was in college, where my family was having real problems and my younger brother was basically left in charge of the family. And I had a great sense of guilt and a sense of urgency to quit school at that time to help the family. And it was only through the persuasion of the Randalls that I decided not to. They convinced me that I could do more good for the family if I continued with my education. But folk don’t realize very often, at least that’s been my experience, the pressure and the guilt that I still feel to this day. I mean it was my kid brother who kept the family together. I was a year and a half older. I probably could have earned more money that he, etc. etc. And yet it was he who took on that burden. And those are tough situations for young people who find themselves in that quandary.

Will Proctor: You mentioned that you still feel guilt to this day about that decision. But in retrospect do you feel like you made the best decision for yourself and your family?

Cruz Reynoso: I do, I do. Yeah. But you never know. You know what if I had quit and have helped encourage my sisters, all of who were younger, to continue with their schooling? Maybe if I had been there, I could have helped with that. If I had been there maybe my youngest brother would not have ended up being a drug addict and in prison for many years. I mean I think I made the right decision, but there’s always that little question of what, how could you have influenced your brothers and sisters to have — most of them have done quite well — but would they have done better had I been there? So there is always a little bit of a question I must say.
Will Proctor: In following along your family lines and talking about the influence you might have had on your brothers and sisters, did your second older brother's decision to join the military have any influence on your decision to join the army?

Cruz Reynoso: No, not really. No, in fact it was in reverse. The fact that I went to college influenced him, while he was in the military, to go to college after he got out. So he and I are the only ones who attended college of my brothers and sisters. And he did, he tells me, because I had been there. In fact he went to the same community college and sort of followed in my footsteps even though he was a year and a half older than I was.

No I went into the military ... Even there I was rather methodical. It was during the Korean War. I had a deferment because I was a student. When I graduated, the war was coming to an end. Nonetheless I called into the draft board that I had graduated and was eligible to be drafted. I was drafted. So I was a draftee for two years. But I actually did it on purpose. I wanted to go into the military during the summer so I could get out two years thereafter and be able pick up with my education. So I served for two years in the military between college and law school.

Will Proctor: When you went to serve in the military you moved all the way across country to Ft. Holabird, MD. What was it like being so far from your home and so far from your family?

Cruz Reynoso: Well, I had my basic training in California — Ft. ??? at the time. It has been decommissioned. Do you use the term “decommissioned” for a fort? It's not a fort any more. When I was there I must have done pretty well in some exams because they asked me if I was willing to be a member of the counter intelligence corps. So I thought that sounded better than being a foot soldier so I said sure. So they kept me for a second round of training at basic training — advanced basic training. Then I was sent to Ft. Holabird to be in the counter intelligence corps school. And so we were taught there all about counter intelligence. Then there after I was sent to Washington, D.C.

That was in some ways a difficult time because it was during the McCarthy Era which interestingly came to an end during the time that I was in Ft. Hollibird. I had always been in favor of civil rights. Folk now forget that in those days anybody who was in favor of civil rights was accused of being a communist, or a fellow traveler. They would say, "Hey, the communist say they are in favor of civil rights, therefor if you are in favor of civil rights, you must be a communist." So to be in a school like Ft. Hollibird, where most of the folk there seemed to be supporters of Sen. McCarthy's view, was not easy.

At one point, one of the instructions was saying something about civil rights and communism and all that, and I couldn't take it anymore. I got up and disagreed with everything he was saying. And all my buddies said, "Well Cruz, we'll see you in Korea." [laughter]. And nothing happened. He must of thought I was kidding. He probably didn't take what I said seriously. So I graduated and I was sent to Washington, D.C.

During the time that I was there, the McCarthy, Joseph McCarthy, hearings took place. And McCarthy went from being a hero in the army to — and of all the military he was most heroic in the army — to then being an enemy of the army. It's interesting how quickly things changed.

I had gotten used, by that I think, and living with the Randalls, of not being in daily communication with my brothers and sisters. So I don't think that it was a trauma for me to be in Ft. Hollibird. It was quite an experience. I had never been east of the Sierras, I don't think, until I was in the military. So to come to the east coast where the trees are so different and the rain is so different, was quite traumatic and dramatic — but not in terms of the family. I had gotten used to sort of being by myself.
And the same sort of thing happened in Washington. I went there with some buddies. We rented some places. We didn’t serve in uniform when I was in Washington. And again I had tremendously interesting experience in Washington. I meet my wife in Washington. That’s a good experience. But I didn’t have a sense of disconnection with my family. I knew I’d be going back to California.

Will Proctor: You stayed quite busy while you were in Washington it sounds like. With your work at Ft. Hollibird, and meeting your wife. You also continued your studies at George Washington University. Was that part of your training, or was that something else that you again took on …

Cruz Reynoso: No, after being a student, to be on a job where one could quit at five or five-thirty was a novelty. So I figured hey I’ll just take a couple of economic and history courses at GW so I took those courses at night.

Will Proctor: Did you get married while you were in Washington?

Cruz Reynoso: No, I went back to law school and the woman who is now my wife and I really weren’t quite sure we were going to get married. But we kept communicating during my first year in law school. I went to visit her during that summer and at the end of the summer after my first year of law school we decided to get married. So we got married on Labor Day weekend that summer.

Will Proctor: And did she then move to California …

Cruz Reynoso: She did.

Will Proctor: You attended Boalt Hall at UC, Berkley and graduated with an L.L.B. in 1958. What was your experience like there?

Cruz Reynoso: I went to law school because I wanted to be a lawyer. And my idea of a lawyer was small town lawyer. I wanted to go practice in a small town, help people deal with some of the inequities that I had seen growing up. I had had very little contact with lawyers. Really just two. One, which again influenced me, was one time when my parents needed a lawyer, and they looked all around Orange County, could not find one Spanish speaking lawyer. So I went with them as their translator. And I remember thinking you know we should have lawyers who can speak Spanish and understand the culture of folks like my parents.

Then another time when I told Mr. and Mrs. Randall that I had pretty well decided to go to law school, and they were somewhat disappointed that I was not going to be an artist. But they said, “if you’re going to go to law school, you at least should meet a lawyer.” So they introduced me to their family lawyer. I went and talked to him for half an hour. I remember walking out, thinking. “Aha, I met a lawyer, now I’m perfectly qualified to go to law school.”

So I didn’t know anything about law schools. In fact, the only reason I went to Berkley, it was that it was a public school, therefor it was cheap and I could afford it and it was in northern California and I had spent all my life in southern California, so I was looking for a change in geography, were sort of the only reasons. When I got there, they said, “Oh, your so lucky to be at such a fine law school.” And all that. I didn’t know whether it was a good law school or a bad law school.

So I had gone there expecting to hear about the grandiose notions of the law: about equality, and freedom and all that. When I got there I found very little of that. But I had
gone there to be a lawyer. So I figured those were the things I needed to learn. And
needed to be a lawyer. So I always enjoyed the study of law. I enjoyed being able work
with a problem and look at it from various points of view and analyze it and so on.

I did not enjoy law school. I used to refer to it as a cadet atmosphere. I had just gotten
out of the military. When I went there — it was quite different than now — in our
freshmen year they would sit us all alphabetically. And then we would attend school six
days a week. Monday ... well, each day from Monday through Saturday morning, so our
lives were regimented, so I think that’s why I used to refer to it as a cadet atmosphere.

But I enjoyed the law and enjoyed many of my colleagues. So the experience was a good
a good experience, but quite different than I thought it would be.

Will Proctor: My dad went to medical school and he said in his day they had classes six days a week as
well and so he gives me hard time saying, “You modern ...

Cruz Reynoso: Yeah, softies! [laughter].

Will Proctor: At the time you attended Boalt though, the modern civil rights movement was nascent. A
professor at Boalt, Geoffrey Hazard — I believe he came a year after you left. He came
in the fall of 1958 and you graduated in the spring of that year —

Cruz Reynoso: Yes.

Will Proctor: He was very active in propelling the civil rights movement at Boalt. Was there anything
going on while you were there? Or did you have any involvement with the civil rights
movement while you were there?

Cruz Reynoso: No. While I was ... I always viewed my role as a lawyer in a dual capacity. One as a
lawyer to represent people. The other as a person who understood the relationships of the
law and Constitution to the people and as a citizen I would be able to help people also —
not just as a lawyer. So when I was in law school, for example, there was a political
campaign going on. And one of the state-wide candidates was a Mexican-American,
Chicano, out of Denver, a lawyer. And I remember getting involved in his campaign and
meeting with some of the Latino community in San Francisco. But in the law school
itself, there was zero going on in that regard, in deed. It probably would have been
difficult since I was the only Chicano in my class. We had one Asian-American and no
blacks. I believe we had three or four women. So that was the extent of the diversity in
my own class.

Will Proctor: Wow. You had mentioned an interest in constitutional law and being able to look at a
problem from various angles. Was this what propelled you to pursue studies at the
National University of Mexico City?

Cruz Reynoso: I think that really had to do more with my obvious natural interest in Mexico. And I had
also thought or toyed with idea of maybe doing work in the international field. I was
interested in constitutional law, so at that time the law school had some fellowships for
folk who were interested in studying in other countries. I was very interested in a
provision of Mexican law that’s somewhat equivalent to the writ of habeas corpus. It’s
called el huísto de umbaro. And so I studied that on my own under the tutelage of a
professor at Boalt.

And I suppose that because of my interested I got a fellowship to go to Mexico to study
for just six months. So I went to the National University. I got there when weren’t
classes going on. I met the dean and got to know him. And I studied on my own until
classes began. Then I attended the classes having to do with el huísto de umbaro. And
my wife and I attended some evening classes, called winter classes, on all kinds of matters pertaining to Mexican culture. So I learned a great deal and I enjoyed it but — and it had to do with my interest in constitutional law — but it also had to do with my natural interest in Mexico.

I had tried to make sure that I learned enough Spanish, because at home, the Spanish we learned was the Spanish of agricultural folk, of folk from the country. And on one occasion, I remember when I was in high school, I had the car radio on and the Mexican president was delivering his state of the union speech. I could hardly understand anything he was saying. I didn’t understand any terms pertaining to economics, or politics and so on. I remember thinking to myself, “Gee, you know if I’m going to be an educated person, I’ve got to at least be able to understand what a president of Mexico is saying.” So I took Spanish classes in college and high school and I took a lot of Latin-American literature in college. So going to Mexico was an opportunity to again perfect my Spanish professionally speaking, and indeed when I started practicing law it came … it was in indeed very helpful.

**Will Proctor:** How did living in Mexico change your perception of the Hispanic movement in Southern California and the United States at large?

**Cruz Reynoso:** I suppose that it buttressed what I already in some ways knew. When I graduated from Pomona College, I went to Mexico for about a month before going into the military. And was just struck with how distinct we who were Chicanos, or Mexican-Americans, were from Mexicans. We really did live in a different culture.

And there was a certain element, among Mexican intellectuals at least, of looking down on Mexican-Americans, who were often referred to as *pochos*, which is somewhat of a derogatory term for a Mexican-American. In meeting with particularly some of the university students, some of them would say, “Gee,” they would say to me that I was the first *pocha* they had talked to who knew as much as I did about world history, and Latin-American literature, and all that. So there was a certain derisiveness between Mexicans and Chicanos, even those who had immigrated. And that really was confirmed during the time that we were in Mexico.

Secondly, I always knew that I was a person who wanted to be involved in one’s own community. And living in Mexico was a reminder of how little one can get involved if one is not in one’s own neighborhood. So I think it probably confirmed, or fortified, my notion that I did not want to be in international law, did not want to be dealing with oil companies and so on. I wanted to be a lawyer in my community, working to help those folk, supporting my family, and being a real part of the community.

**Will Proctor:** When you came back to the United States and started your early career, you continually moved amongst the private sector, government and academia. Was it this feeling of needing to be tied to your community that influenced you to keep a hand in each of these areas of your career?

**Cruz Reynoso:** I’ve been fortunate in a way that but for my first job interviews, I’ve never really sought a job. So I accepted the position in Imperial County — a small rural area of California, had a large percentage of Mexican-Americans and Mexicans living there right next to the border. And I accepted a position that was both as a lawyer and as assistant to the state senator. So I immediately had entrance with the folk in the community and immediately became active in many organizations including the leading Mexican-American organizations at that time, particularly a group called the Community Service Organization. It was a group … the chief staff person for that group at that time was Cesar Chavez, who later became well know as a civil rights and farm labor organizer and leader. So I immediately became very involved in the community.
Opportunities came up there after that were related to that, for example after practicing several years, I was appointed by then Governor Pat Brown to be Assistant Executive Director of the Fair Employment Practices Commission. I view that as simply an extension of what I was doing, but I could do it on a broader scale. So instead of just helping each individual with cases of discrimination, maybe I could influence folk by speaking to the government officials and private employers and so on. So that seemed to be like a natural evolution for me.

Then, while I was there, the Governor invited me to be a staff secretary in his own office. And again to me that seemed like a natural evolution. I continued to be active with Latino and other groups throughout the state of California. Then I returned to practice in Imperial County. By that time, I had started with a small firm, then I opened my own office. I was a solo practitioner. I hired a couple of associates as my work progressed. And then by the time that I returned to El Centro in Imperial County, one of my associates had been with me long enough that we formed a partnership.

Six months after I returned I got a phone call from Washington where I was invited to go and talk to the chair who invited me to go back to go to Washington to work with the EEOC [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission]. It was a new organization. Again, it seemed to me it was an extension of the things that I was interested in. I had always told my wife that one day we would take a leave of absence from my law firm. I had an ideal of having a law firm and being able to take leaves of absences for public service. She didn’t quite believe that we’d go Washington. But by golly we did. We went back to Washington. I served as Assistant Associate General Counsel of the EEOC for about a year and a half or so.

And we enjoyed Washington, but then I was invited to go back to San Francisco to join a poverty law firm called California Rural Legal Assistance. I had actually been in touch with a gentleman, a fellow by the name of Jim Laurens, who had put that program together. I had served as Chair of the Board before going to Washington, D.C., but had to quit when I went to Washington. So I knew the program very well. I was reluctant to join it frankly after working that long to build up my law firm. But eventually I was persuaded to join CRLA and I became a poverty lawyer for four years. Well that surely was an extension of the interest that I had. We were representing farm workers. We were representing rural poor. At that time we were representing Native Americans. It was all the sort of thing I became a lawyer to do. And so that was great work I must say.

During the time that I was ... the last couple of years I started getting phone calls from law schools saying, “Hey, would you like to teach?” I taught a seminar at Boalt Hall. I taught a seminar at UCLA. And I had never in the world thought of being a law professor when I went to law school. That’s not why I went to law school. But I actually enjoyed the teaching so eventually I was offered a position in New Mexico. I had been so socially and politically and legally active in California that I thought I needed to get away from California to see whether or not I really would like teaching, because I knew it would take time and effort.

So we moved to New Mexico. And it turned out that I did like teaching. So I was there for four years. Even there I was very involved in the community. I hadn’t been there more than a few months when some students came to see me because they thought the bar examiners had made a mistake and failed them when they should have passed. Actually, another professor and I looked at it and we were convinced that they were right. They had made some mechanical errors. So we brought an action against the state bar. [laughter]. I’d only been in town a few months and we were already suing the state bar. The case went up to the New Mexico Supreme Court.
And then, I hadn’t been in town more than a couple of years. The newly elected attorney general asked me to become his chief assistant. I declined because I was teaching. But he said, “Why don’t you become my chief assistant on a part-time basis?” So I did that for several months. So I had ... in New Mexico, in part because it’s only one law school, your quickly in demand to do all kinds of things. So I really very much enjoyed my stay in New Mexico. One of our children was born there. A native New Mexican is called a manito. So I tell people I’m part manito now because my son was born there. But we really enjoyed it. Then I taught for four years there. I really had expected to stay there because I really had enjoyed it and was looking forward ... I had just been named Associate Dean, and I think we were looking forward to my maybe my becoming Dean in a few years.

Then I got a phone call from California. There was a new Governor, Jerry Brown. One of his assistants I knew very well, called and said, “Hey Cruz, the Governor would like to appoint you to a high position in state government. Can you come?”

And I said, “When would I have to come.”

And he said, “Yesterday. This is a very important executive position. We need you right away.”

And I said, “I just can’t. I’m in the middle of a semester.”

And he called back several times and I just kept saying, “You know, I just really can’t.” And then ... so that came to an end.

Much to my surprise he called two or three months later and says, “Well the Governor says that if you can’t accept an executive position can you accept a judicial position?”

I said, “When would I have to report?”

He said, “Next summer.”

I said, “Ah, okay.”

And so we talked about that and I eventually accepted the position, which was on the appellate court. And it turned out that Governor I think wanted to have the government be more representative, I think, of all ethnic and racial groups, one. Secondly he was a great admirer of legal services lawyers. He named many of them — and public interest lawyers including my friend Tony Klein — to high positions in government. Thirdly, he had been very close to Cesar Chavez and considered those who had worked for farm workers in practically heroic terms.

And so the things that I had done many years before where some of my friends said, “Gee Cruz, is this really the right way to get ahead?” Turned out that this Governor many years later looks back and says, “Gee, this person must have done worthwhile things.” And I think for all those reasons, plus the fact that I was a professor, and all that sort of thing, apparently he decided to appoint me to the court of appeal. I was the first Chicano or Latino ever appointed to the court of appeal in California. Sad to say this is in the mid-seventies. Never had there been a Latino on the Court of Appeal.

Will Proctor: It was 1976.

Cruz Reynoso: Yes, right.
Will Proctor: I feel badly because I feel we have moved so quickly through your early career. I mean that encompassed fourteen years and there was quite a bit that you accomplished during your early career and then four years at law school. But continuing on, talking about you appoint to the Third Court of Appeals, what was your experience — the Third Court of Appeals from 1976 to 1982 — what was your experience there like?

Cruz Reynoso: Well, I enjoyed being an appellate judge. I’ve told my friends that in some ways being an appellate judge is a perfect job for a lawyer because your dealing with cases, your analyzing them, your writing. So I enjoyed it a great deal. Sad to say there were a few things that turned out not to be very good there including the fact that we had a couple of judges who when I was later appointed to the Supreme Court [of California] sent communications to the commission that had to confirm me saying that I would not be a good person to be on the Supreme Court.

And at that time we had a new Governor, who had made it clear — I’m sorry an Attorney General — who had made it clear that he didn’t like people like me on the bench. He had decided to run for the Governorship, that Attorney General, and he had made the death penalty the key element of his campaign for the Governorship. And so when I was appointed to the Supreme Court it was rather extraordinary to have a couple of your colleagues say of you that you weren’t, that you shouldn’t, hold that position.

As you might guess, my other colleagues came physically and spoke on my behalf and all that so I was confirmed. In California appellate judges need to be confirmed by a constitutional commission composed of the Chief Justice, the Attorney General, and the Senior Presiding Justice of the California Court of Appeal. And so in that process I was confirmed by the Chief Justice and the Appellate Justice and I had a negative vote from the Attorney General.

The two judges expressed the view that I was too interested in poor people, that I was too interested in Latinos particularly — in fact one said that I felt that they were my constituency. Of course I, one, never said that, nor never felt that. As a judge my constituency was all of the people of the state of California. But that turned out to be a sad experience.

One of the judges later was appointed by the President to a Commission in Washington and the Senators knew of those charges. Oh he had referred to me in his letter as a “professional Mexican.” And so they asked him, you know, what is a “professional Mexican?” And I forget what he responded, but he didn’t think there was anything negative to be calling someone quote “a professional Mexican.” And he said, “It’s nothing worse than calling an Italian a WOP.” And then he used a couple of other pejorative terms and the Senate Committee declined to confirm him for that position. [Laughter]. So that was a sad experience for me in terms of those colleagues.

But beyond that I must say I really had a good time. I mentioned to you that in my younger life and in my later life, I see all the issues of discrimination and how they apply to folk, but I confess that I’ve never seen them really directly applied to me. If they have, they haven’t told me. Fortunately I’ve had a good life professionally. I just haven’t felt it personally. One time in high school a kid called me a “dirty Mexican.” That was pretty clear. I knew what he was about. [Laughter]. But other than something that bald, for me at least, the issues of discrimination that I’ve seen have been more institutional type issues.

Will Proctor: I think its interesting that you talked about the response that this one judge had to you and calling you a “professional Mexican.” And it seems that if the shoe was on the other foot and you called him a “professional Anglo” for ruling in favor of big business or
something like that, and that Anglos were his constituents, that sentiment might be quite different.

Cruz Reynoso: Well, sad to say in some ways I think that he took our legal opinions, and personal opinions — that is philosophically based — somewhat personally. For example, there had been a challenge to an affirmative action plan by the University of California at Davis Law School [De Ronde v. Regents of University of California, 99 Cal. App. 3d 136 (1979)(ordered not published)]. That was after the Bakke [Regents of University of California v. Bakke, 98 S.Ct. 3140 (1978)] decision. He wrote a majority opinion declaring affirmative action unconstitutional under the California constitution, even though the California Supreme Court had already ruled after Bakke, that it was constitutional. I wrote a rather strong dissent, saying appellate court judges have a great deal of power. One piece of power they ought not to have is to completely ignore a recently issued Supreme Court opinion. Then I ended my dissent by saying how ironic it’d be if the Law School at Davis, named after Martin Luther King, was not permitted to be representative of all the people of this state and this country.

And then the Supreme Court took the case and agreed with dissent of course — that was what they had just ruled. And he was quite bitter about that. He took that quite personally. He resigned somewhat later from the Court of Appeals, issued a press conference saying that he could no longer abide being a judge under what he called the “Supreme Court Junta.” That’s how strongly he felt.

Will Proctor: Wow. Well, in spite of all the opposition you faced from this fellow judge, you still managed to move up to the California Supreme Court, and as you mentioned before, become the first Hispanic judge sitting on that court, from 1982 to 1987. What impact did national politics have on the type of cases you saw in state court? During the time you were at the appellate court level, the Carter administration was in place. And yet when you moved to the Supreme Court, the Reagan years had just begun. Did you see any difference in the types of cases that came in?

Cruz Reynoso: Oh sure. I mean we saw, at the Supreme Court level the type of cases we had seen at the Appellate and Supreme Court level in California when the Governor, when Reagan was the Governor in California. When I was with CRLA for example we brought an action where the legislature had passed some legislation at the urging of the Governor that simply did not follow Federal law on eligibility for medical attention. And we brought the action successfully before the appellate court. It was a matter of many hundreds of millions of dollars. I remember the Governor being very unhappy with us, saying, that we were interfering with a democracy because he had acted, the legislature had acted and here this legal services program comes and undoes the work of a democratic society. Of course it didn’t take much for us to point out that they were violating the law, passed by Congress.

And we started seeing, sad to say, even though we had a Democratic Congress, some of those same laws coming out of Washington when we were on the Supreme Court. So we had to deal with some of the welfare laws and some of the similar laws that were coming out of Washington that then affected the state issues. Of course we dealt with the state issues.

Will Proctor: You penned over fifty opinions in your time on the California Supreme Court. Your cases ranged from private disputes over property distribution amongst married couples to high profile city planning cases. You also wrote the opinions for several labor and employment law cases — an area of the law in which you had previously served as a zealous advocate. How did you balance you role as impartial arbiter with a commitment to the rule of law, with your underlying personal commitments to humanity and compassion?
Cruz Reynoso: Any person who's appointed to the Appellate Courts is already a mature person. The person comes already in with a view of life and a view of the world. I don’t think we expect those people to come intellectually neutered at that point. The magic of the Appellate Court system of requiring three judges at the Appellate level and, in California, seven judges on the Supreme Court level, is that by having those folk, all of whom come with different ideas, interact, that the opinions will be clearer, will be shaper, will better serve the people of that jurisdiction — in my case California.

So I felt that I brought something special to the court. There were no other judges who had been farm workers. No other judges who came from immigrant families. No other judges who were bi-lingual as I was. I could share with them my own experiences and my own knowledge just as they share with me their experiences and their knowledge. And I think to have a diverse court, as we did, made for good law. So I never felt that I should ever suggest to them or to me that I should change my social views.

Now, we’re all constrained as judges. When I was on the Court of Appeals, for example, I remember issuing a ruling that affected negatively all of the state workers. I happened to be riding in a van at that time with state workers. But the issue was whether the legislature had a right to do that. I felt that constitutionally they did, even though I happened to disagree with what the legislature did, but I thought they had a right to do that.

So you are constrained by the rules of construction, by the rules of law and being a judge means obeying those rules of construction. Nonetheless, there’s always some room for interpretation at the Appellate Court, but particularly at the Supreme Court, because at the Supreme Court level we’re taking cases where we are expected to establish jurisprudential policy. And I think we are expected as judges to bring to it our own life view of what good jurisprudence, of what good government is, of the role of government. For example, I happen to feel that in a democracy that’s majoritarian, the role of the courts is very special in protecting minorities — and I don’t mean just racial or ethnic minorities — any minority, based on the Constitutional precepts that everybody should be treated equally, with due process and so on.

So the court has a very special role in a democracy. I hate to tell you that I think the U.S. Supreme Court has abandoned that role in the last twenty years. I think they’ve done so erroneously. It think that’s a very important role. And I certainly always felt that that was part of my role as a Supreme Court judge. So you come with it. Another judge might have agreed with a Rehnquist point of view. But by putting all those folk together, hopefully you exchange those views and you end up with good law. So I never saw any conflict between the views that I had had in supporting poor people, in supporting immigration rights, any more than I felt that a lawyer who had represented big business would be so prejudice in favor of big business they would not be able to be fair. So I think that’s, as I say, the magic of having more than one judge making those important decisions.

Will Proctor: I think that one of the things you bring up about the Supreme Court having changed its course over the past several years is true. I have a question though if they’ve really begun to take a role as more neutral arbiters and divorcing themselves from their life experiences, or whether they are really being judicial activist, but just in the opposite direction. Do you think that’s ...

Cruz Reynoso: Oh, I think they are absolute judicial activist. They’re about changing the law and Rehnquist I think has been rather express about that. And sad to say, in my view, they’ve succeeded, particularly in the civil rights and human rights area.
Will Proctor: One of the cases for which you wrote an opinion, *Durces v. Woods*, addressed the issue of whether “the state [may] disadvantage citizen children eligible for governmental assistance on the basis that they live with their brothers and sisters who are undocumented aliens.” Speaking for the majority, you held that the equal protection clause of the California Constitution did not permit such disparate treatment. While the opinion appears legally sound, did you encounter any criticism, as you had at the appellate court level, because you were known as a Chicano advocated and here you were writing an opinion that found in favor of the Chicano community?

Cruz Reynoso: That case was an interesting case in which I will share with you something that reminds me of how difficult it is to reach opinions. We had voted to take that case. And then the Chief Justice assigned that case to me to prepare a memorandum for the court’s considerations before oral argument. I had gone through that case and had reached a contrary conclusion in my first memo, different than the final opinion. Fortunately lawyers were, on both sides, were very, very good and judges, even at Supreme Court level, depend on lawyers and their argument.

We had a custom then, as I’m sure is true now, of discussing the case afterwards. It was a very close case and several of the other judges said, “Cruz, we appreciate the depth of your analysis but why don’t you take a second look at it.” My inclination, my sort of emotional inclination was to come out the way I did. I had actually intellectually come out to a different conclusion initially. I went back after that meeting, read a lot more of the Congressional record and so on and finally reached the conclusion that I do in this opinion and was one really were my colleagues were with me already. So the short answer is I received no criticism on that case. It was a tough case, it was a tough case to analyze and to reach.

One of the difficult things about being an appellate judge is that you try to be fair and when you have a natural inclination to go one way, I think sometimes you know that and so you try extra hard to be fair and sometimes you ended up going a different way out of that strong sense that you’ve got to be fair. So here I had actually intellectually gone against my natural inclination initially, but on spending a lot more time reading in greater depth the Congressional debates I became convinced that this was right not only emotionally but it was the right thing intellectually and legally. This was a very difficult case for me.

Will Proctor: Wow. I hate to wrap up the discussion about your time on the Supreme Court because it sounds so interesting, but I would like to know about how you finished your time on the Supreme Court. You detractors enjoy spinning your departure from the Supreme Court, granting you the “dubious distinction of being the first associate justice of the California Supreme Court to be voted out of office in more than fifty years.” Do you mind sharing your version of events and what lead you to leave the bench?

Cruz Reynoso: Oh, not at all. I indicated to you that the then Attorney General, whose name was Dukemajian, had made the death penalty his campaign for the governorship. And he in fact became governor. He succeeded.

During all that time as Attorney General, then later as Governor he was attacking the Supreme Court as a court that was failing to follow the law because we had had an initiative called the Briggs’ Initiative that re-imposed the death penalty. Then Senator Briggs used to brag that his initiative was tougher on the death penalty than the U.S. Supreme Court had been. He was exactly correct. It was unconstitutional in many respects.

And in California, the trial takes place. The judges interpret the law at the trial court level. Most of them — a few did not — most of them followed the Briggs’ Initiative
figuring that’s California law. Eventually those death penalties got to the Supreme Court. Then we would have to rule on it on the Constitutionality. Some aspects of the Briggs’ Initiative were just clearly unconstitutional in terms of the mandates of the U.S. Supreme Court. So we would overturn a case. By the time that case came to the Supreme Court, several other cases had already been decided erroneously. So all those cases would be reversed.

Now I need to emphasize that not one of those who had been convicted, were ever freed. The option was life imprisonment or the death penalty. And in everyone of those cases, so far as I remember — no there were one or two where it wasn’t true — but in most of those cases we would reverse only the death penalty portion because that’s the portion where the judges had not been applying the Supreme Court ruling. But the court was attacked particularly by some politicians as quote, “Letting all of those killers out on the street.” And that was sort of the attack of the Supreme Court.

It had been directed for years against the Chief Justice, Rose Elizabeth Bird, who was the first woman and first woman chief justice — first woman on the Supreme Court and the first Chief Justice on the Supreme Court — and there was a drum beat of attacks against her. Sad to say, in my view, it was lead by Republicans. The Democrats however I think didn’t want an extra battle on their plates so few of them — some did — but few of them were coming to the protection of Rose Bird.

When I was appointed to the Supreme Court, under our system, we have to stand for confirmation at the next gubernatorial election. So that’s when Dukemejian was running for Governor. And I had been confirmed — also the Appellate Court judges have to be confirmed — I had been confirmed as an Appellate Court Judge. I was confirmed as a Supreme Court Justice. But then I was on the ballot again, five years after I had been on the Supreme Court. At that time, the Chief Justice was also on the ballot, Rose Bird. So the Governor decided to help the campaign against Rose Bird.

I don’t think that the campaign could have had the same power with only Senators and Assembly Men attacking her without the highest ranks — folk in whom presumably the people have some trust — as attacking the Chief Justice as a person who was failing to obey the law. I used to tell people that if I believed what people said about me — that I wasn’t following the law — I would vote against me. So they had a very successful campaign focused on the Chief Justice.

There was a little campaign against some of us four years earlier, but it never got any place because it didn’t have the support of the governor and so on. And we were all reconfirmed. Four years thereafter, when Rose Bird was on the ballot, they ... those who were attacking her decided they would include, in the attack, several other judges. In fact, yours truly, and two other judges. Thereafter they decided to drop one of those judges who had been an Attorney General, and was well known — I guess they figured it was harder to attack him. But they still left, beside the Chief Justice, two other judges.

There was at that time on the court one judge I think already appointed by the new Governor. And so they needed three more votes basically to take over the court politically. As the campaign went along, the polls seemed to indicate that they were in fact going to succeed in defeating the Chief Justice. So the last two weeks particularly they decided to go after justice Joe Grodin, and yours truly. I don’t know whether it was simply an accident that one of the judges they were trying to defeat was a woman, one was a Jew, and one was Mexican-American. But that happened to be true.

There was a great infusion of money against the court in the last few weeks. And they went on television in a very effective, as it turned out ... in fact the consultants who put that campaign together later received an award for having such an effective campaign.
And the message was very simple. It said, "Rose Bird has never voted for a death penalty. If you don't like her, you can't like Grodin and Reynoso. They've only voted to uphold the death penalty so many times." We had all upheld the death penalty in several cases, but not most. Principally for the reasons I indicated. And it was a very effective campaign. They raised, I've heard, over ten million dollars.

Meanwhile, the people who supported the court were used to at that ... that's been the one, the only time where there was that good an organized campaign against the court. Many, many years before there had been an effort to unseat some judges who had ruled in favor of fair housing. And the realtors were unhappy with them. But it really didn't get any place. So this was really the first effort. It is the only time in California where Judges have not been returned.

When I was appointed to the bench and to the Supreme Court, I simply assumed that I would be there until I retired. That was the expectation in California, which in part I think had lead to the greatness of the court. That is judges felt that sense of confidence. And so the folk who had supported the court, just didn't quite know what to do. I mean it doesn't seem very nice to be contributing money to judges who are already sitting. And we ourselves had no experience with that. In fact, I waited a long time to even name a campaign consultant, which I eventually did. I'm not sure that it did much good.

But basically what happened was that the Republicans attacked the court, particularly the Chief Justice, with all of their political guns. They went on television with millions of dollars. And the Democrats, with very few exceptions, did not respond. So what were the people of California to believe? It seems to me that if I were a citizen — I'm surprised that we got as many votes as we did. If I were a citizen, I think, that was most of what they were hearing. So it was basically a very effective campaign and three of us were not returned. I think we all picked up, you know, forty some percent of the vote. In political terms respectable, but it's the one and only time when judges have not been returned.

I remember meeting with a very distinguished and lovely politician who was supporting us. And I remember him saying, "Cruz," he says, "you are such a great judge. We need you so much. Don't you think you could vote for the death penalty in a few more of these folk?"

And I remember thinking to myself, "You know, he's a lovely person, thinking he's doing the right thing." And I didn't really respond to him, as I thought to myself at that time, "I'm a judge! I'm here to do the right thing for each individual person. How could I say I'm going to vote in favor of putting this person to death if I've concluded judicially that he shouldn't be put to death? I mean that would be the worst thing that a judge could do."

But even he was beginning to look at us like politicians. And I think the campaign succeeded in making the judges look like politicians.

The Governor, who was a lawyer, didn't bother to point out that none of those people were out on the street. That they were just being retried on the death penalty, on the imposition of death. If they didn't get the imposition of death, they would be in prison for the rest of their lives. He didn't bother to talk about the Briggs' Initiative and how our Initiative violated the Supreme Court. So we had to overturn many of those cases — not all, but many of them. And so in my view it was really a fraud upon the people, but a successful fraud upon the people.

Will Proctor: After that experience, would you ever consider returning to the bench?
Cruz Reynoso: Not at this point in my life, but I would have at that time. Some folk were urging that I be appointed to the Ninth Circuit for example. If that opportunity had come up about a year or two or three after I had left the bench I would have accepted it at that time. At this point, I’m at a different stage in my life. And in our own lives we go through different chapters. I enjoyed being on the court. Once I left the court I enjoyed having the freedom that you have when you’re not on the court to speak out on the public issues and so on as I had done before, but with a little more prestige, a little more say in the community.

Will Proctor: Well since then, you’ve returned to your private practice. In 1988, you joined Kaye, Scholer and in 1991 you joined the law faculty at UCLA. Earlier we spoke a bit about your experience as a law student and now I like to talk to you about your experience as a law professor. In what ways has law school changed, for better and for worse, between the time you were a student and now?

Cruz Reynoso: There’ve been a lot of changes. It’s not so much of a cadet atmosphere. There’s a great more freedom. The institutions pay a lot more attention to students. They’re even student evaluations of professors. That never existed when I went to law school. The law schools now, compared to when I went, of course are far more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, gender. This year at UCLA, over fifty percent of the incoming class is female. We have also more diversity — not as much as we should — but more diversity in the faculty. We had practically none when I went to law school. I think we do have more interest in social issues, even today, in poverty law and consumer law, and so on, than we did in the days when I went to law school. Far more options for students.

At the same time — those are affirmatives — at the same time, they’re negatives. When I went to law school, I was on the G.I. Bill. I paid all my expenses out of the G.I. Bill which I think was a hundred dollars a month. That is we really had something akin to free public education, even in law school. Now, even the public schools have become semi-privatized, so that students graduate so often with these great pieces of indebtedness that I think is a real shame for the legal profession. So they have to worry about that. Students now are far more — many students, at least at the leading law schools — are far more attuned to corporate law firms. There’s practically an ambiance that says, “That’s the thing to do!” That was not true when I went to school. We were far more diverse. Some would work for government, some would go to small towns and so on.

Interestingly, when I was in law school, we were referred to as “the silent generation.” We turned out not to be so silent. I don’t think yours truly was very silent. A classmate of mine was Ed Meece, Attorney General for Ronald Reagan, who turned out not to be so silent and so on. But now in some ways in social issues, law students have again started to be more silent than they were certainly in the sixties and seventies.

And sad to say, I think there is far more emphasis now on law as a business rather than a profession. And I advisedly say “rather,” because lawyering ought to be about helping people. That’s what the profession is about. If we do it well, there will be a side effect that we’ll make a nice living. But I find that a disproportionate large number of students, particularly those with high LSATs and high grades, become lawyers for its economic rewards. And frankly I lament that. I think I see that more now than I saw it when I went to school in the fifties.

So there are many goods things and some not so good things as I see in the law schools. Perhaps because of who I am, I’ve always found that students around me are very interested in public interest, they’re interested in lawyers as folk who are there to help other people. So I’ve never found a dearth of lawyers that are well motivated and have gone into the law for those purposes. But many students nowadays go to law because they think that is the only option they have when they graduate. You know they were
philosophy majors, and they say, “Well what do I do with philosophy. Well, I’ll go to law school.” And not enough thought goes into making those decisions — i.e. the decisions to go to law school and be a lawyer — by many of the students.

**Will Proctor:** One of the things that you’ve spoken about in terms of the changes in law school is more diversity amongst classes. And you’d think with this diversity that we’d have more students going into public interest. You also mentioned that you had a feeling that students come into law school aiming to go towards big corporations. But I wonder if it is really their desire to go work for big corporate firms or maybe something institutionally within the law school environment. You also mentioned the fact that many students are saddled with debt. I know that coming out of Penn you can easily have a hundred thousand dollars worth of debt. And also recruiting services at law school are set up, are geared towards pushing students into firms.

**Cruz Reynoso:** Oh, very much so. The answer of course is somewhat complex. First of all when I graduated from law school there were no public interest jobs. There were no poverty law firms. In all of Southern California, there was a one half-time attorney working for the ACLU, So far as I know that was the only lawyer doing what we would now call public interest work. So we’ve had a great evolution in the legal profession where we now have dozens of such opportunities. At the same time, there are far more students willing to take those thirty, thirty-five, forty thousand a year jobs than jobs exist. So I’ve never found that lack of interest in students in doing that work. I remember talking to a friend of mine, a Latino lawyer, who said he went to law school to become a poverty lawyer, couldn’t find a job with a poverty law firm, went to work for a law firm that turned into a corporate law firm — it wasn’t when he joined it — and by the time I met him, he was a senior partner, and he said, “You know, this is my life now.” So he would have gone a very different way if he had had an opportunity. I think that’s very real.

Secondly, the loans are very real. When I visited at Penn State some years ago when I was named as a fellow, I met with some Latino students. I remember meeting among them a young woman who came from a farm worker family. But she said that unfortunately she had done too well at law school. She had done very well here. So the law school said, “You don’t need scholarships. We’ll give you loans because we know that you can graduate and work with a downtown firm and make a lot of money and pay the loans back.” She said, “I really wanted to work for a poverty law firm,” she said, “but now I’m stuck with all these loans and I’ve got to pay them back.” I think all of that works together.

But I must say that ... We just met with some students at UCLA and I mentioned to them that because when I graduated I was interested in civil rights work and all that, I didn’t think about what we now call public interest, except in the day dream. I had a day dream that some day that organization I mentioned to you earlier, the community services organization, would have so much money that they would hire me on a half time basis simply to represent people on a no fee basis — sort of my early imaginations of what we now call public interest. Of course that never happened. But what I did was simply incorporate the civil rights work, the other work that I did, in my regular private practice. And I still had enough clients that paid money, so I was able to pay my rent and my secretaries and support my family and yet do that.

And I urge the students at UCLA to think about that if they are really interested in public interest, in civil rights work and so on. If they need to go to work for a corporate law firm that’s fine, but then after a year or two, they ought to start looking around for an area in which they can exercise what they want to do and if they work hard, they are still going to be able to make a living. I think we as lawyers if we can’t find those jobs have to take it upon ourselves to make it part of how we practice law. That’s why I became a lawyer. That’s why I did that.
Will Proctor: Wow. Do you think the ABA could do anything to promote public service amongst lawyers in general? I know they have the pro bono challenge, but …

Cruz Reynoso: Well, the ABA actually has done a great deal and they have units of the ABA that are working full time on encouraging pro bono work. What I’ve been talking more about actually in terms of corporate law firms particularly is they ought to think a lot more about accepting cases where people can afford to pay some money, but not very much, because the pro bono now is a completely pro bono exercise. You might be surprised to have me tell you that really I don’t believe squarely in pro bono work, or in legal services.

That is, my experience as a lawyer was that if the client paid even two dollars or five dollars, then they became far more a part of the law suit. Then … I’ve always viewed the work of a lawyer and a client as being a partnership. Then the client feels like more of a partner. I really would wish that legal services would allow the legal services programs to charge the clients a minimum amount of money.

There was a priest out of Arizona who got an award for doing poverty interest work — and of course he was a priest so he had no expenses. His policy was that we would charge his clients on an hourly basis, whatever they were earning. Well, as you might have guessed, he had more clients than he could take care of. Well I would hope that legal services and so on would charge at least a little bit.

As a private attorney, that was my experience. I remember accepting a case one time that had strong political … that the group would have had a strong political impact in fighting a certain law that was not being enforced. And so I testified on their behalf and so on. And then after a little while, they seemed to have lost interest. And here I was their lawyer and I was the only one acting. I thought, “You know this is not quite, this is not working.” If I had told them I would charge them a hundred dollars, then they would have been more involved.

I remember another case of a retired farm worker — I say retired because he was sick and couldn’t work anymore and his farm worker wife, both were in very bad shape physically — and they came to see me to see whether I could help in any way. I told them I would see if there were any programs that would help them. If I succeeded I told them I would charge them a hundred dollars and they could pay it five dollars a months.

I fortunately got together with a welfare worker and she and I spent hours going over all kinds of rules and regulations that were not codified the way they are now. But by golly, we found that the gentleman was legally blind. The standard for blindness was two to two hundred — twenty to two hundred — and we discovered upon examination that he was legally blind. And he was entitled to a state program because of his blindness. They were both elderly and at that time the state of California actually had a pension for elderly people who had no resources. They were entitled to that. The lady had a goiter condition, which meant that she had a big bulge under her chin and she had open sores on her leg when she came to see me. And she was entitled to medical attention at the county hospital which we were able to get to her.

And so basically I was able to help them. And by golly, every month they would come in with their five dollars. And they were so proud that they had their lawyers. I can’t tell you how many clients they referred to my office and they would say, “Go see our lawyer, Mr. Reynoso.” I mean they were proud to have participated in self help. I mean its true that I helped them as a lawyer, but it was part of them helping too. So I’ve always believed that that sort of partnership works better.
I'm very much in favor of legal services the way it is now as you might guess, but I think they ought to consider that. So I've urged the ABA and law firms, because I talk before law firms not infrequently on ethics, legal ethics, and I said, "You know one of our ethical obligations is to think about pro bono, to think about representing people who may pay a little bit but don't have that much money, and you know who can afford to pay three, four hundred dollars an hour for lawyers. And so I think that's part of our ethical obligation.

Will Proctor: You were appointed to the United States Commission on Civil Rights in 1993 and have served as vice-chairperson since 1994. Would you say that the same precepts of self help apply in the civil rights arena as they do in legal assistance?

Cruz Reynoso: Very much so, but in somewhat of a different way. I've become convinced that in civil rights as in other matters, self help is the best. But folk can help themselves in civil rights if they have economic resources. So I'm on one of those who has become convinced that one of the things we can do most to help civil rights, is to have those folk who are suffering from violations of civil rights, be able to stand economically so they can protect themselves.

This came ... It was particularly important to me in some hearings we had in the delta area of Mississippi. And we heard all these pieces of testimony from African-Americans in that area. They were unhappy about the public schools. There was not economic opportunity for their children, etc., etc. And I remember thinking to myself, "What if each of these families tomorrow magically had a million dollars? And had the training in how well to use that million dollars?" Because any money can disappear if you don't know how to use it. Now clearly to myself, "You know that just the way the white folks had their white academies, many of them not very good, but if these black folk are unhappy, one, with money, they would contribute to political campaigns, so they could then have people there who agreed with them who then would pay the teachers more and could get better public schools, or, two, if they had the money, they could set up their own academies for that matter! If they had their money, they could send their children to college because in a place like the delta that's poor, if they're going to do well economically, they've got to do it through education."

There's one firm there that their folk came and testified before us who were in the seed production business. Very high tech and they sold seeds of different products throughout the world. Its that sort of highly educated populace that you need to really make ends meet nowadays in this globalized world. Well they need highly educated folk. Well the black folk particularly don't have that education. And I was thinking to myself, "Most of the things that these folk complain about if each of these families had a million dollars and knew how to spend it, they would be able to take care of their own problems." So when I see civil rights issues, I immediately think about its economic ramifications.

In California, when we have adverse matters happen politically, its very often because those who are affected adversely, as with the anti-affirmative action initiative, didn't have the resources to educate the public about what it really meant. So to me, economics and civil rights are very tied in, and yes, its self-help, but in somewhat of a different way.

Will Proctor: How do you feel economics impacts illegal aliens? Its one of the issues that came up in the case you had about citizen children who were living with their non-citizen illegal alien brothers and sisters, receiving public aid. How do you feel that illegal aliens should be treated by the United States in terms of economic rights?

Cruz Reynoso: My view is, that as happen so often ... Winston Churchill once said that, "A Democracy has to have a certain element of self-deception to be successful." In dealing with the undocumented, we have a lot of self-deception. We have a law that says "undocumented
workers, don’t come” — and incidentally only about fifty percent of the undocumented workers are Mexican — many of them, thousands, tens of thousands of them are called Canadians, and Europeans, and Russians. But somehow we never talk about them.

But particularly with respect to Mexican undocumented, we have laws that say “don’t come” but we have an economic system and an employer system and a social system that says “please come.” So they are responding to the invitation. So I see many undocumented in practically heroic terms. They’re coming up here to work in sometimes a hostile land so they can earn enough money to send back to their families. Those who come are folk who have strength, who are willing to take chances in life. Mayor Giuliani, with whom I disagree on many things, nonetheless says that if New York City — the economic revival of the last few years — he says is due to immigrants including undocumented. And I agree with him.

Since we have a national policy that violates our law and encourages them to come here, when they come here we ought to treat them as full human beings. That doesn’t mean that we won’t enforce the law when we need to, but we still need to respect them as human beings and understand that many of them are fine human beings that should be treated with respect. And if we enforce the law — and I’m in favor of enforcing the law — we should do it with equality, with magnanimity, (laughter) — can’t even pronounce my words now — but approach it with respect for them because they are fellow human beings.

But mostly frankly I object to the fact that we have laws that say “don’t come” and all of our policies encourage them to come.

Will Proctor: It seems like we have a similar paradigm within the drug trade. I don’t know if you’ve seen the movie Traffic, which is a highly acclaimed movie that’s about the drug trade in America — its now playing in theaters across the country. And if gives the impression that border towns like Tijuana and San Diego are the floodgates of drugs into the heartland. And also gives the impression that the Mexican government, the Chicanos, are fueling rather than fighting the war on drugs. Do you think that paradigm, the Drug Enforcement Agency saying, “We don’t want drugs in our country,” and having these laws on the books saying “We don’t want drugs in our country,” conflicts with the underlying social structure?

Cruz Reynoso: Absolutely. The war on drugs, in my view, has been an absolute failure. And it has been an absolute failure in some ways for the same reason that we were talking about in terms of the undocumented. We want drugs. We buy drugs. Its our people who use the drugs. Those folk are just providing what we want!

If we’re going to fight drug use, we have to do it internally, and we have to do it by providing resources for folk who become drug addicts. We have to accept the reality that it is mostly a medical and social problem. Only later does it become a criminal problem, because we don’t respond. Its our problem, that we’re blaming Mexico and Columbia and Asia and so on. Its again a matter of fooling ourselves. And so long as we continue to think that armament in Columbia is going to stop drugs, we are absolutely wrong. We will stop drugs when we stop the demand in this country. That’s what’s driving it.

And our responsibility as citizens and as a nation — and for the protection of our own people — is to indeed solve that problem internally. We know there are many programs that work. The wealthy when they get on drugs don’t end up in prison. They end up in centers that help drug addicts. But the poor end up in prison. I was reading a figure that says that we now have two or three [times] more folk in prison during the Clinton years, that at the beginning of the administration, because I’m sure of the War on Drugs and so
on. I think its been a devastating effort on our part against our own people, against young people, against Latinos and African-Americans. I think its been a terrible ...

And its given rise I see by district attorneys sometimes violating the Constitution, all in a higher effort to fight drugs because they're so terrible and they affect our young people. And I agree with all that. I mentioned to you that one of my younger brothers ended up in prison because of drug use. He was turned in by family. Because he got to the point where he was trying to get other members of the family on drugs. Its a terrible things. He's the only brother that I have — he's done pretty well since he got out of prison many, many years ago — but hasn't done as well as the others because the drugs I think somehow still affected his mind.

So I'm not one of those who thinks that the drugs are good. I don't believe that. I've always had qualms even about those who say marijuana is okay. And the reason for that is sort of folklore, folk-knowledge. When I was a youngster, and somebody wasn't acting quite right, or was being overly forgetful, the older people would say, "Ah, que pobrecito es marihuano." "Gee, what a poor ... we feel sorry for him. He's a marihuano." A marihuano means a marijuana user. So at least as I grew up, I grew up with the notion that anybody who uses marijuana extensively, for a long period of time, and intensively is affected. I don't know if that's true or not. You read a lot of literature that says its not true. But it can't be good for.

I hate to tell you, I don't drink alcohol, I don't go to x-rated movies ... I hate to tell you. So I'm absolutely against drugs. Nonetheless, we're doing it in this country. It's up to us to take care of it and not to be blaming Mexico and Columbia and all those other folk. That's the way I feel and I think that if we accept that reality, we will cut down on folk going to prison, we will cut down on criminality, we will help people, particularly when they first get on drugs, and I think if we spent half the money that — a billion dollars we spent, I think, just on those crazy ads on television that saying, "don't take drugs" — if we spent half that money on helping people who are on drugs and help them with the jobs they need and help them in those programs that get them off drugs, I think we'd be a lot better off.

Will Proctor: Do you think there's a role for the civil rights commission in addressing these issues?

Cruz Reynoso: Absolutely. No, we've addressed already many of the police community issues. And I've in fact ... we're issuing a report now, where I've urged the staff to look on the War on Drugs as a civil rights issue and the first draft, I must tell you, did not include that, so I wrote a memo saying, "Hey, look at this." So hopefully the second draft will have something about, because it is really a very important issue for us as Americans to deal with.

Will Proctor: One of the things that you spoke about earlier today at the Sparer Conference was a shift in the dialogue from talking about civil rights in America, to talking about human rights. And I think one of the things that people in the majority hear when they hear civil rights is "special rights." Do you think that a move to a discussion about "human rights" in America would alleviate that problem?

Cruz Reynoso: I'm not sure that it would alleviate that problem, but it would expand it, because human rights deal with economic rights, with medical rights, with rights of privacy. It deals with a whole of gamut of human experience. And when we deal with civil right so often your right that people immediately think about, "Ah, there come those ethnic and racial minorities." And those are the folk we think about in civil rights. Indeed, even on the Fifth Amendment, you have folk who often speak against the Fifth Amendment, particularly, prosecutors and police officers, until it turns out that they use the Fifth Amendment, then they agree that it's a good thing.
So you have sometimes a sense that a Constitutional protection is for “those people,” whether it is “those people who use the Fifth Amendment, until I need it” or “those people who are being discriminated against, because I’m not.” And I think that expanding the discussion because all of what we call civil rights comes within what’s generally referred to as human rights. And I’ve just been interested, as other folk mentioned that I’ve traveled in other countries lecturing on issues of human rights, and all over the world folk talk about human rights, and here we just talk about civil rights, which we take directly out of the Constitution.

But through the international documents that we’ve agreed to and so on, we ought to be talking in a broader perspective. I can’t … you know I always think about the freedoms we fought for in the Second World War. You know I was a little boy, but I remember, one of the freedoms was freedom from want. Those were one of the four freedoms, if I remember correctly, that Franklin Delano Roosevelt told us we were fighting for. And now, we forget about that freedom. That’s what I would call a human right — not a civil right as we describe it. So I think it would be helpful in our country to expand the dialogue to talk about human rights.

Will Proctor: You’ve recently garnered many accolades … over your career you’ve garnered many accolades for your public service. Most recently you were awarded the prestigious Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2000, and in the same year you were awarded the Hispanic Heritage Foundation Award in Education. Do you feel these awards validate the stand you have taken for civil rights over the years?

Cruz Reynoso: I do actually. It seems to me … When I was a young lawyer as I indicated to you, sometimes even folk in the Latino community — I remember one elderly gentleman, a leader in the Latino community, coming to see me and “Cruz,” he says, “I notice you’re defending a criminal, a person accused of a narcotics related crime. You know,” he says, “You know, it really doesn’t look right for such a fine young man like you defending a person accused of such a terrible crime.” And I had to explain the role of the lawyer — I’m not quite sure he was ever convinced. And then I would represent farm workers, and friends would say, “Hey is that for a young lawyer to get along?” Then I became a poverty lawyer and some folks said the same thing about poverty lawyers. But that’s why I became a lawyer. And then to have, many years later, get a Presidential Medal of Freedom, where it seems to me the American people, through their President, were basically saying “Cruz, the things you did were worthwhile.” I think it’s a great validation for the things that I’ve done and more importantly I think an encouragement for young lawyers to think about some of the things, think about doing the things that I’ve been able to do in my professional life.

Will Proctor: Well, thank you for you time this afternoon. I’m sorry we don’t have more time and I have lots more questions to ask you. You certainly have had an illustrious career, and I’m sure will continue to do great works. Again, thank you for being here today.

Cruz Reynoso: Well, it has been my pleasure. I hope this is some help.