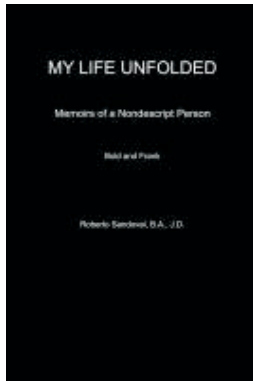


MY LIFE UNFOLDED

Memoirs of a Nondescript Person

Bold and Frank

Roberto Sandoval, B.A., J.D.



The memoirs in this book are, in many ways, somewhat different from typical memoirs. The book is arranged topically and not chronologically. It is not a celebration of the individual's life. Rather, it is highly descriptive, colorful, emotional, and honest. The author is sincere, and may have engaged in a self-discovery of his life. He quite bravely, and with pride and understanding, reviews the main facets of his life. The story is told with a depth of feeling that is remarkable.

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MY LIFE UNFOLDED:
MEMOIRS OF A NONDESCRIPT
PERSON

Roberto Sandoval, B.A., J.D.

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ISBN 978-1-62646-407-0

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Bradenton, Florida.

Printed in the United States of America.

For protection of privacy, names have been changed.

BookLocker.com, Inc.
2013

First Edition

CHAPTER 1: FAILURES

My first failure is that I'm unable to remember almost everything that occurred in my young life. To "put this another way", my life before the age of almost twelve at least. Over the years, I've talked with lots of people who have retained some memories prior to being five years old. I do have a couple of memories.

One is of myself being somewhere about the time of being of advanced tender age. I'm instructing my grandmother, Santana, in Spanish, on how to properly prepare my baby bottle milk formula. For years, older siblings that witnessed same teased me about that.

Another such memory is me sitting in a "high chair". You know, the type of chair one places an infant or toddler in, in order to feed them. I'm outside, or out of doors, in the shade. This is at my parent's house and the high chair is up against an outer wall of the house. There is a large vegetable garden and out in the garden working with the plants are a few people; probably not more than two or three; whom I assume to be family members. These people are adults. Given my being in a high chair in the memory, I'm likely to be somewhere between one to four years of age.

Here's another failure. I'm taken to a pre-school program, being around five years of age at the time. At that age, I speak Spanish only. In other words, I don't speak English at the time. The adults working in the program were speaking in English. All of the children in the program were speaking English. I was seated with other children and put to playing with clay, I think it was. Before long I stand up from where I am sitting and walk out the door; then proceed to run home to my parent's house, which is not far away. I remember I could see the house at a

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distance across weeded and wild grassed fields, as well as railroad tracks, from where I started running as I left the program. I get to the house but stay on the front porch and don't go in. After some time, my mother comes out onto the porch and sternly asks me why I have come home. I answer that I needed to go to the bathroom and that I couldn't ask to go to the bathroom at pre-school since no one there spoke Spanish. I don't really know whether I was trying to give myself an acceptable excuse for running away from school, or if my recounting was accurate. After I used the bathroom, my mother asked me if I was ready to go back to the pre-school. I pleaded with her not to make me go back. She doesn't and so that was the end of my pre-school experience. This pre-school episode must have occurred in the spring because the weather was mild and the timing would have been just a few months before I was enrolled in a kindergarten class.

Thus the failure is that I "lost out" on what I might have learned in a pre-school program. I wonder if this episode didn't influence why I was so supportive and committed to having my own children enter in early childhood and pre-school programs years later during my early parental years.

My fifth life failure came soon after my second failure, previously described. Here's what I mean by soon. A few months after the pre-school experience I was enrolled in a kindergarten at a catholic school. An older brother was assigned to take me to school on my first day. I don't know why one of my parents didn't accompany me, at least on my first day. I suppose they had to go to work, and my grandmother, Santana, who essentially spoke Spanish only, rarely left her house or yard; or at least not much beyond her immediate neighborhood, which was located in a Latino barrio.

Anyway my brother took me to the school on his bicycle. I remember that I used to love riding with him as a passenger on his bicycle. Upon arrival at the school, he left me there in the playground. I don't know why he didn't stay until the school bell rang, signaling that it was time to go into the school

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building and into one's assigned classroom. I don't know why he didn't escort me to my kindergarten classroom. You see my brother attended a different school. He attended a public elementary school and maybe he had to ride his bicycle and get to school on time, and that's why he couldn't stay and then escort me to my kindergarten classroom. I recall that I had been instructed at home, before leaving for school to, upon arrival at the school, stay in the playground and listen for the school bell to ring. When the bell rang, I was to "get" with the smallest kids and follow them into the building and presumably they would "end up" in the kindergarten classroom.

During the minutes that I waited in the playground for school to start, I felt rather alienated watching other kids play on swings and "what not", given that I spoke Spanish only and they English. Not only that but all or most of the kids seemed somewhat bigger than me. Little did I know that all of the kindergarten students had most likely been escorted by their parents directly to the kindergarten classroom. The bell rang and I felt rather confused as there was no gathering of kindergarten-sized kids proceeding into the school building. At that instant a tall boy came up to me and said something in English. I, of course, didn't know what he had said. I must have attempted to answer him in Spanish. A strange look came over his face and then he hit me and knocked me down. I don't know if he hit me in the face or what. Strangely enough he wouldn't let me get up from the ground but rather he stood over me in a menacing fashion. Suddenly two Latino boys came up to where we were. The playground was empty by then and there were no catholic clergy in sight to provide supervision. The two boys charged the assailant and ran him off. He ran into the school building. The two boys, who turned out to be brothers, quickly realized that I spoke only Spanish and they spoke to me in Spanish; although they were bilingual English and Spanish. They escorted me to the kindergarten classroom; saw me into the door; "turned me over" to the clergy woman teacher there, and then left. I had failed to make

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a smooth entry into the beginning of my formal education; and I had been in my first fight before experiencing even my first minute of education; and I had failed miserably, being completely victimized in that fight. No success there, "that's for sure".

My next failure in life occurred when I was about eleven years old. I had come to admire and glorify the lifestyle and antics of youthful street gangs. I wanted to be a gang member. I couldn't seem to get into a gang, however. There were no youthful gang members in the barrio where I lived. I'm talking about a street gang in which members would be 10, 11, 12, 13 years old. I managed to persuade my grandmother, Eulalia, with whom I lived, to buy me a leather jacket, --- something which gang members often wore, by the way, as a winter jacket --- green pegged pants, pink pegged pants, and a few colorful shirts --- but alas no gang membership became a reality for me. In elementary school, I quietly identified those who appeared to be gang leaders. I attempted to befriend them in order to, through their assistance and influence, gain membership into a gang. These leaders spoke to me a little bit but were generally 'standoffish' from me. In the end, I failed to ever get into one of these gangs, or to socialize with them in any meaningful way.

When I was about thirteen or fourteen years old, I decided that the way to become "cool and tough" would be to commit juvenile crimes and as a result get convicted and sentenced to a juvenile state prison in the state of Colorado where I lived. There was such an institution located in a town called Buena Vista, Colorado. Whenever I had an opportunity I would listen in, or eavesdrop, on an ex-Buena Vista inmate, recounting experiences in the youthful prison. I guess I longed to be brave, tough and feared but in reality I was probably cowardly, weak, and actually feared by no one. I set about committing small acts of vandalism in order to end up getting sentenced to that youth prison, but I never got caught, much less convicted and sentenced.

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I don't really know what acts of anti-social behavior I would have needed to commit in order to be sent to that youth prison. I failed in my attempts to have a youthful prison experience. I was sure that upon returning home from that prison I would have been able to have an abundance of girlfriends, among other perks.

When I was about fourteen or fifteen years old, I became frustrated with the youth culture "pecking order" of the tougher kids "picking on" the weaker ones. I had quite a number of long time friends in the barrio where I lived. I decided I needed the experience of a "good fight" in order to steel myself to be able to "take on" some of these bullies as I wanted to. I decided to "pick a fight" with one of these friends who was tough but a year younger than me. We fought and he beat me in the fight. I think I got a nose bleed for my efforts. I felt like a failure once again, and a stupid one at that. For several years after that I felt inferior whenever I was around him even though he and his brothers and sisters had been friends of mine since childhood, and continued to be.

It wasn't until becoming a pretty good football player in high school, and this friend "passed" on playing football, that I no longer felt inferior around him. This friend, thankfully, never brought up that fight and its outcome, in the years that followed, other than that he alluded to it just once. A few days later after that fight, my ego and pride still stinging from being beaten in a fight by someone younger than myself, and while out in the nearby hilly countryside, and while with a cousin two years younger than I, I "picked a fight" with him. I pushed him several times and knocked him down. I then challenged him to stand up and fight. He refused saying, "Roberto, I'm not going to fight you". Time passed and I apologized to him for my cruel act. This whole experience was a failure for me. In the years that followed I engaged in many small acts of kindness to this cousin in pursuance of my secret desire to try to "make it up to him" for the mean thing I had done to him that day out in the hills. That cousin has remained loyal to me throughout my life,

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and I to him. He “went on”, in later years, and after much of life’s hardships, to become a deputy sheriff in a large city and after retiring from that became a successful businessman in Denver, Colorado.

When I first became interested in girls, at about the age of ten and over the next four years until I was fourteen, every girl I was secretly, and sometimes not so secretly, attracted to eventually ended up becoming the girlfriend of someone else. This someone else was usually the member of a youth gang, or somebody new and exciting who had moved to my tiny hometown from either California or Denver. I had successfully masturbated when I was twelve years of age and this may have had something to do with my interest in girls. After becoming a “master” of masturbation I imagined having sex with many of the girls I had a “crush on”. In actuality, I never experienced as much as a hug or a kiss from any of these girls.

Throughout elementary school, each valentine day when cards were exchanged; of the cards I received none of them ever revealed any evidence of special interest in me from the giver. This was one of my life’s failures.

Let me speak of a failure that was self-inflicted. I was raised by my grandmother, Santana, since infancy and she died a couple of months before my thirteenth birthday. A couple of days after her death I “ran off “ to one of my hiding places with an ivory handled pistol that my grandmother kept in her home; and sometimes under her pillow where she slept. There was no other adults living in her house. Anyway one of my older brothers found me in my hiding place, talked to me, and persuaded me to turn the pistol over to him. He said he would keep it for me until I was old enough to have or own a gun. I never saw that pistol again. My failure was not handling my grief in an appropriate manner.

I emotionally survived the rest of that winter, after the death of my mother, Santana, and the spring that followed, but by summer I was in semi-rebellion, which turned to full fledged

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rebellion when the school year began in the Fall. In school, I proceeded to deliberately sabotage my school performance, “running up” quite a “string” of failing grades. For background, I will say that I was “moved in” to live with my mother and father after my grandmother died. I really didn’t want to live with them, having never done so up to that point in my life. I just wanted to live with my grandmother, but she was dead. The failure here is that I didn’t adjust well to the loss of my grandmother and “unofficial guardian”.

I played a lot of “sandlot” football in my neighborhood; on grass, in weeds, on rocks, on gravel roads, and even on, or in, snow. There was no organized youth football that I was aware of in that little town where I lived. In fact, the area was called by some the “Appalachia of the West” as it was so poor and lacking in resources.

I’m now in the 8th grade so I join the junior high school football team. Given that I assessed myself as having lots of football experience I figured that I would make first or second team. To my deep disappointment I was put on the fifth team. In the games, I hardly ever got to play at all. To “make matters worse” my deliberately obtained bad grades “caught up with me” and I was “declared” academically ineligible to “suit up” or play in the last game or two of that football season.

In the 9th grade, somehow I ended up in a woodworking class as an elective. The high school I attended was notorious for having very limited elective course offerings; and even a shortage of core courses at times. It wasn’t long before I was doing a very poor job on my woodworking projects. I did manage to make a bread board but couldn’t seem to advance beyond that.

A huge amount of time in that class went by with other students and myself doing nothing. I became very frustrated and decided that I needed to “get myself out of that class” somehow. I managed to get an appointment with the school academic advisor and asked to be transferred to another elective course. He said I could not do so, so I was “stuck”. I

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next decided that if I misbehaved maybe the teacher would “throw me out” of the class. Now the teacher was a tall head basketball coach, at this high school, who had played Division I basketball while in college. Division I is the highest category of college basketball competition. Well I proceeded to misbehave for what seemed like weeks but still the teacher gave me no consequences.

Finally one day the teacher called me into his little office and demanded to know or asked, I can’t remember which, why I was doing so poorly in woodworking class and why I was misbehaving. I told him I hated the class and course; and probably some negative things about him as well. The teacher said some mean things to me, and about me. I became angry and upset and proceeded to throw punches at him. The teacher used his long arms and hands, and his height overall, and “held me off” harmlessly by placing the palm of one of his hands on my forehead while keeping his arms outstretched; thus causing my punches to flail harmlessly in the air.

I was then sent to the principal’s office for discipline. The “long and short of it” is that the teacher refused or declined to let me get out of his class and I had to remain the whole semester or school year, I don’t remember which, in that woodworking class. I received low C’s, D’s and F’s throughout that class. This was my failure.

When I was in the 8th or 9th grade I was walking home from school and two or three junior high school boys proceeded to “bully me” with physical gesturing and verbal insults and threats. I became frightened and declined to confront them, or to defend myself verbally or physically. The three boys “didn’t touch me” physically, however. Afterward I felt humiliated and embarrassed for days. After that I would “go out of my way”, while walking to or from school, when alone, to avoid encountering them. Often I felt apprehensive, in these walks to and from school, until I was well past where the incident had occurred.

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Finally I decided to “take the bull by the horns” and so the next couple of times that I encountered those boys, while walking to and from school, I glared at them while walking by. They did nothing and I said nothing. Later on I told the older brother of one of them about the incident. He said that his younger brother was a “phony” and that I should have just “slapped him up the side of his head”. This was a failure.

Also during this period of my youthful life I was walking home from school by a route I didn't normally take. I lived in a community or town in which there were many untended dogs in residential areas. I myself usually had one or two dogs that were untended and would bark at people walking by and sometimes even went out onto the road in front of the house where I lived to bark at and harass people going by. Most people, including myself, would harness, tie up, or fence in; or otherwise corral our dogs and “fetch them” back into our yards or properties if we saw them barking at and bothering people going by.

A few blocks from the school, while walking home from school and in the middle of a block, dogs started to come out “on me”. In that particular barrio, as in most in my hometown, there were no sidewalks and so one had to walk on the road. Most “chantes” [houses] didn't have fences or gates either around them. These dogs behaved quite aggressively and before long there were six dogs of various sizes, all of them mongrels, and they completely circled me while barking rather ferociously. From time to time, one of the dogs would seem to threaten to bite my legs. I couldn't seem to advance or retreat from where I was. All I could do was spin around periodically in a futile effort not to turn my back to the pack of dogs.

Finally one of the smaller dogs jumped up behind me and “bit” me on the back of my knee. As I felt the pain I exploded with rage and manifested it by hollering, then picking up rocks and throwing the rocks at the dogs. Somehow all the dogs retreated to their yards. What made me so particularly angry was that during this whole incident not a single person came

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out of the houses involved to rein in or otherwise discipline and control their dogs.

As time went by, I would periodically walk up that road on that block, well armed with rocks or a large stick, prepared to effectively defend myself from any attacks from these dogs.

When I was a much smaller boy a pet dog of mine, in his enthusiasm to see me returning home from school, bit me somewhere on the leg. To this day, I am apprehensive, if not fearful, of unleashed dogs, and even upon entering a house or building where there is an unfamiliar dog. On balance, this incident was a failure.

I belonged to a Mexican Folkloric dance troupe throughout my four years of high school. Mexican folkloric dancing is an art form in which there are individual and group dances learned, practiced and performed. These dances reflect various regions and historical periods of the country of Mexico, as well as the Mexican-American dancing and musical experience in the United States of America.

The troupe I belonged to was affiliated with the high school I attended. The troupe was called El Fandango. This form of dancing had been in my family for some time as at least four of my older sisters had participated in this same dance troupe.

Well through my freshmen, sophomore, and junior years of high school I had made reasonable progress with this troupe in practicing and performing these dances, and was getting "more than my share" in dance performances. Then came my senior year and "there I was" progressing quite well, as well.

For senior dancers there was a special honors dance. It was called El Jarabe Tapatio. It was a one couple dance and the steps and choreography were reasonably complex. For the male dancer position only two of us stepped forward for the try-out. My competitor was a good dancer, athletic, handsome and with a ready smile. At this late stage in our senior year of high school, we were both recently "turned" eighteen years of age.

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The try-out panel consisted of the veteran artistic director for the troupe and two selected volunteers from the local community, all three of whom were “savy” and discriminating in judging quality in this art form.

The dancing began and I tried as hard as I could, while at the same time being nervous. The panel had difficulty selecting the “winner” and we had to dance this Jarabe Tapatio three or four times before they made their selection. It was announced by the artistic director. My competitor had won and I had lost. This outcome was a failure for me.

Life experiences with Mexican folkloric dance troupes were not over for me, however. Twenty years later, and at the age of thirty-eight, I joined a troupe in Seattle, Washington named Bailadores de Bronce. I’d become familiar with this troupe since moving to Seattle in late 1975. Over the ten years that followed, I became one of the troupe’s benefactors to include doing some pro bono legal work for them, on a couple of occasions.

After that, and finally after some persuasion, I decided to join, and did join, this troupe. Immediately upon joining I ascended to being the oldest member of the troupe. In fact I was their senior by some noticeable number of years for most of them. [I was actually 38 years of age at that time].

I quickly discovered that the level of skill in dancing of most troupe members was far above that of the members of my youthful El Fandango troupe. The commitment of time for practice and rehearsals was considerable, at five or six hours per week; and including rehearsals as a performance approached, could easily rise to ten hours per week. There was also time committed to travel and performance time at the rate of two or three performances per month.

The development of my dancing and performing skills was uneven at best. There were times when I would advance rapidly, but all too often my progress was slower; and there were even times when I absolutely couldn’t seem to master certain steps, body movements, or choreographies. Time

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passed and the “years went by” and when a new region was introduced, learned and practiced I would be the last one in the troupe to master it, if I did so at all. Gradually I came to be excluded, by the artistic directors, from performing in the more spectacular dances, and was left to do the simpler ones. This left me with having usually the least “stage time” of most everyone in the troupe.

Finally after approximately ten years, and at the age of forty-eight, I ‘dropped out’ of the troupe, Bailadores de Bronce. I missed the troupe for quite some time after that. My public reason for leaving the troupe was that at my age I was no longer attractive to audiences given that this dance form requires an exuberance that only young adults can give; and that my vocational and family commitments were such that I was missing too many practices, rehearsals and performances. Reader, you now know the real reason. This life experience was a failure to the degree that it ended in such an inglorious fashion.

I was on an intramural basketball team throughout my four years of high school. Somewhat unbelievably my freshmen team had won the league championship. In my senior year of high school, I was an important contributor to the team in all aspects of the game. The league had a season ending tournament for the championship. My team made it into the championship game.

As the championship game approached, and for rationales and reasons I can no longer remember, I decided that our team “did not deserve” to win the championship. I then concluded that if I got myself “fouled out” [disqualified from further participation in a given athletic contest] of the game “early on” our team could not win the championship game without me. Once the game began, I proceeded to commit foul after foul, and to the amazement and frustration of my teammates I quickly fouled out of the game. [we didn’t have coaches in this league] The team went on and played the remainder of the game without me, and won.

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At some point during the remainder of the game, and while I was “sitting on the bench” and witnessing the great effort of my other teammates; my emotions changed and I wanted them to win. After the game was over, I was careful to keep myself in a secondary role while cheering on my teammates joy of winning the championship.

I learned a lesson from my teammates of the profound fortitude and desire that we humans can possess. I had been dishonest with my teammates, self-absorbed, and really rather irrational. This failure in honesty, compassion, and this deception was a life failure for me.

When I graduated from high school I had a girlfriend who had just completed the 10th grade. She was a very good person, a devoted girlfriend, and pretty cute. Her name was Sonia Juarez, a Latina. I was going to be attending a four year college, about 80 miles from my hometown. As my graduation date approached, I decided that I wanted to launch into my post high school life as soon as possible. It had been, or I had arranged, I don't remember which, arranged to take a summer job in Denver, Colorado as a bus boy and dishwasher in a small coffee shop, managed by a brother-in-law of mine. Further arrangements were that I would be living with an older sister, that same brother-in-law, and two of my sister's teenage children.

Early in the morning on the day after my high school graduation ceremony I “hopped on” a bus and went to Denver. Denver was 160 miles north of my hometown. I didn't give my girlfriend even as much as a few days to be with me before leaving town. I remained in Denver working for a little more than two months.

Although my girlfriend and I exchanged letters I didn't go home to see her during the whole time I was working in Denver. I believe I may also never have telephoned her as well; although telephone communications then were still not that common of a thing. Upon returning home from this experience, I “didn't even” bring her a gift. This behavior was a

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failure in devotion, tenderness, and consideration of others on my part.

When I was eight years old I was with my grandmother, Santana, visiting two older sisters at their apartment in Colorado Springs, Colorado; a city where they worked and lived. I was in a grocery store unaccompanied, having been sent to the store on an errand. I saw a chocolate candy bar on a shelf that I wanted but didn't have money to purchase it. I stole the candy bar by "sticking" it in my pocket and not declaring it to the cashier.

Sometime after returning to my sister's apartment, I took out the candy bar to eat it. My grandmother saw this and asked how I had obtained this candy bar. I, while sobbing, told her I had stolen it. She gave me the money for the candy bar and ordered me to return to the grocery store and to speak to a cashier clerk, offer the money, and tell him I had previously stolen a candy bar.

I returned to the store but did not have the courage to speak to a clerk. Instead I placed the money on the shelf where the stolen candy bar had been on display, left the store and went back to the apartment. Upon inquiry from my grandmother, I lied to her in telling her that I had talked to a clerk and given him the money; and that the clerk had admonished me to never steal again. I had failed for lack of courage and in being dishonest with the person I loved most, my grandmother.

As a youngster, and up until about the age of twelve, I enjoyed playing with barrio friends and others; but also had developed a deep pleasure in playing alone. I used my imagination in "making up" and playing solitary games.

Sometimes when a friend or friends would come by my grandmother's "chante" [house] to invite me to "go play" with them, or do whatever they were going to do, I would hide from them inside the house, not answer their calls to me from outside the house, not answer their door knocks, and remain that way until the friends "gave up" with the effort and left. I

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would then resume playing whatever solitary game I was playing prior to their arrival.

I would dismiss my behavior by “telling myself” that I would go out and play with friends sometime soon; and I did, in fact, do that. Yet I failed in these opportunities to develop one-on-one, and group, socialization; and to this day I remain somewhat of a solitary person; engaging in many solitary activities. “To the good”, however, I almost never turn down opportunities and invitations for socialization; and have been this way for a long time now.

In the short period of life before I entered the 1st grade, I was convinced that I would be unable to do the learning required in the 1st grade; and therefore would ultimately not pass the 1st grade. This belief was probably not unreasonable at that time because I was only beginning to learn to speak English then; and my teacher spoke only English and not the language that I spoke, which was Spanish.

The same judgment might be applied to at least part of my 2nd grade school year since it was during that school year that I finally learned enough English to be able to understand and perform, with some degree of accomplishment, the lessons that were given to me. Thus I was persuaded that I wouldn't pass the 2nd grade and be able to advance to the 3rd grade.

Let me digress and say this. In the year I'm writing this book, namely 2012, and for some time now, I've been aware that indeed in some school districts students are passed on to the next grade even though they have not achieved the level of proficiency that would be required for them to successfully handle and do the learning that will be required in the next higher school grade. That was not the case in the 1950's and 1960's.

So there I was at the end of each succeeding school year thinking that I would not be able to “handle” the school work that would be required of me the following academic year.

At the end of the 2nd grade I was sure that I would not be able to do the 3rd grade school work; and at the end of the 3rd

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grade, although happy that I had passed the 3rd grade, I was sure I would not be able to successfully do the school work that would be required in the 4th grade; and at the end of the 4th grade I was convinced I would not be able to do the school work required to pass the 5th grade.

After the first few weeks had transpired of each school year, I would then gain, or regain, confidence in being able to do the school work and lessons for that grade level; and then not think much about it for the remainder of the school year.

So, alas, at the end of the 5th grade school year, I was sure I would not be able to do the academic work that would be given to me in the 6th grade. Thus I determined to enjoy my summer vacation before having to face the failures in school that I would experience in the 6th grade.

At the end of the 6th grade, I was convinced I would fail the 7th grade school work that lay ahead. As the end of the 7th grade school year approached, I was sure that there wasn't any way I would be able to "pass" my courses that awaited me in the 8th grade.

Once I entered high school, and the 9th grade had begun for me; and seeing that I could do the school work, from then on I became confident that I would be able to have overall success during each of my years of high school; and that I would eventually graduate from high school. After all, even though my three oldest siblings had not graduated from high school the next five siblings had, as a matter of fact, all completed and graduated from high school. Prior to this, there had been a failure and lack of confidence on my part that I could learn in a structured academic setting.

In the first seven years of my elementary school education, I was very shy and also easily became embarrassed. I preferred to be seated in the very back of a classroom so that other students couldn't see me unless they were to turn around and look toward the back of the classroom. If called upon by a teacher, I would feel very embarrassed the whole time attention was focused on me.

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If I was assigned to a seat toward the front in an auditorium, theater, or gymnasium the back of my neck felt very hot to me. I felt like if everyone was staring at the back of my head and watching for “every move I made”. In speaking or having to speak to a girl, most of the time I would inevitably turn red with embarrassment.

This same lack of confidence “cropped up” again as I considered attending college, post high school graduation. In this circumstance, however, none of my older eight siblings had attended college up to that point in time and so there was no family precedent for attending a general purpose college. In fact, no one even in my extended family had attended college. My thoughts and emotions were certainly inspired by logic.

How could I possibly be hoping to actually attend college when no one else had done so. The grandmother that reared me had no formal education; my father had three years of schooling; my mother seven years; and I’ve mentioned the high school graduation history of my eight older siblings.

I wanted to attend one of what would have been a more academically prestigious public college or university in the state of Colorado, but I lacked the confidence to even apply for admission to those colleges and universities. I also believed that with the money I had already saved for attending college, and even with the money I expected to earn that summer before entering college, I would not have enough money for the costs of college if attending one of the “big universities.

As a result, I applied for admission to only one small state college and to a couple of junior colleges [nowadays usually called community colleges] all located within 80 miles from home. I was admitted to all three. [At that time in history, admission to junior colleges was not an automatic privilege, but rather was subject to competitive processes]. This college selection process of mine was a failure caused by my lack of confidence in my academic skills and in what I perceived that I had to offer as a college student. I was probably also “held

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back” by my inferiority complex; something that I’ve had to deal with, and live with, for most of my life.

By the time I was about sixteen years of age, an older brother of mine named, Carlos Sandoval, was becoming increasingly critical of my points of view, attitudes maybe, and possibly my behavior. As you can see, I’ve never really been sure of what issues he has with me. It does appear to me, however, that all of these things about me were well within the norms of the standards and expectations of my parents.

Whenever brother Carl was home visiting, which was not frequently, since he worked and lived out of state, he would express to me criticisms pertaining to the above referenced states of mind, regarding me, that he was possessed of. A particular incident arose in which there was a family meal in progress and Carl was standing near the meal table, while I was sitting at the table. He was meting out a barrage of criticism at me. I reached the point of “being at my wit’s end” and told him to stop the verbal negativity directed at me. My brother did not stop.

Suddenly I stood up and, taking my glass of milk, threw the milk in his face. I may have displayed body language suggesting I was thinking of throwing that glass of milk at him; and he may have “dared” me to do so. I’m not sure. What I am sure of is that he spewed statements at me that I was a hoodlum, disrespectful, violent and so on; but he did not assault me in any way physically. Unfortunately I suppose I may have proved him right on the “violence” accusation.

I recall that our mother, an eyewitness to most of this transaction, was deeply upset. I had failed to be respectful, in my parent’s household, to a legitimate member of my immediate family, my brother; and to my mother “for that matter”.

One of the first girlfriends I had was quite a high quality person. She first began to “like me” when she was in the 9th grade of school and I was in the 11th grade. We attended the

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same high school. We lived in the same barrio, but several blocks apart. Her name was Sonia Juarez, a Latina.

I didn't really even know she "existed" until one day while walking home from school she came up beside me and started a conversation with me. Nevertheless I was not interested, considering her to be too young for me. Even so I did put her in my mental rolodex file. Later that school year a popular senior boy took an interest in her, and told her so. I felt a "tinge" of jealousy but mostly I thought, "Well good for her", "big age difference though". Sonia reciprocated the interest in that senior boy but "for some reason or other" they were not able to become "a couple".

Time went by and soon I was the one who was in my senior year, and Sonia was in the 10th grade. That year, at the end of each home football game, as I was beginning my walk off the football field, on my way to the football locker rooms, Sonia Juarez would come up to me, on the football field, and walk with me to the locker rooms. At this point in time, I saw her behavior as displaying loyalty, devotion and trustworthiness and I began to feel fondness for her, which quickly grew to affection. We became a couple thru the remainder of my senior year and throughout my first year away at college.

Throughout this period, however, I often found it difficult to focus on my relationship with Sonia. Sometimes I didn't treat her very well. "From time to time" I felt interested in other girls and sometimes was tempted by some of them. With some of these girls, I did things with them that should have been done only with Sonia. Too often I spent my free time with friends, rather than with her. At college I felt embarrassed to be in a relationship with a high school junior, and wanted to date college girls, but didn't.

Sometime late during my first year of college Sonia "broke up" [ended the relationship] with me. I had failed to keep a proper and positive focus on a quality girlfriend and had lost that relationship.

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I was raised by my grandmother, Santana Sandoval, and didn't "come to" live with my mother until I was thirteen years old. In the six years that I lived with my biological mother, during the remainder of my upbringing, I continued to have deep feelings and emotions for my deceased grandmother, whom I thought of as being my mother; even calling her "Mama"; although admittedly most of my older siblings also called her by that name. Those siblings closest to me in age, however, called my mother "Mom" but I couldn't get myself to do that. One of the reasons is that I felt doing so would be a betrayal to the grandmother that had "raised me".

Throughout those remaining six years of my upbringing, after the death of "Mama", I often argued with my biological mother; and sometimes became angry with her. Sometimes I would refuse to talk to her for long periods of time. At other times I would refuse to eat her food and would instead try to survive on candy bars and other "junk" food and beverages. On a couple of occasions, I also refused to speak to my father for some period of time.

My mother had much higher expectations of me, including my behaviors, than my grandmother, Santana, had had. Once away at college, and in the years that followed, there were times when I didn't visit home enough, didn't write letters to, or telephone my mother and dad very often.

My mother outlived my father by nine years and even during those years I didn't write, call or visit very often; even though I had the financial means to do so. In fact, I didn't visit or see her during the final three years of her life; even though I was telephoning her periodically and, in doing so, realizing that she was past 76 years of age and struggling with the disease of diabetes. My biological mother, Lucia died at the age of 79. I failed miserably in my lack of devotion and loyalty to my biological mother.

In the summer, after my first year of college I needed money, as I did every college year, to pay expenses for the forthcoming college year. Expenses included food, rent, tuition,

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fees, books, travel costs, utilities, and some clothing. I digress, so a sister and brother-in-law persuaded me to go 'out to' California, from Colorado where I was attending college, to Oakland, California where they believed I could get a good paying job in one of the canning companies, canneries or warehouses.

I lived with my sister and brother-in-law in a tenement project located in east Oakland. My brother-in-law was generous with me in allowing me to use his vehicle, almost every work day, to look for a summer job. I was, however, unable to get a job the whole two months I was there. I applied for some of these jobs "and so on" but was never hired. Some days I couldn't find the employment office for a given factory and at other times I was just too timid to go in and ask for work.

During the late afternoons and evenings I got into the social life mode with Latino teenagers that lived there in the projects. I returned to Colorado not having earned "a penny" for college. This was a failure in decision making on my part.

Once the time for the start of the fall term for the college I attended had arrived, and having no money to return to college, I "dropped out" of college and took a job working in a small gas station in my hometown. That was a compounding of the first mistake because I later came to know that if I had returned to college that Fall term, the financial aids office would have "found" some money for me, be it student loans or otherwise, to be able to remain in college.

During that September thru December of 1963, when I was in my hometown of Walsenburg, Colorado working in that gas station, President John Kennedy was assassinated. That was November 1963. In my spare time I wrote a couple of short stories. Both were nondescript in terms of being distinguished or interesting.

"Closer to home" a more personal tragedy "struck me". Sonia Juarez, although still only a high school senior, became engaged to be married. Although she had ended the

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relationship with me six or seven months before that, I still loved her and, I suppose, I maintained some hopes that we would reconcile; although I doubted she would have much renewed interest in a boyfriend who had dropped out of college and was now “pumping gas” for a living.

Sonia had “dropped by” once or twice that Fall for short visits with me at that gas station. She and I had remained friendly but didn’t socialize.

I “took the news” of her engagement “really hard”. That night, or a night soon thereafter; after drinking a few bottles of beer; I went to a café/drive-in frequented by lots of local young adults, and the police. From there I called the police and reported a fight ongoing in the café parking lot.

When the police arrived I told them the fight was with me, and I challenged the police to fight me. Before long I was surrounded by four or five policeman attempting to subdue me. I “fought them off” until one of the policemen “rushed up” quickly on my right side, jumped on my neck and applied a police maneuver called a “neck lock”, which no doubt he had been trained for; and the pain of that neck lock “took the fight out of me”. The remaining police subdued me, arrested me, and took me to the local jail where I spent the night. The policeman who had applied the neck lock on me was a former classmate of mine, but not a personal friend.

The next morning in jail; after eating a good breakfast, I might add, I was released from jail on my father’s recognizance. Some months later I “appeared in court” and was sentenced to a monetary fine; and my “record was sealed” as I was still considered an underage teenager even though I was 19 years old by then. I guess I hadn’t hurt any of the policemen in the pre-arrest scuffle and that’s why I wasn’t charged with something more serious. In this incident, I had failed to control my disappointment and sorrow.

Upon transferring to a better college, in the Fall of 1964, I was impressed by the large number of pretty and smart girls at this big college located near Denver, Colorado. As previously

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mentioned, I had lacked self confidence to ask out and date college girls upon first entering college in 1962. I did have a couple of platonic-like dates with a distant cousin attending the same college. I also had a couple of dates with a freshmen girl from Hawaii, but lacked the confidence to “make a move on her”. Therefore, no relationship was launched. This lack of confidence, on my part, continued at my second college; the one with “all the pretty and smart girls”.

So it was that I went through that second year of college without dating anyone in that college town, or having a college girlfriend. This was a “long drawn out” period of lacking social confidence and constituted a failure. My “fall back” was that I had some degree of social confidence back in my hometown area. These circumstances influenced my dating and mating patterns, “if you will”, for sometime into the future.

The name of the second college I attended was Colorado State College. Nowadays it is known as the University of Northern Colorado. The first college I attended was Adams State College. Colorado State College was one of the eminent, if not pre-eminent, teacher’s colleges in the United States.

I had developed a strong interest in national and world events and politics. Sometime during the spring quarter, or first or second quarters, of my second calendar year attending Colorado State College. I decided that I didn’t need to attend classes much to become knowledgeable and educated and that I could learn more by engaging in scholarly and informed discussions in coffee shops, and other similar venues, on or near campus, with college friends and acquaintances of similar persuasion. It wasn’t long before my grade point average [GPA] dropped severely and the institution “placed” me on academic probation for the following term. Academic probation meant that I had to raise my GPA up to the required level or else I would be “flunked out” of this college.

Faced with this harsh reality I “gave up” the coffee shop philosophizing, social movements and political discussions and concentrated on my studies and exams connected with the

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courses I was actually taking. As quickly as the succeeding academic terms permitted my academic performance returned to “academic progress in good standing”. I “kept an eye” on my grades and GPA from then until graduation.

I had failed to realize that I could not singlehandedly create an ideal world, “not by a long shot”, and that I had to conform to the institutional structures and rigors as they presented themselves; just like everyone else.

At the age of twenty-one, I was still very immature and somewhat naïve. 220 miles from home and away at college, I often seemed to feel lonely even in the midst of the “hustle and bustle” of college life that existed at Colorado State College, and the offerings of Denver. While working at still another gas station job in my hometown during the long summer vacation break--- but this was a good paying job that involved fixing the flat tires of very large trucks --- which I always needed to do in order to continue in college; in the summer of 1964, I briefly met a girl who was a high school junior through a mutual friend; and at her request. Her name was Marcella Gallindo, another Latina.

Somehow we began exchanging letters during the academic year that followed. We dated during the early part of the following summer, of 1965, before I returned to Greeley, Colorado, my college town, to begin my new job --that I would maintain while continuing to attend college--- and when I was home for the holidays and so on. Here I was again in a relationship with someone much younger than myself. This time, however, I wasn't embarrassed that she was still in high school. I guess because she was somewhat mature for her age. She was also very pretty and talented.

In the fall of 1965, however, just as the first college term was beginning, I met, next door to where I was sharing a large apartment with two student friends, a girl who was just entering college, as a freshmen. She would be living with her sister who lived next door to us. She was beautiful and vivacious and I was very “taken with her”. She was also a Latina, as am I.

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We spent a lot of time together after that, sometimes dating, but mostly casual time together. We often hugged, kissed, talked and danced. We did all those things that can cause two young people to “fall in love”. Her name was Veronica. Veronica arrived at college with a boyfriend still back home and she may have also dated one or two other guys there at college. I, however, continued to be in that relationship with Marcella Gallindo back in my hometown. [I know, suddenly I’m experiencing an embarrassment of riches!]

In February of 1966, after Marcella had reached the legal age of consent of 18, [actually in the state of Colorado the age of consent was as early as 16 depending on the circumstances] and in her senior year of high school; during one of my visits home, she and I made love and had sex. It was actually the first time she and I had experienced sex with anyone. We fell in love.

After returning to college and seeing Veronica again I realized that I loved both Marcella and Veronica at the same time. I wanted to marry either Veronica or Marcella, and as soon as possible. In my “heart” and mind I preferred Veronica.

I began to probe Veronica, during our conversations, to attempt to determine what she thought of marriage, and what she would think of marrying me; and she said that she didn’t want to marry anyone for a long time and that her goal was not to have sex until after she was married. As it turned out, Veronica did in fact have a “deep crush” on me and was hoping that she could stave off my enthusiasm for her and that maybe in a couple of years or more we could marry each other. Meanwhile “back in my mind” I was disappointed and discouraged by what seemed like Veronica’s “taking a pass” on me.

I henceforth concentrated all my love energy on Marcella, who expressed a lot of interest in marrying me, even though she was “so young”. We made plans to marry by around Christmas time of 1966 and after “a few bumps in the road” we

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“moved up” the wedding and had a Mexican type wedding and got married in July 1966.

We had spent only 65 days together during the time since we had met two years previous to that. Marcella was only eighteen and a half years old and I was a very immature twenty two and a half. This was a failure in judgment and wisdom, mostly on my part. We were definitely too young and too immature to get married.

After my first wife, Marcella, and I were married I was filled with enthusiasm and I happily went to work every day, and looked forward to coming home to her at the end of each day. Once my senior year of college began, that Fall term, my enthusiasm waned as I noticed that the large majority of college students and friends were not married.

Several of my friends did also become friends with Marcella as well, however, which was a good thing. Even Veronica's older sister became neighbor friends with Marcella, but Veronica herself did not make that effort.

I was especially unsettled when around Veronica; and I second guessed my previous decision to select marrying Marcella “now” over being patient and waiting for Veronica to solidify a relationship with me. Overall, however, I recommitted myself to the relationship and marriage with Marcella.

After the Christmas holiday period we left the college town and campus, and moved to Pueblo, Colorado where I was to teach at a large public high school. Being only twenty-three, some of the high school Latina girls were “taken” with me. I found myself being flattered but concurrently my devotion to my young spouse seemed to weaken a bit. I questioned myself as to whether it had been unwise for me to marry while this young and immature.

On the national and world stages the Vietnam Civil War, involving North Vietnam , South Viet Nam [currently those two countries have reunited to form the historical single nation called Viet Nam], insurgents in South Viet Nam, known as the Viet Cong, and the United States of America. By then there

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were hundreds of thousands of U.S. combat troops in Southeast Asia, where the VietNams were located.

That winter I was “drafted” into the U.S. army. The draft, which was conscription, existed at that time. I was within a few weeks of completing my student teaching and with a graduation ceremony scheduled for late March 1967.

My participating in that graduation ceremony was very important to my parents so I accepted following a military procedure called “volunteering for the draft”. What that entailed was that I could select the exact date on which I would be inducted into the U.S. military to “serve” for a two year period. I selected a date that was two weeks after the scheduled graduation ceremony. This phenomena did not “make me” a volunteer for the army; I was still and would remain a “draftee”; and obligated for two years in the military. It was fairly clear that I would be assigned to participate in the Vietnam Civil war. To my spouse, Marcella, this was a betrayal and abandonment on my part.

To “make matters worse” during a certain emotional day she pointedly asked me if I loved her, and I said that I didn’t know anymore. Very soon thereafter I atoned for that and told her that I did love her. The “damage had been done”, however.

My guilt feelings were further inflamed by a certain sense of adventure I felt on the prospect of embarking on a military experience; and curiosity I possessed over what it would be like to be in Asia, where Vietnam is located. I had failed by lacking devotion, tenderness and compassion for my spouse; and I would fail her, at least twice more, in the years ahead.

It seems to me that a major reason why I got “drafted” into the Vietnam War, in effect, was because of my ignorance and naivety regarding the military selective service system; and how to be deferred from being drafted. I was not aware that the system, called the national guard, existed; being a member of which can often avoid going into the active military. I was not aware that there was an army reserve component that included such a unit in my hometown, and therefore draft

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board area. For that matter, there may also have been available air force, navy and marine reserve components available to me.

All of these would have had the same positive effect as far as avoiding active military service, and therefore, warfare experience. No one ever mentioned any of these things to me, not ever; even though a major war was raging and I was of "draft age". Finally, no college official or employee, nor any of my family or friends, in college or at home, or any relatives, ever informed me or mentioned to me that unless I carried a full "academic load" while in college, as I was, I would become "draft eligible" at the highest level. It's only fair to mention that I disliked the military and had no intention of ever being in the military.

Well after getting married, in July 1966, I became concerned about our living expenses and family budgeting. As previously mentioned, I had only one term, and a very minimum number of required courses, to complete on campus before leaving for one term in practicum education by student teaching. I, therefore, enrolled for only the courses that I needed in order to complete my degree in my "major" and "minor", as well as secondary education course requirements. This "placed me" well below what was required for a "full academic load" which was the criteria for being deferred from being drafted on that basis. Soon thereafter I was "classified" at the highest level for being drafted and inducted. I could not "plead ignorance" to avoid being drafted. Within weeks I was "called up" for induction into the army; and then I was in the army; and with a huge war going on. My failure was ignorance and naivety about what was going on in the world around me beyond my studies, my college life, and my new marriage.

So often I have become involved with girls and women that were "too young for me". The first one was Sonia Juarez and for the first half of that relationship I felt that she was "too young for me". We were fourteen and sixteen years old

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respectively at the beginning of that relationship. I suppose in retrospect two years age difference is miniscule.

The next one was Marcella Gallindo and she definitely was “too young for me”. We were seventeen and twenty-one years of age respectively at the beginning of that relationship.

The next one was Ruby Padilla, a Latina. She was decidedly “too young for me”. We were fifteen and twenty years of age respectively at the beginning of that relationship.

When I write “the next one” I don’t mean the next relationship, I mean to say the next relationship in which the girl or woman was “too young for me”.

The next one was a girl I met in Sacramento, California while attending law school. We were nineteen and twenty-nine years old respectively at the beginning of that relationship.

The next one was my second spouse, Kassandra Kravichovich. I was almost seven years older than she. We were twenty-three and thirty years old respectively at the beginning of that relationship.

The next one was Elena Flores. We were thirty-one and thirty-seven years of age respectively at the beginning of our relationship.

The next one was Brooklynn Blanc, a fellow teacher. I was twelve years older than she.

The next one was Jamie Becerril. I was ten years older than she.

The final one is Penelope Infante, a Latina and my second most recent girlfriend, that I was involved with in 2009 thru very early 2012. I was almost eight years older than she.

My failure is that the deeper we advanced in these relationships the differences in perspectives and goals became apparent. Often the younger person eventually decided to end the relationship for these reasons.

My first spouse, Marcella, had a very “difficult time” with my leaving for the army and the war after only nine months of marriage. She struggled a lot emotionally during the first year and a half that I was gone.

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During this period, she “took” one or more boyfriends; and later spoke of sexual encounters with other men as well. My absence was at least part of the reason for this behavior.

With about four months “to go” before my “discharge” [being released from active military duty upon completion of draft obligation] from the army, Marcella filed for dissolution [divorce]. She didn’t follow through on it, however, so there was no divorce.

We did reconcile about a month and a half after my discharge, and continued our life together from then on. I “chalked up” her infidelity-like episodes to the “trials and tribulations” of our physical separation and the Vietnam War.

Ten months later Marcella had an affair with a student at the college she was then attending. Several weeks later she revealed this to me. It hurt a lot. By that time I had been admitted to law school for the upcoming academic year. She asked for forgiveness. I didn’t want this to “mess up” my opportunity to attend law school so I pretended to forgive her. I explained to her my view that her infidelity had been partially my fault. The disclosure of this latest infidelity by Marcella felt like it had “burned out the remaining lights” of my love and devotion to her. I secretly and privately decided that I would divorce her at some later point in time; at a time and place of my choosing. This was a huge mistake of selfishness and insensitivity on my part. I should have remained devoted to and committed to my marriage in spite of all this.

We arrived at the city in which the law school was located, which was Sacramento, California. It was June 1970. Marcella “got a job” right away and continued working for the remainder of that year, and for years beyond. In many ways, during those six months, she was a perfect spouse; and the best she had ever been. Nevertheless, I found myself being “hateful” to her at times. In January 1971, I filed for dissolution of our marriage.

We moved her into her own apartment. She was very unhappy with the circumstances. She had no family or friends

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beyond my circles at the time. I continued to spend a lot of free time with her but her sadness and sorrow were palatable.

I deeply regret this action on my part. I had failed to forgive Marcella; and I should have done so, therefore, causing this divorce action not to happen. I had made a mistake in “forcing myself” to stop loving her and in being willing to end this marriage.

I had “taught” one year of high school before moving from southern California to Sacramento, California, to enter and begin law school. For that one year of teaching I had accumulated an appreciable amount of money into my account with the California teacher’s retirement fund. I withdrew that money during my first year of law school and spent that money on law school and living expenses.

Twenty years later at the end of eleven years of working as a federal government lawyer, I had accumulated a considerable amount of money into one of my retirement funds, which was a federal civil service retirement fund. When I left that position or job I withdrew all of that money and spent it on transitioning to a private law practice, on family, and on remodeling my home in Seattle, Washington. Both of these retirement fund withdrawals were mistakes and errors in judgment vision; and constituted failures to take action on serious and concrete plans for income during my retirement years.

Having an opportunity to attend law school, to study law, and to someday be able to be a practicing lawyer professional, was a huge life opportunity for me. Yet during law school I often lost focus and concentration on my studies and on doing my best academically.

I would often “day dream”, allow my mind to “wander”, and to think of other things while in law school class sessions, while reading the law in the law library or at my apartment, and while studying the law at home. I often would take time to think about “the Chicano social and political equality movement” and my activities in it. The result is that I “wasted a lot of time”

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throughout my years of law school when instead I could have devoted most of my time and attention to my responsibilities as a law school student.

I could have been developing some mastery of various areas of the law. I don't know why I couldn't focus better than that. I had recently been through two years of warfare, a year of the high intensity atmosphere of high school teaching, and the self-imposed breakup of a marriage; one which had "deep roots" in my past and in my beginnings. Whatever it was, I failed to take "anything close to" a full advantage of the educational opportunity to develop proficiency and mastery of a high profession. This was a failure to fully seize this excellent career and life opportunity.

I cheated once while in law school. Here is how it happened. There was apparently a small group of law students [and maybe not such a small group "for all I know"] who managed to obtain vital information on one or more course final exams. This was because one of the law students was dating one of the secretaries or office assistants that worked in the faculty offices. At my law school there was only one exam given for each course, and that was the final exam.

All exams were of the "fact pattern" type. Fact pattern exams can be described as follows. There would be a set of facts containing many "legal issues". The examinee's challenge is to identify as many of these issues as possible, analyze them, apply the relevant laws to the facts and issues, and reach conclusions on each of them. A final exam usually contained three to five of these fact patterns. All of this is done in the context of a narrative answer written by the student.

The group of students in question was getting access to these fact pattern questions in advance of the actual examination. To some extent, these questions were also being distributed by this group among friends and acquaintances in the law school student population.

One day when three of we friends and study partners had convened to study together one of the three indicated that he

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had the fact pattern questions to an upcoming final exam in the law of trusts course. He asked us if we wanted him to share those questions with us. After some discussion and trepidation, and much thought about it, each of us decided to accept the questions; and we received copies of them. It was left to us, as an individual decision, as to whether to look at those questions in advance of the final examination.

I did look and I used them to prepare for that final examination. A couple of days later, at the beginning of the testing session, I looked at the test questions that had just been handed out to me by the testing proctor; and the questions were the same ones we had received in advance. In preparation for that exam, I had decided that it would be too unfair to try to get a grade of A on the exam. In addition, I didn't want to risk arousing suspicion by answering the test questions at an inordinately high quality level. I wrote my answers in a way that was calculated to get a B grade. In the end, it would be a B grade that I received on that final examination. My two friends and study partners indicated that they had also looked at the exam questions in advance.

A few weeks later the cheating ring was discovered by law school personnel, and this incident came to be known as the cheating scandal at our law school. Three or four law students were expelled from the law school. Our cheating on the trust exam was not discovered and the three of us were not exposed. Two of the four law students that were expelled were U.S. Air Force officers. I had failed by cheating on an exam at the professional level of education.

In the summer, following the completion of my law school studies, I registered for and scheduled to take the California bar examination. This is the four day lawyer's examinations, passage of which is required in order to obtain a license to practice law in California.

The preparation and undergoing of the examinations would be taking place in the summer. That summer, however, I chose to continue to work fulltime at a social service agency.

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For this, and several other reasons I put myself in a position where once again I was not focused on what should have been “by far” the most important thing; passing the bar exam. The result was that I didn’t pass the bar exam. I had failed to align my priorities properly. I had wasted financial, and other resources, as well as time, and I had rendered some damage to my self confidence regarding passing the California bar exam.

My ex-spouse, Kassandra Kravichovich, and I had purchased a family home in 1978. In the community property settlement [where all the common property accumulated during a marriage is divided evenly among the spouses] in 1982, I received the family home. Kassandra’s boyfriend had a much bigger house and so she preferred to move in and live there.

As a result, I kept and continued to occupy the family home. Within three years after that, my ex-spouse had received her equity share in the family home which I now owned.

By 1995, mortgage payments on my house, over the course of 19 years, had significantly reduced the balance and the monthly payments were very reasonable for me. In fact the house would have been paid off in full within four more years. The house had also been substantially remodeled and upgraded.

Nevertheless this was a period in my life when my income, relative to my expenses and financial obligations, was more limited than usual. An offer to get an equity loan came to my attention. The terms seemed very attractive and would not appear to either increase my balance or monthly mortgage payments very much. The transaction would seem to give me about 20 to 25 thousand dollars in cash.

The language of the contract was difficult but instead of obtaining my own independent legal review of the terms of the equity loan contract, I sought out and received, and relied on,

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the advice of the agent representing the corporation that was offering the equity loan.

Shortly after the contract had been signed I received only \$5,000 in cash rather than the \$20,000 to \$25,000 that had been promised to me. It turned out the agent had told me blatant lies regarding the terms of the contract; and I had believed him in spite of provisions in the contract that were not consistent with what he was telling me.

As the months went by the monthly mortgage payments “ballooned up” to an incredibly high amount; and an amount that I frankly could not afford to pay. Most of this was the result of sharply accelerating interest rates apparently allowed for in the contract. Eventually this loan corporation’s license to conduct business in the state of Washington, where I resided, was canceled. A large class action lawsuit was rendered against it on behalf of homeowners, such as I, who had been “defrauded” in this way.

As for me, to make the monthly mortgage payments forced me to “cut deeply” into my lines of credit; which were considerable because I was a lawyer and in those years lawyers were often granted substantial lines of credit by banks and other financial institutions. Within two years, it was clear that I couldn’t afford to continue to try to meet these mortgage payments.

My attorney and I decided that I should sell the house rather than to risk foreclosure on it. I was forced to repair and upgrade my house for purposes of selling it; and was able to extract only about twelve thousand dollars in profit from that sale.

In 1998, I moved into a duplex I had rented and began paying rent for the first time in twenty years. I had failed by becoming greedy for “easy money”, by exercising poor judgment regarding financial matters, and by lacking wisdom in my financial transactions.

There was a job I enjoyed very much. I had been holding this position for a couple of years; and had been with the

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organization for about four years. The position was a special assistant to the executive director. The job was with the Sacramento Concilio, a major social services agency and organization deeply imbedded in the Chicano civil rights movement and which had operations and activities in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys of north central California.

Once again I wasted too much time on the job; but in addition to that I didn't keep my "contacts" up sufficiently as was necessary in an organization of this nature.

The executive director became quite ill and I was forced to function as an acting executive director. There was a "disconnect" as I worked out of the executive director's office while the actual executive director did some of his work and carried on some of his duties at his home.

Then I took a two month leave of absence in order to study for the California bar examination. Toward the end of that leave of absence my position was eliminated and I was laid-off, ostensibly as a result of a "budget crunch". I had failed to anticipate that in my absence some of those people who were not my allies would take action to "get rid of me".

I received some "poor grades" in law school and "in the end" had only a C grade point average by the time I finished law school. In professional schools, one is expected to have a B average or higher. I did not meet that expectation. Once again the primary reason why I didn't have higher grades was because I did not focus on my learning.

Often I would be "day dreaming" in class, while reading the law, and while studying from outlines and notes for exams. I "put in" a huge amount of hours on my law school studies, but very often I wasted a lot of that time with lack of concentration. Even though the costs of law school were very expensive and "the stakes were very high" I could not seem to focus enough to "grasp" the material in order to obtain a proficiency level of understanding that would allow me to demonstrate and reflect this on my final exams. I failed at this. I also failed to identify a

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learning and studying strategy which would help me to be successful. Nevertheless I did complete my law school studies and did graduate from law school in 1974.

In November 1975, I left California and moved to Seattle, Washington in order to take an administrative job with the University of Washington; a position that I considered to be one of working in the Chicano civil rights movement that I was, at that time, so dedicated to. This decision and “life step” was a mistake. I should have remained in California; a place I loved for many reasons.

Instead of moving I should have “worked for a living” and “figured out” a way to pass the California bar examination. I would then have become a licensed California attorney and had an enormous Spanish-speaking, Latino, and other, clientele; and probable success in a law career in California. It was a mistake to leave California and I probably did so because I lacked self-confidence in my own abilities and skills.

In the University of Washington administrative job, referenced above, I was “on balance” not very successful at it in terms of meeting the expectations of many people. Even though I worked hard at the job for two and one half years, many people were glad to see me leave that position. I had failed to be successful as an administrator and supervisor.

My first job as a lawyer was in Seattle, Washington practicing law with a legal services organization, called the evergreen legal services corporation. My “learning curve” as a practicing attorney turned out to be “quite steep”. Again, many times I did not focus on my work and on developing myself as a valuable employee.

I practiced as part of a legal employment law project for which funding was eventually eliminated and I and others were laid-off. I applied for a lateral position with the same organization. I was asked to meet with the directing attorney. He told me that my mentoring attorney had reported that I wasn't doing very well at learning how to practice law quickly enough to be of value to the organization. He suggested that I

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“give up” on the practice of law and chose some other profession to pursue, or to find some other way to use my law school education.

I can still relive and feel the emotional pain and negativity of what he said. Obviously I wasn't hired to the lateral position. I had failed to make a good overall impression in my first lawyer job.

By late 1977 or early 1978, my girlfriend, Kassandra Karvichovich, a Caucasian, and I decided to get married. Kassandra was a converted catholic and wanted to have a catholic wedding ceremony. In order to do that, since I was divorced from a previous catholic marriage, I needed to try to obtain a catholic annulment from the Vatican [the headquarters of the Roman Catholic and apostolic religion]. I informed my ex-spouse, Marcella Gallindo, of this. She was hurt by my decision.

With the guidance of a local priest, I proceeded and prepared a 48 page brief which was sent to the Vatican requesting the granting of a catholic annulment. In the brief, I took responsibility and blame, “in so many ways” for the failure of the marriage with Marcella. The annulment was granted to me by the Vatican.

Marcella was very hurt by this. Throughout her life, she had been a faithful and devoted catholic, while I had not. She may have seen this as a betrayal of her “on my part” and on the part of the Catholic Church. I should never have attempted to obtain that catholic annulment. This was a mistake on my part.

I had an eight year domestic relationship and marriage with Kassandra Karvichovich. The first three years went well while we were still both in law school. During the next five years, however, I sometimes lacked focus on the relationship. I did it in the following ways. I had three or four “lady friends”. These relationships did not involve sex, intimacy or even hugging and kissing; but giving some of my attention to them took time away from my marriage given the time I spent with them, and

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the time I spent recalling our conversations and the things we did together.

I also spent a lot of time away from Kassandra and later our children due to the demands of my federal law practice, which included long hours at the office working on class action types of investigations and litigation; and trips out of state that sometimes lasted for several days.

I also was spending increasing amounts of time with civil rights activities in the Latino civil rights movement; and serving on boards and committees of Latino social service agencies and organizations.

In contradiction to all of this, I was determined and desirous that our marriage would be a permanent one; and I fully expected it to be.

We made a vacation trip to Guadalajara and Mexico City, Mexico while Kassandra was in the second month of her pregnancy with our oldest child. After a few days of that vacation Kassandra became quite ill. A doctor came to our hotel room, examined her, and ordered bed rest before she could safely "fly" home.

We were staying in a hotel in the international district [zona rosa] of Mexico City. Instead of staying with her in our hotel room, as a devoted spouse would do, I spent a lot of time out of the room and even out of the hotel entertaining myself, while Kassandra slept and attempted to recover from her illness. In all of these ways, I lost focus and failed to properly behave with Kassandra.

In 1979 I became friends with a federal government client named, Niles Gillespie. I spent a lot of time at work giving him legal advice on cases he was investigating. We also had occasional coffee breaks and lunches together.

In 1980 he met my spouse, Kassandra. Over time we socialized with Niles and his girlfriend. The girlfriend than died suddenly and Kassandra seemed to feel much sympathy for Niles. I didn't notice an apparent closeness that was developing between Kassandra and Niles.

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In September of 1980, I “made” a five day road trip, from Seattle, Washington to Mexico City with a compadre [catholic godfather to our oldest child] of ours, and his father. Cassandra and our children did not travel with us. In late November of that year, I traveled with friends on a weekend trip to a football game across the state of Washington, to the city of Spokane. Cassandra did not go with us. In mid-December of that year, Cassandra, our children and I traveled to spend the Christmas holidays with family in northern California.

Kassandra was emotionally distant from me, critical and irritable throughout those two weeks in California. Two days before New Years Day I traveled, with my oldest child, to attend a rose bowl football game in Los Angeles. Cassandra and our youngest child “flew” home to Seattle. Shortly thereafter Cassandra, who was a practicing attorney, “flew” to Japan to “try” an employment law case. She was on the Japan “trip” for several days.

A couple of days after her return home Cassandra requested a divorce [dissolution]; and soon thereafter she and Niles declared that they were “in love” with each other.

I had failed to exercise good judgment in selecting and trusting this friend with my family; and had “given him” the opportunity to betray my trust in him. I had also failed to realize that it is not a good idea to allow men to spend a lot of time with your female spouse; especially if you are not also present; and especially if your spouse might not be happy with the marriage. Unfortunately I was not aware of her unhappiness.

During my 11 years of being a federal lawyer, I made a lot of mistakes. Again many times I lost focus and concentration in my law practice. Many other times I became bored with what I was doing. Often I didn’t pay enough close attention to my clients. This is particularly necessary when you are in the role of in-house counsel or a corporate attorney, as I was.

I should have requested lots of meetings with my clients, rather than waiting for clients to request meetings with me; and

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discussed their cases with them including difficulties they might be having in handling their cases, but I didn't. I should have developed a rapport with all of my clients, but I didn't. I should have spoken with all of my clients frequently to determine if all of their legal needs were being met, but I didn't. Instead I waited for clients to make contact with me, requesting legal advice or meetings.

I passed many days without client contact, which was wasteful. I did a lot of legal research and writing all of which was topical but much of which was not case specific. I did not seek out a lot of contact with other attorneys in my law firm and, therefore, lost the benefit that comes with collaboration with other lawyers; even though they were practicing specialties other than mine. I didn't insist on developing my own specialties and niche within my law firm.

In all of these ways I failed to fully develop my law practice as a federal lawyer in ways that would have made me valuable to my law firm. As a result the consequences of these failures turned out to have a disastrous result.

I met Elena Flores, half Filipina and half Caucasian, in late 1980; in an adult education college class dealing with improving parenting skills.

We began to get to know each other in early 1981 after my ex-spouse had "separated" and filed for dissolution of the marriage. Three months later we began dating. Over the course of the next 10 years we were in a romantic relationship "off and on".

Over the course, of twenty years I proposed marriage to her several times. She declined each time. Being more specific on that, over a period of twenty years I proposed marriage to her seven times. She declined all of those proposals. I was advised by many friends and some family to "give up on her" in terms of a romantic or permanent relationship. I didn't do so and we ended up not being together anyway.

I wasted and lost a lot of time and years maintaining my sentimental and romantic feelings for Elena. She had many

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good reasons for positioning herself in the way she did as pertains to me. Nevertheless my failure to “move on” and “get on with my life” was a failure in judgment and perspective.

In 1990, after 11 years of being a federal attorney I was terminated by a regional counsel on the basis of incompetency.

At about the tenth year he had assigned a senior attorney to review my legal work before it “went out” to clients. Eventually the senior attorney reported back to the regional counsel that in his opinion my work was satisfactory.

Not long after that the regional counsel indicated that our clients in Alaska had, after six years that I provided them legal services, requested that I no longer be assigned as counsel for any of their Alaska cases. Toward the end of the eleventh year he also indicated that my primary civil rights client requested that I no longer be assigned to handling some of the civil rights cases. I had been doing so for eleven years.

Once terminated, I contested it through the appropriate system for litigating an employment discipline and termination case. I represented myself.

I won the case and the judge ordered that I be reinstated and with back pay, interest and benefits. The regional counsel professed that he would appeal that ruling; and it was appealable. He had assigned his best attorney, and one of my colleagues, to handle the case.

I considered a future scenario where I would be “back on the job”, and then if later on my litigation opponent and supervisor, the regional counsel, were to prevail on appeal, if he had chosen to file an appeal, I would have to leave my job again.

Many of my lawyer colleagues in the law firm strongly encouraged me to return to the law firm; and they attempted to assure me that they would “make sure” I would be successful and that I could go forward and have a long career as a federal lawyer.

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I concluded that I did not have the courage to return to my position in the firm, and to be in the presence of the person, that was the regional counsel, on a daily basis. I did not return. That was a very big career mistake on my part. I had failed to exercise sound judgment in making the right career decision at that “crossroads” in my working and professional life.

In 1995, I ran for political office in the form of being a candidate for the school board in the very large city of Seattle, Washington. I worked hard on my campaign. I received good ratings from the major newspaper and from several civic organizations involved in “that sort of thing”. I was actively involved in campaigning and devoted half of my work time to my campaign. On election night I lost.

Due to fraud in the inducement pertaining to the home equity loan, previously discussed; my insistence on spending money visiting Mexico City periodically in order to maintain very close friendships there; attempting to maintain my children in a lifestyle they were accustomed to; and to give them financial opportunities that I felt they deserved; and the reduction in income over time as a result of the loss of my high salaried lawyers job; I reached a point where I was in default to my creditors.

I retained a lawyer and, upon her advice, decided to obtain a chapter 7 bankruptcy, which I did. This was a failure in my ability to adequately manage my domestic and family financial concerns.

I had long been involved as an advocate and volunteer in the mental health community. In 1990, I began working in the mental health community as a mental health counselor. I also continued my private practice as a lawyer.

This dual effort required me to work seven days per week; and often “on into” the night. In 1992, I put my private sole practitioner law practice “on hold” and took a fulltime job as a clinic manager of a large mental health clinic.

The clinic was part of a large mental health organization in the Seattle area. The organizational ownership and leadership

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was “very high” on my prospects for success as a clinic manager. Things “did not go very well for me” at all in that capacity.

Although I knew a great deal about mental illness, mental health and developmental disabilities, from an academic and practicum standpoint, in general I was not highly skilled in supervising other employees.

I had taken time to become a certified mental health professional and licensed counselor in order to do this. In addition, there was somewhat of a “poisoned atmosphere or climate” in the clinic that I managed.

For example, there was someone who was a counselor in the clinic who felt she should have been selected as the manager of the clinic; and others who resented my having “come in from the outside” to be their manager.

After two years as clinic manager, and with the concurrence of the medical director, I “stepped down” and resigned from that position. I had hoped for a more successful outcome to that mental health clinic manager experience. I had failed to be a successful mental health clinic manager; even though I continued with the organization as a psychiatric social worker.

As a law student intern in a summer job while attending law school, and during a period that I was divorced from my first spouse, I became personally involved with some of my clients. I had sexual relations with three or four of the young women clients. This was a failure in professional ethics and in “maintaining boundaries” between clients and their serving professionals.

Years later I also had a brief sexual relationship with a high functioning mental health community client. The same standards should have applied. I had failed to exercise proper professional ethics and conduct.

During the period of 1994 to 1999, I found myself to be working, and practicing law, seven days per week, and for a total of between 70 to 80 hours per week in order to try to

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provide the kind of income I needed for my domestic budget, child support payments, on behalf of my younger son, my daughter's college expenses, visitation expenses and summer expenses.

My daughter, Santana Sandoval, was in high school and had been living with me since just before the beginning of the 10th grade in 1993; and was completely under my care, supervision and guidance.

I failed to provide good parenting in many ways. A lot of it was because of the work hours that had caused me to be unavailable to my daughter. There were times when I wasn't able to be home at odd hours and Santana took to spending overnights, with my permission but at her request, in the homes of good friends of hers. Her friends had parents present in the homes.

Partially because of this, Santana, during her junior and senior years of high school, functioned almost without close parental supervision. I failed in my role as a residential custody parent.

In March 2000, I moved to Sacramento, California from New York City. Fully credentialed, since 1973, as a secondary school teacher for life, I made a decision to teach fulltime at the secondary level of public education or private education. During the 2000-01 academic year, I taught part-time at all levels in an effort to adjust to returning to the teaching profession.

Just prior to the beginning of the 2001-2 school year, and in close proximity of time, I was offered three teaching positions. One was at an academically prestigious public high school in Sacramento, California. Another was at a public high school in nearby Stockton, California. The third was at a middle school also in Stockton, California.

I decided not to accept the Sacramento prestigious high school assignment because it was a one year assignment, and also because there was a much higher percentage of Latino

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students which I preferred, in Stockton, California than in Sacramento.

That decision was a mistake. I didn't realize that teaching positions are generally one year assignments anyway. With good performance, I would have continued to be offered subsequent positions at that high school in Sacramento, or in that school district. Preferring to teach a lot more Latino students, however, was not a mistake, and I've always had fond memories of that.

Had I accepted the Sacramento high school position I would not have had to drive 100 miles round trip per day as I "ended up" having to do to get to the schools in Stockton over the next six years. I also would have been able to continue to live in Sacramento, without having a long driving commute to work, a city that is very attractive and that I liked very much.

Of the two Stockton teaching offers I received I selected the middle school assignment because I felt I would have better rapport with the younger students, given my age then of fifty-seven. I thought I might "cut somewhat of a grandfather figure".

That selection was also a mistake. Although I taught at that middle school for six years, the middle schools were eventually phased out in that school district and I "ended up" teaching high school after that anyway. Also the "pushing and pulling" and the "testing of boundaries" the middle school age youngsters engage in was not to my liking.

Later on, in the years of teaching at the high school level, I found the maturity and humor of the mostly juniors and seniors that I taught to be much more compatible with my personality, and much more enjoyable to me.

In 1999, I left Seattle, Washington, after 25 years of working and living there. It had been "a splendid exile". All three of my children were born in Seattle. I moved to New York City. That was a rather large mistake, but not a huge one since I was going to move away from Seattle in any event.

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The reason that I call it a mistake and a failure is that it was difficult for me to remain gainfully employed in New York City. I didn't have any licenses, professional or otherwise, for New York City or New York State.

I did manage to work the majority of time I was in New York City, but I was without work at times. During the months, I lived in New York City, and for a short period of time afterwards, I was not able to assist my son and daughter with the amount of financial resources they had been receiving from me and that they needed for the college situation each one of them was in. It may have affected the outcome of their college careers.

I had originally planned to remain in New York City for two or three years and then to move to a city in the American southwest or southern California. My choices were Austin, Texas, Phoenix, Arizona and San Diego, California.

Eventually I made a decision to move to Sacramento, California. I had a part time job in New York City when I left but I chose to "follow through" with my previous decision on this matter, so I left.

Aside from all this, New York City was very stimulating for me, and living there was quite an adventure. You may have heard the old expression that goes something like this, "New York City, it's a tough town; if you can make it there, you can make it anywhere". Well, I only partially "made it" in New York City, and I certainly partially did not "make it".

In 2002, I met a woman in Stockton, California where I was working as a teacher. I was very "taken" with her. Her name was Davina Guerrero, a Latina. She was called Dave. By 2003 we began dating regularly. By sometime in 2004 we decided that we would get married as soon as possible. In June 2005, Davina suggested that we buy a house together and we would live in it. A lot of mistakes were made regarding that relationship. I will discuss this in detail in Chapter Nine, Relationships; under Davina Guerrero.

CHAPTER 4:

THE VIETNAM CIVIL WAR

The Viet Nam war was a brutal war that was a by-product of European colonialism in Indo-China, modernly referred to as Southeast Asia. Chinese hegemonic interests over domination of indo-china, and the United of America's anti-communist paranoid foreign policy conflicted and clashed "head on" there. The result was that European interests, particularly France, China's regional interests, and the interests of the then soviet union of socialist states of eastern Europe and northeast Asia "came to a head" in indo-china.

France "gave up" its direct involvement in the region, even though it had for some time been given financial and logistical assistance there by the United States, and France "handed it" to the United States to become directly involved, and the United States was eager to play an "active role" in "stemming the tide" of communism and socialism in that part of the world. It did so by "carrying out" a militaristic foreign policy there; by engaging "any and all" policy partners it could enlist, among indigenous political entities so that the United States could "carry out" its plans to engineer its political and economic objectives on the nations of that region.

This military foreign policy that the United States "carried out" was sometimes referred to as 'the domino theory'. I, as a college student studying for a bachelor's degree in world history, had, based upon my studies and analysis of the histories of eastern Europe and Asia, and my observations and analysis of United States foreign policy as related to the soviet union, China and Asia in general, and which I had been engaging in since 1962; by 1966 had made the conclusion that

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the domino theory contained “fatal flaws”. I therefore rejected its accuracy as a legitimate foreign policy objective. I believe I even wrote about this in my student newspaper and talked about this frequently.

A somewhat conflicting United States foreign policy theory, and one shared by many other countries “around the world” at that time, was the policy called “spheres of influence”. I found the spheres of influence analysis likely to be much more factual as to the “histories” which ultimately led to the Vietnam Civil war.

To illustrate, the “spheres of influence” theory went “something like this”. In the “modern” world of post-world war II, eastern Europe would be in the sphere of influence of the soviet union; the Americas of north and south were in the sphere of influence of the United States of America; Britain, France and Germany shared a sphere of influence over western Europe; Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Iran shared a sphere of influence over the middle east; South Africa and Nigeria shared a sphere of influence over sub-Saharan Africa; and all of Asia, including indo-china, was in the sphere of influence of China.

The “scene is set”. Now what about the dimensions of the Vietnam Civil war itself as pertains to that portion of my life experience in it? By 1967 the United States military “human investment” in the war was over 500,000 combat and support troops in the Viet Nam war theatre; and a relatively large military mobilization “back” in the United States.

The Viet Cong insurgents in the politically sovereign South Viet Nam had 450,000 troops “under arms”. The politically sovereign North Viet Nam had 1,000,000 [one million] military troops in uniform; with many operating in the northern regions of South Viet Nam proper, and along the border between the two countries. China had “up to” two million troops massed along the Chinese-north Vietnamese border in support of the military and political efforts and objectives of the north Vietnamese.

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Let us now “flash back” to sometime in the Fall of 1966. My spouse and I are living in Greeley, Colorado where I am attending college and in my senior year. I believe that she was working in the local community, but I can’t remember where or doing what. Maybe she wasn’t working, in which case I don’t know “what she did all day” because I do remember that she wasn’t attending college classes at that time.

We were very recently married and we both knew that we would be living for no more than five months in Greeley before “going back” to our hometown region, as it were, where I would be teaching at a high school in Pueblo, Colorado, as a pre-requisite requirement for completing my bachelor of arts degree from the university of northern Colorado. She would simultaneously be attending a four year college in Pueblo.

Sometime that Fall I received a notification from the selective service system, bureaucratically referred to as registration for the draft [see Chapter 1 which explains what “the draft” was]. The notification ordered me to report to a military venue in Denver, Colorado for a medical physical examination. The results of that examination would determine whether I was “fit” to be drafted into the military for a two year period of military service obligation. A person undergoing the procedure of “being drafted” was referred to, by the military, as a “draftee”.

What did it mean to be “fit” for the draft? Essentially it meant that a potential draftee’s physical and medical condition was such that there was not an extraordinary chance that the person would be wounded or killed while engaging in warfare activities. The criteria utilized had numerous illogical faults.

For example, if a potential draftee had a condition referred to as being “flat footed” he would not be “drafted”. Flat footed was a medical condition of “fallen arches”. “On the other hand” if a potential draftee was diagnosed with a “heart murmur”, that is to say one or more heart valves malfunctioning in moving the flow of blood thru and out of the heart chambers, this person would be drafted.

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I reported, as mandated, and underwent the physical examination. I remember that as I was undergoing the exam I wanted to “pass it”. Why? I certainly didn’t want to be inducted into the army. It was because all of my life until then I always very much desired to be in the best health possible. This in spite of the health obstacles and challenges I have had to “face”. Indeed I had a heart murmur and hosted a moderately defective heart. I did “pass” the examination.

What was the military history of my family? My father and his five brothers had not been “called” or had to personally participate in either World War I or World War II because they were farming the five farms that remained to our extended Sandoval family as a result of the Mexican land grant those lands were a part of. [I discuss this more extensively in the autobiographical portion of this book]. The older ones may have been “too old” to have participated in World War II, in any event.

My two older brothers had both had stellar military experiences, one in the U.S. army and the U.S. navy and the other in the U.S. air force. As for me, sometime during my high school years I became significantly anti-military. Throughout my college years, I “had no intention” of ever volunteering for being in the military; or “by any other means” ever being in the military. I considered that doing so would be a “total waste” of three or four years of my life.

To put this another way, In February 1967, while we were undergoing the student teaching training in Pueblo, Colorado, I received a notice from the selective service system ordering me to report for a military induction, on a date in late March of 1967, at a military venue in Denver, Colorado.

What is a military “induction”? It is a ceremony where you and others “raise your right hand” and swear allegiance and loyalty to the United States of America; and swear to defend it militarily if “called upon” to do so. At the end of the oath you and all the others taking the oath automatically and instantaneously become members of the U.S. army for a

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subsequent two year period of time; if you are a draftee, otherwise more than two years.

The notice of induction mentioned that I should bring to the induction ceremony personal clothing and toiletries; and not to plan on returning home after the ceremony.

The “last thing in the world” I wanted to do was to be in the military. I had responsibilities, however. One responsibility was that my family was patriotic. My family would be deeply shamed if I didn’t “do my duty to my country”. Another responsibility was to my young spouse who now was stunned and deeply disappointed that we would be apart, likely for the next two years.

As I alluded to in Chapter 1, she felt betrayed by this; and abandoned by me. She even somewhat believed that I saw this development as a “good excuse” for me to “get away from” this marriage with her; given that I had already, apart from this, shown “some signs” of having some regrets about she and I having married the previous summer. Nevertheless as to this responsibility it seemed “there was nothing I could do about it”.

There was, however, an, albeit conflicting, alternative to submitting to being inducted into the army. That alternative was to “refuse” to be inducted and to, therefore, become a prisoner or inmate of the fort Leavenworth military prison at a military base somewhere in the state of Kansas. This imprisonment would be for two years, I believe.

This alternative had some attraction to me as I visualized myself in that prison functioning somewhat as the military “bird man of Alcatraz”. This, in literature, was the story of a prisoner who became highly educated and a curator of birds while in prison. I naively visualized myself as maybe writing a couple of books while in prison, and that these books would later become “best sellers”, or at least prominent. I had no interest in birds, however. This alternative was negated by the shame my family members would feel by my status as a prisoner of the United States of America.

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My reason for contemplating refusing induction was not just that I was anti-military but also that I was “against” this particular war. I would have been happy to fight in world war II.

“Technically speaking” there was a third option. That option was fleeing the United States to Canada or Mexico. I had little difficulty discarding this option. I wasn’t going to “run away” from my own country. I felt an obligation to “face” consequences so it was just a “question of” what those consequences would be. “Besides”, I didn’t know anyone in Canada and knew almost nothing about that country at that time.

As for Mexico, although I had ancestors from Mexico I had no known relatives there. I also knew very little about Mexico except for what I had experienced during a couple of teenage dance troupe trips there; by the pride I felt in being of Mexican origin; by Mexican folklore among my Latino population, and by what I had read in books and seen on film.

One other alternative was the conscientious objector exemption or the extreme hardship exemption to being drafted. Each of those did have consequences but I had no problems with my conscience; in fact I wasn’t even religious, and there were no extreme hardships to me or my family; at least at that stage of the process.

In retrospect, my young spouse may have been emotionally vulnerable to experiencing an extreme hardship, but I didn’t then know it. Maybe she, however, knew or sensed that. I didn’t pursue any of these options but instead submitted to induction and became a member of the U.S. army.

In spite of the “weight” of all of these disappointments, and weighing of responsibilities and options, a small “part of me” was curious about “what it would be like” being in and living in Asia; and what it “would be like” being a soldier in a war. This curiosity and interest in adventure is something that “afflicts” many young male adults, at least, and I guess I was no exception.

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The date for my induction, stated in my induction order, created some practical problems for us. I had two weeks remaining on my student teaching commitment. Failure to complete that commitment would have the effect of my not being eligible to “graduate from college”. My parents were very much “looking forward” to attending my college graduation ceremony, which was being “held” in late March 1967. I had some interest in that as well.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, the military offered a procedure called “volunteering for the draft” which allowed for a temporary deferral of the induction date. In order to be able to graduate by completing my student teaching commitment, and to graduate from college, and to participate in my graduation ceremony, I selected that procedure. I chose April 12, 1967 as my induction date.

My young spouse interpreted this “volunteering for the draft” as another indication of my abandoning her. She saw this as my “volunteering” to leave her.

In 1967, men my age, my being twenty-two, and married, were not a high priority for being drafted. If I had been allowed to graduate from college, for example, and then “taken” a teaching position, for which I would be immediately qualified, having just graduated from a “teacher’s college” curriculum; such status would have given me a deferral, on that basis, from being drafted as long as I continued to teach. Such was not to be “the case”.

After I was drafted and inducted, my father “visited” a meeting of my local draft board in Huerfano County, located in southern Colorado; near the state of New Mexico state line. He spoke to the selective service [draft] board members; in the form of a scolding, as to why his son, attending college, graduating from college, and being married, would be drafted while other young men locally not attending college, not being married, and working in menial jobs, and some even unemployed, were not drafted.

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The most glaring difference, from my civil rights conscious perspective, seemed to be that they were mostly not Latinos. At that time, local draft boards made the decisions as to who would be drafted and who would not be drafted. "To this day" I believe that this local draft board made a racist decision, as regards to me, in order to protect draft eligible non-Latinos from being drafted and, therefore, not being "sent" to the brutal Viet Nam Civil war.

On April 11, 1967, my young spouse, Marcella Gallindo, and I had "a stiff upper lip" goodbye; or maybe it was a tearful goodbye, I can't remember which. I "mounted" a bus and traveled to Denver, Colorado where I was to be inducted into the army the following day. The bus trip and the overnight stay in a downtown hotel was paid for by the U.S. army.

The next morning I walked over to the "induction center". I was surprised to see quite a few other young men awaiting the same fate.

After the induction ceremony we were "loaded on" several buses, they were military buses this time, and driven to an airport. At the airport, we were "boarded" on a commercial aircraft and "flown" to El Paso, Texas.

I believe this was the first time in my life that I had "taken a trip or flight" on an airplane. Over the years, I have "flown" a huge number of times since then. The "flight" along the "eastern slope" of the Colorado rocky mountain range, and over the dry lands, plateaus and canyons of the state of New Mexico was quite interesting to me.

We "landed" at a commercial airport in El Paso, Texas. At the airport there, we were escorted onto army buses and were "driven" to the outskirts of the city where was located a huge army base named, fort bliss. Within fort bliss was an also huge army basic training camp.

A "basic training camp" is a place where new inductees "spend" their first three months in the army undergoing various types of orientation, and being trained in many of the skills of soldiering including basic aspects of weaponry, survival skills,

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physical fitness, care for all military equipment, hand to hand combat, endurance hiking and marching, and how to live and survive when there are no houses, buildings or even tents to live in. There was “none of that”, however, the first day in camp; particularly “none of that” for me. It was soon discovered that I was a commercial painter apprentice, with some journeymen skills, and I was “put to work” painting the inside of buildings. This “went on” for two or three days. After that, I was back in my “platoon” or was it “squad”, or was it “company”, doing the same thing everyone else was doing.

The orientation included several tests, and one was an intelligence test. I, being someone “who never met a test I didn’t like” obtained a test score that placed me fourth or fifth in a battalion of “roughly” 2,000 soldiers. These 2,000 “souls” included officers and even the commander, as well as all the “enlisted men” and “draftees”, such as myself. “In other words”, my test score was higher than the score most officers had obtained when they “took” this test. I may even have placed third, I don’t quite remember, in my battalion.

“Like I say” I’m always motivated to do my best when “taking” a test. Nevertheless, I did overhear some “test takers” saying they were deliberately not going to “do well” on the test for fear that “it might lead” to unfavorable assignments in the future.

There was also an aptitude test given. What it revealed about me was not going to “matter” because as a draftee I was not going to be offered, and indeed, over the “course” of the next two years, was never offered any vocational specialty schools to learn and train in.

After basic training is completed, almost everyone is assigned an advanced training component. I was destined to be sent to “advanced infantry training” and then immediately “on to” participation in the Viet Nam Civil War, and I knew it. I’d hoped to be given some kind of advanced training that might help keep me out of direct combat, but I knew I wouldn’t; and I wasn’t.

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Just like I “never met a test I didn’t like” I also “never met an army meal I didn’t like”. Maybe it’s because I like to eat and I like to eat a lot; and I like almost all types of foods. Nonetheless I completed three months of basic training a trim and conditioned 150 pounds. I had weighed 165 pounds as a senior in high school and my weight had probably increased in the five years after that. My height is five feet and ten inches; in case you’re curious.

Over the next two years, I hated “making my bunk [bed]”, in accordance with a particular army way. I hated keeping my foot lockers’ contents in perfect order. I hated wearing my army uniforms a certain and perfect way. I hated polishing my army boots and shoes with a “high gloss shine” every evening. I hated going outside at five or six in the morning for essentially a roll call, military style. It didn’t matter that it might be raining or snowing. I hated having to “wait around” so often and for sometimes very long periods of time. I hated crawling rapidly in dirt or mud. I hated crawling under barbed wire. I disliked intensely the young Ku Klux Klansmen that were in the army. I hated obstacle courses in general. I hated the frequent stupidity or stubbornness of my fellow soldiers. I hated kitchen duty or bathroom duty or mopping and waxing floors. I disliked guard duty. I hated being in an all male environment. I hated classroom training sessions. I hated poisonous gas training. I hated riding in an army truck when not the driver. I’m sure I’ve left some things out.

Over those two years, I loved the attention of girls and women when on liberty [time off from duty assignments], or on furlough, or on leave [vacations from duty stations]. I loved army food and beverage. I loved food rations [these are foods in preservative cans]. My favorite food rations were ham, chocolate cookies and wafers, devils food, spam, chicken, beef and liverwurst. I loved the dress uniform. I loved pugle stick fighting. I loved jogging. I loved running. I loved hand to hand combat training. I loved shooting range training. I loved throwing grenades [small peach shaped bombs] training. I

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loved sleeping in pup tents. I loved digging foxholes. I loved filling sandbags. I loved driving army jeeps. I loved riding in army jeeps. I loved driving army pickup trucks. I loved being paid 365 days per year, although the pay was low. I loved being fed, for free, 365 days per year. I loved combat pay. I loved opportunities for volunteer activities in local communities. I loved the rest and recuperation trips out of the Viet Nam Civil war theatre. I loved relatively inexpensive on-base entertainment. I don't think I left anything out.

Given that I possessed a college degree and that I had scored so high on the military intelligence test, at some point in time during basic training I was offered entry into officer's candidate school [OCS]. OCS is an alternative to being a cadet in the army military academy, known as West Point; or to completing an academic and military program at a sponsoring college or university, known as the Reserve Officer's Training Corps [ROTC]. As to ROTC, I don't know whether its completion results in getting a commission [appointment as an officer] in the army reserve, which is normally not active duty, or in the regular active duty army.

In any event, I declined the offer for OCS candidacy for a couple of reasons. Becoming an officer requires that one "serve" in the active army for three years instead of the two years required of a draftee. Another reason is that I had promised my young spouse that I would not volunteer or, by any other means, become obligated for any more time than the two years that my draftee status required. Another reason is that I did not want to be in the army for more than those two years.

In fact, throughout the two years that I was in the army I would recite to myself a sort of mantra "that for me being in the military was like being in prison, but without walls or cells". I was never "free to leave" my duty stations. I had no option but to obey all "commands" and "for the most part" I was not allowed to exercise my first amendment rights and privileges. All of these limitations and deprivations also exist in prison.

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El Paso, Texas is a city with a large majority of Latino population. After the first month or so of being “confined to base” [not allowed to leave the army base], we were allowed to go “off base”. I went into the city on Saturday nights until midnight, and all day Sunday until about 8 p.m. I really enjoyed going into the city and being among a lot of Latinos.

I would ride a city bus from the army base and disembark in downtown El Paso. On these Saturday nights I would usually walk around a “little bit” and then inevitably end my time in taverns drinking beer and smoking cigarettes. Otherwise I’d “take in” a Hollywood film.

On Sundays, my activity was quite different. Daylight gave me an opportunity to explore the city well beyond the downtown area. I enjoyed the “walking around” and exploring residential streets as well as commercial ones. There came a Sunday when I “went into town”, with an army friend, from Denver, Colorado, that I “had made”. We came to discover that by mid-afternoon, and then on into the evening, in a downtown park, that was constructed and “laid out” in the Mexican central plaza [zocalo] style, many mostly Latino people walked about the park in a promenade pattern.

There was a wide sidewalk that circled the edge of the park. Alongside the sidewalk were grassy areas, benches, and other passive attractions. We also discovered that there were pretty girls that promenaded around the park. My friend and I befriended a couple of nice and pretty girls.

The girls were from a place near the Mexican-United States border, on the Mexican side, and most Sundays they would travel north to El Paso and “spend” at least part of their time in that central plaza park.

We would accompany the two young ladies promenading round and round in the park; talking to them in Spanish about many things and enjoying each other’s company. We had “paired off” into two promenading couples and I eventually became fond of my promenading female friend, and she of me. My army friend eventually lost interest but I continued to go to

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the park every Sunday afternoon, and would then walk and talk with my female friend and her friend.

Meanwhile my young spouse was “back in” Pueblo, Colorado attending a four year college. I don’t know that she told me much about what she did during her “free time”. She had several cousins, in her age group, in Pueblo and I think she spent a lot of social time with them. She also had numerous other relatives living in Pueblo with whom she had much contact, as well as a few friends in nearby Walsenburg, Colorado.

During my three months of “basic training” at fort bliss in El Paso, Texas my young spouse, Marcella, never had an opportunity to “come” and visit me, and be with me while I was in the army in El Paso, Texas. My mother, Lucy, did come, however.

At the end of basic training, there was a ceremony outside on what in the military is called “parade grounds”. All of the “companies” that have completed basic training do parade marching in summer “dress uniforms”; and marched in review before the commanding general of the army base; or was it the basic training camp only? My mother had ‘made’ a 450 mile bus trip to see me participate in this ceremony. It was the only time parents and relatives were invited to come and visit.

I think she came because it was the only time in the three months of basic training that family or friends were allowed to visit us. I can’t remember if my father also came but I think not, knowing that he rarely or never submitted to bus trips. It was car travel or nothing for him. I don’t recall if my mother stayed and rested overnight before returning to her home in Walsenburg, Colorado. I hope so. I do vaguely recall sharing a meal with her. Actually just a few days later basic training was completed and I myself was on a bus trip traveling from El Paso, Texas to Pueblo, Colorado.

One of the last functions of the army, at least in this basic training camp, was to gather all of us in the main room of the building in which we lived, our “barracks”, and in a way that

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somewhat resembles the handing out of grades or report cards in school, we were each given a document the contents of which indicated what each of our advanced training assignments would be; and where it would be.

These documents, which constitute the succeeding military assignment, are called “orders”. As expected my orders were for advanced infantry training at an army base in Augusta, Georgia, called Fort Gordon.

Here we all were, with no “rank” whatsoever and soon facing our next military challenge. “Rank” is your level of authority and promotional status and your pay grade in the military. We had no authority and no promotional status at that time.

Throughout my two years in the army my young spouse received monthly money, called a “spousal allotment”, which supposedly gives the spouse financial assets for living expenses. In addition, I received a monthly soldier’s pay of several hundred dollars. I gave all but forty dollars monthly of my soldier’s pay to my young spouse. I attached no conditions to how she might use these different sources of money. For the two years that I was in the army I had but forty dollars per month for “spending money” on myself.

I know that part of the reason for my generosity was the guilt I felt toward my young spouse for my so unexpectedly being away from her.

My training battalion or regiment consisted of several companies and totaled around 1,500 to 2,000 troops. Each training battalion had one trainee soldier that served as our leader. Our trainee leader was a man named, Kelly Dean. Kelly Dean was a fullback with the professional Philadelphia eagles football team. Kelly Dean was also a member of the national guard and that is why he was enduring basic training.

Members of the national guard carry out military duties on some weekends and participate in military summer camp. There were many national guardsmen in basic training with me.

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A few years later, Kelly Dean “came out” [revealed himself] as a homosexual. Physically Kelly was 6’4” and 245 pounds and “strong as an ox”. He was a very nice and soft-spoken man.

Kelly went on in his life to be very financially successful, although denied his dream of being a college or professional football coach, and has been an advocate for gays, and other discriminated minorities.

He played almost ten years of professional football in the National Football League. Kelly didn’t reveal his homosexuality until after he had completed his professional football career.

I didn’t like the national guardsmen very much. In addition to most of them being Texans, whom I’ve never liked very much, they were boastful and arrogant. It was apparent that the only reason most of them were in the national guard was to avoid being in the Vietnam Civil War.

There was a particular one who persisted in attempting to degrade me. Finally “fed up” I invited him to a fist fight with me. That may have been in violation of army regulations. He accepted and a time for the fight was arranged. “At the last minute” he “backed out”. I accepted his withdrawal. He was about six inches taller than I.

Some of my favorite army phrases were “not in this man’s army”, “your heart belongs to your mom, but your ass belongs to me”, “dog team”, “hurry up and wait”, “smoke and joke”, “hurry up, hurry up, let’s move that chow line”, “your other right”, “this is my weapon, this is my gun, this is for fighting, this is for fun”, “I don’t know but I’ve been told, Georgia _____ is made of gold”, “smoke em if you got em”, “shit on a shingle”.

During all these “hurry up and wait” periods, I developed an uncanny ability to sleep with my head resting in a metal army helmet so that my head would be suspended above the dirt, grass, concrete, black top, wood or whatever presented itself as a surface. My greatest motivation in this ability to sleep anywhere was to escape my incredible boredom.

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Back to my own bus trip, after the completion of basic training, from El Paso, Texas to Pueblo, Colorado; for a two week "leave" before reporting to advanced infantry training in the state of Georgia. The bus route, of course, made several stops along the way. I was required to wear my summer dress army uniform as I departed the army base in El Paso, Texas so I was wearing it while riding on the bus.

At the bus stop in Albuquerque, New Mexico a young lady "got aboard" as a passenger. She selected a seat next to me, possibly because there were no other seats available. "After a while" I noticed that she was "nice looking". We began a conversation. She was traveling to Denver, Colorado to visit relatives. She was a college student from Albuquerque but attended a catholic college in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She had beautiful brown skin and was a Latina.

We talked for a couple of hours about various things each of us was interested in. It got dark outside. I invited her to sit on the window seat and she did. Soon we began to "hold hands". We could barely see each other in the dark of the traveling bus. After a bit more time passed we began to hug and kiss. We continued to hug and kiss for a couple of hours. Eventually I proceeded to touch her legs and she allowed it. We did this while constantly kissing. Finally I moved my hand high up between her legs and she allowed it. Her lips, face, hands and legs felt warm and sweet.

I did not intend to "go any further" and I could also sense that she did not plan to allow us to go any further either. Suddenly the bus driver spoke out in a loud voice and said, "You two stop doing what you are doing". We stopped and didn't do any more "necking" for the remainder of the trip to Pueblo, Colorado; although we did hold hands, but somewhat sheepishly.

We arrived in Pueblo, Colorado at six in the morning, which was the end of the journey for me. She said goodbye to me and I said goodbye and she wished me good fortune for the remainder of my experiences in the army. As I left the bus

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the bus driver talked briefly to me and said that if I hadn't been a soldier he would have "put us both off the bus" once he discovered our activity. We had not intended for the driver, or anyone else, to see us. I don't think the driver could have legally "taken us" off the bus without incurring liability.

The bus quickly departed the station, and an hour and a half later my young spouse arrived at my bus station destination in our car to "pick me up" and drive me to her apartment. Within fifteen to thirty minutes of arriving at the apartment we were having sex and "making love". I was twenty-three and she was nineteen years old. It had been three long months that we had been apart. It was late June or early July 1967. My young spouse, Marcella, was a charming, beautiful and sexy young woman.

Based on my being assigned to advanced infantry training, it was now, if it hadn't already been, "crystal clear" that I would be going to the Viet Nam Civil war right after the advanced infantry training was completed, two months hence.

Marcella and I talked about this. There was no "getting around" the fact that we were going to have to live a war experience as a young married couple. There is a big difference in state of mind between someone who has volunteered to be in the army, sees it as an opportunity or an adventure, and maybe even wants to engage in combat; and someone, such as myself, who against his will is drafted into the army during war time. It becomes even worse when you refuse all military opportunities to possibly avoid being in this war.

The Viet Nam war was no small war; it was a big killing war. Along with physical challenges that we "faced" ahead of us, there were also the emotional and mental challenges that we would "face". The Viet Nam Civil war was a war in which 58,000 American troops were killed. 250,000 American troops were wounded. Over two million Americans and Mexicans served in the U.S. military during the essentially ten years of the Viet Nam war. During late 1967 and the first half of 1968,

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when I was in the war, the weekly “death count” of American troops was 250 killed per week.

I’d like to think that in spite of all this my spouse, Marcella, and I enjoyed our two weeks together on that leave before my going to advanced infantry training in Georgia. We expected to be together again for a few days after the next two months of advanced infantry training, and before I would have to depart for Southeast Asia and the Viet Nam Civil war. We talked a lot, made love a lot, and visited with family and friends a lot. Marcella indicated she would like to move to California, work there and be near her father and family while I was away in the war. If I was killed, she would remain living in California as she felt no particular attachment to living in Colorado.

After the leave ended, I don’t remember how or by what means of transportation I “got to” Augusta, Georgia, and that advanced infantry training there. I wasn’t thrilled to now be in a state that had been one of the pillars of the confederacy during the American civil war; and the more than 300 year history of slavery and racism against black people and Jews in that state.

In terms of nature, Georgia was beautiful, with green foliage everywhere, rolling hills, and lots of rivers, streams and other waterways. Not a lot different from the state of North Carolina that I was already somewhat familiar with due to having close family members living there, and as a result having visited there several times.

Advanced infantry training was quite vigorous and demanding “by any measure”. There was a huge amount of emphasis on military discipline, which included following “any and all” commands unquestioningly.

I remember seeing Jimmy Carter on television functioning as governor of that state. Nine years later Jimmy Carter would become president of the United States.

Many of the trainees who were in this training program were volunteers for airborne training, and upon completion of this training they would be “going to” airborne training school.

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Most of these were enlistees; young men who had volunteered to serve in the army for three years. There were a few draftees who had volunteered for the “airborne”.

The “airborne” is infantrymen who parachute out of military airplanes into combat situations. Some of these enlistees came from circumstances where they had to choose between going to jail or “joining” the army. Once they completed their airborne training they would be assigned to either the 101st airborne division or the 82nd airborne division, neither of which were at that time scheduled to fight in the Viet Nam Civil war, as far as I know. As to the 101st airborne division, however, I thought it would just be a “matter of time” before they would be inserted into the Viet Nam Civil war.

In advanced infantry training, nearly every day some training sergeant or officer would say, “most of you are going to the Viet Nam war”. Most of the training was “geared” toward “combat and survival in the Viet Nam Civil war, which was substantially a jungle and tropical warfare situation. Thus we were trained in jungle warfare. We spent several overnights in the wilderness areas of densely forested parts of Georgia. We moved through swamps and forded streams. We engaged in simulated combat situations. We learned how to relieve ourselves in a sanitary fashion when bathrooms were not available. We learned how to use advanced weaponry including machine guns, high caliber weaponry, flame throwers, anti-tank weapons, how to make and avoid booby-traps, how to fire mortars, how to fire bazookas, various side arms, tear gas, how to set up and how to avoid land mines, grenade launchers, field radios, night vision devices, how to “string” barbed wire, knife fighting, bayonet fighting, and all uses of the M-14 and M-16 automatic rapid fire lightweight rifle.

Some of the black soldiers would say to me that I would be killed in the Viet Nam war because I was not quick enough. We all had to run a mile in “under” ten minutes. We had to do this in full combat clothing, without equipment, but wearing

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combat boots, and not athletic shoes of any kind. I ran the fastest mile, finishing the mile in six minutes and thirty seconds. This test was performed on a badly maintained track by today's standards.

One day we were in morning formation just after breakfast. We would soon be "heading out" to our first training exercise for the day. The drill [training] sergeant asked if there was anyone in the company who could type [work with a manual typewriter]. I had "taken" a couple of typing courses in high school, for lack of any other courses I could take, and was a pretty good typist --- mainly because I never met a speed test I didn't like ---. I did not volunteer to the drill sergeants' request, however.

A friend of mine raised his hand and volunteered and he was "taken away" and became the company typist. He spent the remainder of his two years in the army in the office as the company office clerk and typist; and never did go to the Viet Nam Civil war.

Here we trained "all day long". There was also a lot of classroom training regarding jungle warfare. I usually slept from after supper for the "rest" of the night because I was so physically exhausted from the training and because I became extremely bored with "army life" during "down time". "Here I was", a college graduate but not utilizing any of my college education or developed mental disciplines.

There were a lot of blacks in my "company". Most of them were "from" Midwestern and eastern cities. I enjoyed talking to those that had black ghetto experiences in the cities about that; and about what level of black civil rights consciousness they might have, on an individual basis. "On the other hand", most of them were not familiar with the concept of Latinos [then referred to as Hispanics or Chicanos] beyond Puerto Ricans in east coast cities. They were not familiar with our [Latino] characteristic of culturally and historically inspired courage and bravery in battle. They were slow to learn that we didn't want to imitate, nor to alienate, other cultures or races.

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We [Latinos] had our own racial, cultural and behavioral patterns which were neither black nor white.

My black fellow soldiers gradually “got the message”. When challenged by a black soldier I never “backed down”. This was for all to observe. I already had a seven year life history of respecting and having empathy for black populations, and their civil rights movement, and activities. I felt that the best way to show that respect was to never “back down” from any challenges from my fellow black soldier trainees because backing down would send the message that they “were not worth the bother” and that was not the message I wanted to deliver.

There were very few white soldiers in my company, no Asian-Americans, and actually only a few Latinos soldiers, such as myself.

During “free time” I remained mostly “on base”; sleeping, resting, eating and occasionally attending “Hollywood films”. I do recall one weekend when I “went into town” with two or three Latino soldier friends. We rented a room in an economically priced hotel. The others were interested in having sex with local females in the business of providing sexual pleasures in exchange for remuneration. One of the friends made inquiries and discovered that prostitutes were available to conduct business within that “very same” hotel.

Each of my two or three friends, in turn, left the room to “go out” to another hotel room to “have sex” with a prostitute. I chose not to participate in that activity. None of the three friends pressured me to do so. Their probable thinking was that my disinclination and declination was due to the fact that I was married. That actually was the reason, but I also had no previous experience dealing with prostitutes.

During the time that I was in advanced infantry training I finally “broke down” and agreed to take the test for admission to officer’s candidate school [OCS]. First, however, I inquired whether I could receive and be granted a “direct commission” to the rank of second lieutenant officer. A direct commission is

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to be made an officer almost immediately and without having to “go through” OCS school, or any other type of officer training. I had been informed of a soldier who had a college degree in chemistry and who had received a direct commission on that basis. I was told that I could not be granted a direct commission because the kind of college degree I possessed, a bachelor’s degree in world history, was not of a type that merited a direct commission.

Well I sat down in a small classroom and began “taking” the OCS test. Halfway through the test I realized “this is not what I want”, so I “stood up”, walked to the front of the classroom, and turned in my uncompleted test and told them to throw it away.

We completed the advanced infantry training and received our “orders”. As fully expected my orders were to report, three weeks hence, to an army “replacement station” in South Viet Nam; and in the war zone. A “replacement station” is an army encampment where soldiers, who are not arriving into a “war zone” with an entire division, or organized grouping of some type, are assigned to an army unit upon arrival in the war zone. A war zone is the geographical region where a war is taking place.

So I left Fort Gordon army base, in Augusta, Georgia and arrived home in Pueblo, Colorado, and rejoined my young spouse, Marcella Gallindo. We “spent” a few days visiting family in the local area.

One of my older brothers, Carl, was there visiting our parents. He had traveled there from his home in Sacramento, California. As I was leaving he said that he wished he was going to war instead of me and “in place” of me. Years later he told me, somewhat sheepishly, that the reason he had said that was because he believed he was more patriotic than me; and he knew I was “against this war”.

My father cried when I left. It was only the second or third time I’d seen him “cry over me”. The two previous times was because he felt, in retrospect, that he had over-administered

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corporal punishment on me. Our father was 67 years of age by then. There was sadness “all around” among immediate family members.

My young spouse, Marcella, and I “took” a road trip from the state of Colorado to the state of California. Our first stop was Disneyland in southern California. We had a “good time” together there. Next we visited her aunt in Rialto, California located near San Bernardino in southern California. After that, we undertook the long road trip from there to northern California. Our first stop was San Jose, California where we visited with Marcella’s father, step-mother and Marcella’s younger brothers and sisters, and other family members thru them.

My young spouse and I were very loving toward each other throughout this trip, and throughout my pre-Viet Nam war leave [vacation] from the army.

Next was a visit with three of my sisters and other family members in Sacramento, California, which is also in northern California. Finally we “went” to the apartment of a mutual friend living in San Francisco, California. My young spouse, Marcella, would be living with this friend, Janice, and hoping to be employed in the San Francisco bay metro area. She and Janice were high school classmates during their senior year. Both were Oakland, California natives.

I was to report to a particular “dock” of the Oakland army terminal. It was located on the San Francisco bay with a great view of San Francisco. This small army encampment was dedicated exclusively to “shipping out troops” and “receiving arriving and returning troops” to and from the Viet Nam war.

My young spouse was with me “all the way and to the very last moment”. She was very brave throughout. She then drove our Volkswagon beetle home to the San Francisco apartment where she would be living.

My heart “reaches out” with sadness to her as I recall the great emotional hardships she endured during the Viet Nam Civil war and in her marriage with me.

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An army bus transported me to the “interior” away from “the coast” and to an air force base in Fairfield, California. There a large commercial aircraft was “loaded up” with soldiers and we “flew” to Saigon, now known as Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Due to the threat of incoming artillery and rocket fire our aircraft had to engage in a tight spiral landing pattern; in order to “land” safely. All of the soldier passengers were unarmed and in dress uniforms. As we deplaned onto the tarmac we were surrounded by a bevy of well-armed Vietnamese national police guards.

At the edge of the tarmac, we were loaded onto military buses and transported to the replacement station at Long Binh, Vietnam, about thirty miles outside of the city of Saigon.

The encampment was small, consisting mostly of tents of various sizes, and the climate was rainy and muddy. Next to the encampment was an army “stockade”. A “stockade” is a military prison. The prisoners were all United States soldiers, although some may have been marines. The prison was called LBJ, the long binh jail. [The double meaning was Lyndon Baines Johnson, the current American president] During the course of the war, there were one or more prison riots at that location.

It was early evening when we arrived. I was tired but didn’t get an opportunity to sleep at all that night. I was selected to work the entire swing and graveyard shifts that first night in the mess hall [dining hall]. I worked hard in that kitchen; from 7 p.m. until 6 or 7 a.m. the following morning. I hadn’t eaten supper that evening and wasn’t given any food during those shifts. The last time I had eaten was on the airline while “flying” over the pacific ocean on the way to indo-china and South Vietnam.

I “spent” all night peeling potatoes and scrubbing and washing large pots and pans. The only other people in the kitchen were a soldier cook and two or three Vietnamese workers. I was miserable. I felt that I was at or near “the bottom

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of my barrel". When I "got off" kitchen duty, I "found" my tent and "cot"; yes I said "cot", and "fell" into a deep sleep. As a result, I "missed" breakfast and lunch. That's three successive meals I had "missed". Actually I don't recall eating any meals during the four days I was in that replacement encampment; but I must have eaten something.

Here's the way the encampment functioned. We had no work duties in the camp, so long as we avoided being singled out to perform various chores the encampment needed. There was a sheltered area in the middle of the encampment. There were large wooden bulletin boards erected there. Posted on these bulletin boards were lists of names indicating what "unit" you were being assigned to in the Viet Nam Civil war.

For example, the 25th infantry mechanized division would be one of those units. "From time to time" new lists would be posted on the bulletin boards and old lists "taken down". The biggest function of this encampment had to be the work of personnel operations. I never did see them.

We replacement soldiers just "hung around" and waited to see our name "come up" on some list. Trucks from "the big red one", 1st infantry division, and the 24th infantry division arrived and "carried off" new soldier replacements. The 198th light infantry brigade came; the 1st cavalry division came; the 25th infantry division mechanized came; the 10th mountain division came; others came and left but still my name did not "turn up" on any list. Finally on the fourth day my name "showed up" on a tiny list that had only five or six names on it.

I was so excited to finally be on a list, and to finally be leaving that muddy and dastardly encampment no matter what my future might "hold", that I didn't bother to notice the unit I was assigned to. Very soon I was called to my transporting vehicle. The vehicle was not a big truck but rather it was a large $\frac{3}{4}$ ton army pickup. Already in the pickup were two soldiers riding "up front" with the driver and two other soldier passengers sitting in the bed of the truck. I was forced to sit near the tailgate of the truck.

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During the early part of the truck ride, I noticed that all four of the other passengers were army officers; and not just lieutenants, captains or warrant officers [used as helicopter pilots in the Viet Nam war]. They were majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels.

We “drove” out of the encampment and proceeded up a dirt road. Before too long we were on an asphalted highway. Eventually the highway became wider and wider. My hopes were increasing; maybe I won’t have to fight the war in the jungles after all. If I’m going where these high ranking officers are going, I thought to myself, maybe I’ll be in a safer place for the next year that I’m in this war. After some more traveling, it was clear that we were entering a city; than we were actually in a city; and it had to be Saigon, South Viet Nam. We eventually arrived at, and entered, a small compound with a guarded double gate entrance. The compound looked like a French foreign legion fortress, at least as portrayed in “the movies”.

I had been assigned to a unit called the 34th army General Support Group. This was an army aviation unit. The four officers that rode in that pickup truck with me were all army pilots. For my part, I hadn’t known that the U.S. army had aviation units, at least not since World War II.

The Group consisted mostly of attack helicopters, such as the OH-1 bell helicopter, the OH-21, the cobra swing-wing gunship, the CH-54 Chinook giant transport helicopter, and various fixed wing aircraft; manufactured by Bell, Hughes Aircraft, Beech, Lycoming, Sikorsky and others; all from the United States and Canada.

There were many pilots and warrant officers in the Group and the units it supported. There were also many civilian aircraft technicians “attached” to this Group. In addition there were hundreds of sheet metal workers attached to the Group. My job was to facilitate them and to protect them from any and all dangers.

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My entire military training was that of an infantryman. So why did I “end up” being assigned to this unit? A few months later I had occasion to talk to personnel specialist soldiers working in the replacement personnel offices “back in” that replacement camp near the Vietnamese village of Long Binh. Their offices had many soldiers with two or three years of college education, and most of them were draftees like I. In examining my military records, they saw my scores and also noticed that I had a college degree. They decided to assign me to a unit where the army might be able to utilize, to its advantage, my education and assumed intelligence and maturity.

As it “turns out” the brigade headquarters, located where I was to be, also had a lot of soldiers assigned to it that had two or three years of college, and were draftees. I was to remain in that brigade during the entire year that I was in the Viet Nam Civil war.

For my first job I was placed in a back room of a small building in the compound; where I poured over telefaxes coming in from “all over” South Vietnam; to decipher them; and to write up notes interpreting them for the benefit of sergeants and officers. I did the job for about two or three months.

This compound had actually been built by the French and used during the French-Indochinese war. We lived in a couple of buildings that were set up as barracks. The barracks had solid doors and windows. The walls had portions that contained wired windows for ventilation. We didn’t do any of our own housekeeping or laundry. That was all done by civilian [non-military] Vietnamese women. They were paid from a collective pool of money we all contributed to.

I don’t recall where we ate. Ours was a headquarters company, meaning the headquarters for the entire 34th army aviation brigade, and it was not a large company. We must have shared a “mess hall” [dining room or eating facility] with other military units.

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We were located appurtenant to the city of Saigon's international airport. It was, in 1967-1968, the busiest airport in the world. We used the air force encampment nearby for our recreational desires as well as their "PX" store. A PX store is a retail store owned and operated by the U.S. military, for our retail needs, such as purchasing toothpaste, shaving cream, and candy bars, etc.

On a regular basis, usually on a late Friday afternoon, the officer flyers would sponsor a large outdoor barbeque for us. Lots of barbeque meat to eat, potato salad and lots of beer to drink. The officers were friendly and very nice and easy to talk to. Most everyone in the compound would attend these barbeques.

It was interesting living and working in that French compound; kind of like being in the French foreign legion; except that instead of being in the deserts of North Africa we were in the jungles of the Vietnamese Mekong river delta.

For the most part the war had not yet "come to" the city of Saigon, Vietnam, in August, September, October and November of 1967. On many days I didn't go out with a weapon.

There were a couple of small Vietnamese neighborhoods next to our compound. I liked to sometimes frequent the taverns there. There was low grade, but live, entertainment. There were young well dressed Vietnamese ladies that functioned as tavern escorts for customers. You needed to "buy them a drink", along with your own, and they would provide you with conversation and company. There was no prostitution here.

I traveled to downtown Saigon a few times. There I did some shopping but also frequented taverns a little bit. I never "drank" very much. I was solicited, one time, by a Vietnamese pimp and I had my first prostitute experience.

She was a young woman, about my age, and I did enjoy fucking her. It was different to be with a female small in

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stature. I found that even though she was small in dimensions she was still very feminine and sexy.

In late November, or early December 1967, we left the compound and moved to another compound further into the city and near the heavily ethnic Chinese section, called Cholon. This was a much larger compound. It had been built by the Vietnamese army at some time in the past. Two thirds of the compound consisted of thin walled "hooches", which served as our barracks, of which the upper half of the walls were made of chicken wire. The doors were of a flimsy screen door type.

Another organization sharing the compound was a large army military police [MP] unit. That unit had numerous policing responsibilities around the city of Ho Chi Minh, which had become gorged with Vietnamese refugees escaping warfare hardships in the countryside and in small villages and towns; and so the city was now dealing with a population of over two million people; which was big by 1967 worldwide standards.

The duties of these MP's included guarding the U.S. embassy in Saigon. The third organization occupying our compound consisted of a very large three story building constructed of cinder block, concrete and plaster. It housed the headquarters, and supporting components, of the U.S. army in Vietnam. Operating from there was the overall commander of all the U.S. forces in the Vietnam War, four star general William Westmoreland.

He was and is a somewhat stupid son of a bitch. In some ways I felt safer to be located close to them; but there would "come a time" when we would regret their proximity.

Particularly during my first few months in the Vietnam War I was surprised to receive communications from a couple of young women other than my young spouse. One was a girl who had been a student of mine when I was teaching high school for a few months. She said that she cared for me a lot and that she was worried about my well being in the war.

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The second young woman was more serious. It was Ruby Padilla, my third cousin and former girlfriend, who lived near where I had graduated from college. In her letter, she apologized for writing to me, given that I was married, and that she didn't mean to be disrespectful, but that she wanted to tell me that she still loved me and that she would be hoping and praying that I would remain safe and unharmed in the war; and that I would return home intact to my spouse. She also said that she was proud of me for my being willing to be drafted into the military "in the face of" a deadly war.

Early in the morning, each morning, one of our maids, who liked to joke a lot; would enter the hooch and sing out loudly, "good morning Vietnam". This was something borrowed from armed forces radio; and which was made famous a few years later by the Hollywood film of the same name, and starring comedian, Robin Williams.

Also living in my hooch was a young soldier named Melnick. He had been a lead singer in a rock and roll band that had recorded the rock and roll version of "liar, liar, pants on fire". I'd heard that song prior to my Vietnam experience and on occasion in the years that followed.

At some point I was assigned to work with a young captain who was also a lawyer. He had graduated from the law school of the University of Virginia. He told me that a classmate of his was Edward Kennedy, who later became a United States senator, and "ran" for the presidential nomination of the democrat party in 1980.

Martin Luther King was killed by assassination while I was away in the Vietnam Civil War; and there was much sorrow among the black soldiers and myself. There were, however, few black soldiers in my company here, unlike how it had been in advanced infantry training. There were, however, many in the nearby MP unit.

Also working at my duty station was a first sergeant I worked with, another soldier and a Vietnamese secretary. The captain-lawyer's name was Nichols and the Vietnamese

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secretaries' name was Le Di Tai. I can't remember the name of the first sergeant or of the other soldier. The soldier was from Kentucky and he "drank" a lot when off duty.

The captain was assigned legal counsel duties, working mostly with the uniform code of military justice [UCMJ] and with legal issues and matters pertaining to the massive number of civilian technicians connected to our brigade. The soldier from Kentucky was our driver and errand person. To a lesser extent I also worked with the first sergeant who "handled" matters pertaining to the civilian technicians attached to our brigade. Le Di Tai was a really good secretary and had a couple of years of college education in Vietnam. The officers didn't live with us in the compound. They all lived in a hotel close to downtown. The hotel had been commandeered as the quarters [residences] for United States military officers. One of our extra duties as soldiers was to "post guard" or "sentry" [to protect by guarding] on the perimeter walls of that hotel at night.

We had helicopter pads [landing strips for helicopters] at the Tan Son Nhut international airport in Saigon; and we were responsible for "posting centry" around the helicopter pads and any helicopters moored there.

I remember posting sentry at the helicopter pads one night while struggling with blood poisoning in one of my legs and foot. Posting sentry was somewhat dangerous work. After all we were carrying loaded rifles and live grenades. It is at night. You're alone and heavily armed. You walk about from checkpoint to checkpoint. There were numerous "blind spots" where infiltrators could be "lying in wait".

In my work, many times I traveled to various Vietnamese government buildings, to consulates abroad, to the United States embassy, and to the presidential palace. Sometimes I would travel out of the city to various other headquarters of military units. Usually I was driving an army pickup or a jeep. My duties often took me into the Chinese enclave of Cholon, which was considered a very dangerous part of Saigon, unless

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moving thru that area with a “show of force”. I, in my jeep, was not a show of force.

One of my favorite excursions, however, was to go to a Vietnamese dump; modernly referred to as a sanitary landfill station. It smelled very badly but the Vietnamese supervisor there always gave me a bottle of cold beer, which I happily and lustily drank in the midst of all of that foul odor.

We shared a large tent mess hall with others. It was located in the compound. There was also a night club and tavern in a tent there. I spent a few nights there but never really “over did” it. I remember one night when I was posting sentry around the compound. Each time I walked by the night club tent I could hear Australian musicians performing songs. I particularly enjoyed their version of “Danny boy”.

My job entailed handling passports, visas and other foreigner documents and verification documents and paperwork for the many civilians that were “attached” to our brigade.

Thanksgiving “came and went”. I don’t remember if the mess hall had a dinner; maybe there was turkey. Christmas “came” and an outdoor barbeque was held. This time there was plenty of “hard liquor”. That’s about the extent of my Christmas in Vietnam.

On the night of January 31, 1968 everything changed. A few days before that we had been hearing, on armed forces radio, and through the “rumor mill”, of fighting taking place in various towns and villages throughout South Vietnam. This was frankly highly unusual. Even though approximately 250 U.S. troops per week were being killed in the war, this could indicate a major escalation of the war.

At just past midnight of January 31st our compound was attacked by Viet Cong troops. At the same time the international airport and the air force encampment in Saigon, not too far from our compound, was attacked by thousands of Viet Cong troops. They overran some of our positions, but got caught in a crossfire, and were substantially destroyed. Many

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soldiers from our company were involved in that crossfire at the airport in which over one hundred Viet Cong soldiers were killed.

I was among those in our company who were rushed out to our portion of the perimeter to defend it, and ourselves. We engaged in exchanging gunfire with Viet Cong forces attempting to penetrate our perimeter and overrun our compound, and beyond. We did this with an "extreme" amount of firepower, firing thousands of bullets per hour.

There was also a small Vietnamese battalion, of elite troops, compound next to ours. Some of those Vietnamese soldiers had their wives and children living with them in the compound.

At one point I was with a squad that was ordered to rush forward to form a new advance position in order to push the Viet Cong soldiers positions backward. I remember being really scared. Usually I was lying flat on my stomach with only my eyes, rifle and top of my steel helmet exposed. I wondered if I might nonetheless "catch" bullets in the heels of my feet, which are difficult to keep flat on the ground. [Have you ever tried doing that?]

This was somewhat of a "built up" urban area and in many ways this was urban warfare rather than the jungle warfare taking place in many parts of Vietnam.

After daylight, we advanced fully forward with our entire column "in numerical strength" and seized control of the area beyond the perimeter.

We were to learn that day that there had been Viet Cong attacks all over the city of Saigon; and that the Viet Cong had many collaborators and sympathizers living in the city.

That same night, of January 31, 1968, two truckloads of U.S. military police who had been lured into an ambush in a city alley, had been massacred. The United States embassy had been attacked, overrun and seized. A U.S. marine contingent guarded the embassy, as is the case all over the world. U.S. army military police came to their aid and several

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troops were killed there. Many Vietnamese government and military locations in Saigon were attacked that night and in the days that followed.

Fighting continued to rage for a couple of weeks throughout South Vietnam. Our brigade had encampments throughout the country, particularly linked and enmeshed with the army 1st air cavalry division, which fought the war by attacking and reconnaissance with helicopters. The deadliest fighting was in the “demilitarized zone” along the North Vietnam and South Vietnam border; where U.S. marines and army airborne infantry units fought North Vietnamese regular army troops.

As for us, we continued to endure nightly attacks for a few days, and at times Viet Cong and regular North Vietnamese troops infiltrated our compound and surrounding area, but were unable to hold the ground and positions they occupied. Because of that, we built underground bunkers along our perimeters to ward off probing infiltrators, or direct attacks.

The Viet Cong did not hesitate to launch suicidal attacks on the areas we controlled. This was because of their deep belief in their cause and nationalism; after all they didn't believe in martyrdom. There is nothing in their religions or culture that entails such.

We would “take turns” staffing these perimeter bunkers and defensive positions all night long. It was hard to stay awake but I was motivated to do so in order to protect those soldier comrades, who were sleeping and so on, in their “hooches” in the camp; just as they were doing for me whenever I wasn't out on the perimeter.

It was when being out there at night that I began to think and conclude that if I survived the war, and returned to the United States, I “deserved to” be able to attend graduate school [academic studies beyond a bachelor's degree and “aimed at” completion of the requirements for a master's degree]. I had never in my life felt ‘entitled’ before that. My interest was in a graduate school program in sociology,

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although I probably should have picked political science instead.

In the daytime I liked to, when I could, go out on the perimeter and fill sandbags. I liked the exercise, the sunshine, and the cold beer. In the early days of the Tet Offensive, we reached a point in Saigon, particularly at the international airport and in the Cholon district area, where the Viet Cong soldiers "controlled the streets". Day and night we could see and hear our attack helicopters, particularly the UH-1 Bell and the cobra gunships, attacking Viet Cong positions from the air. There were also CH-6 Cayuse helicopters and Apache attack helicopters involved in these air assaults on Viet Cong and regular North Vietnamese positions.

The regular North Vietnamese troops had traveled down along the Ho Chi Minh trail into the Mekong delta and Saigon to launch their attacks during this Tet offensive of 1968. There were also fighter aircraft attacking Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troop positions in Saigon, and in our part of the city.

During that first week of the Tet offensive, on a few occasions I was assigned "out on" the defense perimeter in the daytime. The reason for this was that I had infantryman and combat training, whereas the large majority of soldiers in my company did not. Along the perimeter there was frequently "incoming" mortar shells launched from nearby urban locations by Viet Cong soldiers.

It is human nature to adjust, over time, and I became accustomed to this. One day I was laying in a "foxhole" [a shallow hole in the dirt dug and used for protection from bullets and bombs] talking to a fellow soldier. I had a sixty caliber machine gun, two tin boxes full of ammunition, and two grenades pinned to my chest. Mortar shells were periodically, thump thump, "walking" toward us. I scarcely "paid attention" to this and just "kept on" conversing, without taking any additional "cover".

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There weren't any Viet Cong soldiers to shoot at because they were not "assaulting" and the mortar shells were being launched at us from a distance of a mile or more, or whatever distance it is that a mortar has a range of. In situations such as this, fighter jets for our side would eventually appear in the sky and proceed to fire rockets toward the areas from which Viet Cong mortars were being fired.

After a couple of months in Vietnam, I received a promotion to private first class [technically I had arrived in the war as a private]. Normally a soldier is promoted to private upon completion of their initial six months or so of training. I had arrived in Vietnam only five and a half months after being inducted into the army.

During this tet offensive of January 31, 1968 thru April 1968, over 268,000 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regular army troops attacked one-hundred and ten South Vietnamese cities, towns and our military encampments. 81,000 soldiers, on both sides of the conflict, were killed; and many more were wounded. The rate of American soldiers and marines being killed per week rose to over 500.

The 101st airborne division, the unit that the majority of soldiers from my advanced infantry training had been assigned to, suffered over 4,100 killed in the Vietnam war between 1968 and 1973. Many more were wounded. Had I volunteered for airborne training, which took place immediately after completion of advanced infantry training; that well could have been my fate.

Over one and a half million marines and soldiers participated in combat in the Vietnam war, from 1965 to 1973. The "Vietnam conflict" itself is considered, by the U.S. military, to have "run" from 1960, when armed U.S. military "advisors" were deployed to South Vietnam, until 1975, when the very last of U.S. troops left the country. By then the South Vietnamese army, called ARVN, was fighting against the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops alone.

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The ARVN was rapidly overwhelmed militarily by the communist troops and in a matter of months the North Vietnamese had conquered the Saigon capitol zone, Hue, Da Nhang, Pleiku, Cam Rahn Bay and every other major part of South Vietnam.

In fact, the last few American troops and personnel had to evacuate by helicopters from the roofs of the U.S. embassy in Saigon. Ho Chi Minh had died in 1969. The U.S. had signed a peace treaty with the North Vietnamese government in 1973; by which the United States agreed to withdraw from Vietnam. The peace treaty did not involve a United States surrender.

In fact, in 235 years of American warfare, the United States has never had to surrender to adversaries. Only the renegade confederate states of America, in 1865, surrendered unconditionally to the United States; ending the civil war of 1860-1865.

An additional one million and seven hundred thousand military personnel, in support of combat troops, served in the Vietnam war. 30% of combat troop deaths in the Vietnam War were draftees. 17,725 draftees died in combat in the Vietnam War. [Keeping in mind that I was a draftee]. A total of 58,000 American troops were killed and 304,000 were wounded in the Vietnam war. 24% of all combat troops were either killed or wounded in the Vietnam war. [Keeping in mind that I was a combat troop].

From 1968 to 1971, the number of U.S. troops killed often exceeded 500 per week. The number of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops killed is thought to have been over 580,000 and the number of communist and nationalist affiliated wounded exceeded 1,700,000. The number of ARVN troops [soldiers of the former South Vietnamese government] is calculated to exceed 350,000 killed, between 1965 to 1975.

Marijuana cigarettes were sold in Ho Chi Minh City, in twenty cigarette packets, similar to the way tobacco cigarettes are sold throughout the world. The price was incredibly inexpensive.

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In spite of this abundance and availability, I smoked less than two packs of marijuana cigarettes the entire year I was in the Vietnam war. I did drink gin and beer frequently at night, however. I've never drank in excess, "to tell you the truth", and that was the case during the Vietnam war as well.

As the months went by, I became more "horny"; so I went back downtown. I made contact with a Vietnamese pimp and he led me into an alley, then down a narrow passage way. By the way, several American soldiers were, during the Tet offensive in Ho Chi Minh city, killed by being stabbed in the back while having sex with Vietnamese prostitutes. We can assume that some prostitutes were in the employ, or otherwise had some association with, the Viet Cong, the north Vietnamese, or were sympathizers of same.

Post-Vietnam war archival records reveal that sympathizers, their allegiances based mostly on nationalism, were much more numerous in South Vietnam than one might have expected at that time. I digress.

In the passage way, there was one bedroom, one young prostitute working, and a short line of American soldiers waiting "their turns" to have sex with her. I decided that this scenario "was not for me". As I was leaving, a Vietnamese woman, who looked considerably older than me, but probably was not, offered to prostitute for me; and invited me into her enclave. I agreed.

After we entered her rooms I paid her and she proceeded to disrobe. Upon glancing at her physical attributes, I realized that I would be very unlikely to get aroused by her; and told her so, without being rude about it. Remember that I had respect for the Vietnamese people. In fact I never used derogatory terms about, or to, them. In spite of this, the woman displayed enthusiasm to "please me" in some way.

She offered to "suck my dick" [penis] and I consented. She proceeded to engage in that activity with me. It wasn't "that bad", but then again "I've never met a dick sucking I didn't like". At least the activity provided me some biological release

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and relief. We parted in a friendly way and she invited me to return. I knew I wouldn't, however.

About a month or so before I left Vietnam "for good" I went "back downtown". This time I was more discerning, insistent and selective with the Vietnamese pimp I engaged for this business. He escorted me to a two story building. We went inside and it "turned out to be" a full fledged house of prostitution; operating on two levels of the building. The price was higher. I "got to" make a selection from among five or six Vietnamese and Cambodian young women sitting on comfortable benches along the wall of a waiting room.

I "picked" one that "struck my fancy". She escorted me to a private bedroom. She wanted to talk awhile and asked me a few questions about myself. Obviously she spoke a little bit of English. I asked her a few questions about herself as well and she responded. We then simultaneously began to disrobe. She asked me to be gentle with her, as many of her customers were not, she said. I agreed to comply. We made love and it was an excellent fuck. Within a short time, we both "got very much into" what we were doing. We had intercourse long and deep and both of us were very aroused. We even kissed at times.

From what I understood, a sexual encounter between a prostitute and customer was not supposed 'to go' and be this way. It should have been impersonal but instead it became quite personal for both of us.

After we had both climaxed, at least I think she did, we lingered for some time "in each other's arms"; and we were not anxious for this encounter to end. Finally "duty called" for her and she asked for us to get redressed. She asked me, almost pleaded enthusiastically, for me to return as often as possible and to always ask for her. I told her I would. I never did, however, even though I had very much intended to; as within a month, and unexpectedly, I had left Saigon and the Vietnam war "for good". I wished that I would have encountered this

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sweet and gentle young prostitute very early in my time in Saigon.

After five months of being in the Vietnam war, I was eligible to travel to Thailand, Australia or Hawaii for four days of rest and recuperation from the war. At the end of these four days, one would return to the Vietnam Civil war.

My young spouse and I made arrangements for, and we rendezvoused in Honolulu, Hawaii. She had already been there for one day, and was already staying in a hotel when I arrived. We had a “good time” and “got along” well while we were there together. We made love a lot, day and night. We ate well, did some shopping, some sightseeing, participated in a big Hawaiian luau, frequented nightclubs, the beaches, and even attended an American “movie”.

We parted with sadness but hopefulness for the future after the Vietnam Civil war, and after my release from the army. I returned to the Vietnam Civil war but tried to remain optimistic about surviving it, and returning home to my young spouse, Marcella, and to our future [is it possible to return to the future?].

About three months later I became privy to some information that was important to me; so I acted on it. I “paid under the table” in order to secure another four day “rest and recuperation” trip to Honolulu, Hawaii. Orders for same were “cut” [yes there was bureaucratic corruption even in the Vietnam war, as a soldier was entitled to only one rest and recuperation per year from the Vietnam war] for me; and using that authorization I traveled again to Hawaii in order to meet and be with my young spouse.

Being more limited on finances than previously, I arranged for the use of a private “rest and recuperation” room at the Scofield army barracks facility in Honolulu. That army encampment had private rooms set aside for married couples rendezvousing for a temporary period of time. The arrangement also, as previously, was to greet each other at a

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reception area for military personnel coming in from the Vietnam war for rest and recuperation in Hawaii.

I arrived but Marcella was not there. She never came. Later that first day I finally “reached her” by telephone where she was, back home in Oakland, California. She said she wasn’t coming to Hawaii to be with me. Over the course of several emotional phone calls, Marcella revealed that she had been dating other men in the San Francisco bay area and that, in fact, she currently had a boyfriend there. She eventually concluded by saying that she might consider reconciliation with me upon my return from the Vietnam Civil war and discharge from the army. Throughout these telephonic conversations she displayed an undertone of anger.

“So there I was” in Honolulu, Hawaii, alone and with a “broken heart”. I concluded pessimistically that my marriage was ended for all practical purposes. I tried to return to Vietnam immediately, from Hawaii, but was denied that and told that I needed to wait for my regularly scheduled return flight three days hence.

On the second night that I was there in Honolulu, senator Robert Kennedy was assassinated at a hotel in Los Angeles, California, just after the democrat primary election results for California had been reported, and in which he had been victorious.

By then, I was already “passing” all of my time walking, drinking beer and eating in cafes and restaurants and lounges alone. After the assassination, I “spent” the remainder of my time in Hawaii doing the same things I had been doing, and generally at the same places, but always while “watching” the news, on television, about the Robert Kennedy killing.

Upon returning to Ho Chi Minh City and my army encampment, I made efforts to be assigned to one of my brigades’ jungle or coastal locations, such as Cam Ranh Bay, Pleiku, Phu Bai, Bent Re, Can Tho, Bien Hoa or Vung Tau. The brigade was located in all these places, mostly because the 1st air cavalry division was there. I really no longer “cared”

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whether or not I emerged from the Vietnam Civil war alive. After all, my strong commitment to survive was based on the promises I had made to my young spouse.

The fact that I had always been opposed to United States involvement in the Vietnam Civil war didn't seem to matter to me anymore. My brigade and company, however, had "other ideas" for me. They intended to have me remain in Ho Chi Minh City doing exactly what I had been doing.

By late March or early April 1968, the Vietnam war, in Ho Chi Minh City, had entered a new phase as pertained to me. A huge military campaign was launched by the communist led Viet Cong and North Vietnamese armies. This campaign came to be called the Spring Offensive, or the spring bombing campaign. Viet Cong soldiers consisted of both men and women, "by the way". Most were very young as were we. Our average age was nineteen years. I "on the other hand" was twenty four years of age by then. You might be able to "imagine" the immaturity and recklessness I had to "put up with" all around me.

Communist led troops attacked U.S. troops and the South Vietnamese army [hereafter referred to as ARVN] in encampments, towns and cities throughout South Vietnam [Vietnam had been divided into two countries of North Vietnam and South Vietnam since 1950].

The United States of America, and its World War II allies had promised the Vietnamese leader at that time, Ho Chi Minh, independence for Vietnam at the end of World War II; as its reward for fighting the Japanese imperial army in indo-china; but the U.S. and allies had reneged on the promise because France decided it wanted to resume and continue its colonial control over indo-china, including Vietnam. The United States had allowed the French to "come back into" Vietnam to re-establish its colonial empire there.

What the "spring offensive" meant for the Saigon area was frequent and intensive rocket attacks; always at night, on us. The fact is that there were huge areas of jungles and rice

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paddies, in agricultural areas, quite near to Ho Chi Minh City. After all, the region was the Mekong river delta. Many of these areas were either dominated or controlled by the communist Viet Cong army [hereafter referred to as the VCA]. From these areas, many attacks of various kinds were launched on our Ho Chi Minh City area military installations.

I remember “going to bed” at night in my hooch wondering if I would be awakened by a rocket attack; and often was. Each time a rocket attack occurred it was “every soldier up”, secured our rifles, and deployed somewhere or another to take up a defensive position to protect ourselves and the compound. I suspect that some soldiers actually never did arise from bed. In any event, I don’t know where everyone deployed too, but I was always “sent” fully armed with weaponry out onto the dark defense perimeter. There I might be for the remainder of the night discouraging, awaiting or repulsing the assault of infiltrators or worse.

There certainly didn’t seem to be anything we could do, at the company and compound level, about the rocket attacks, but we certainly could defend ourselves against attacking ground forces.

On one particular night the rocket attack was so severe, and so close by, that the screeching and exploding thunder of rockets was so loud and disturbing, and the sky overhead “light up” red; almost like a brilliant sunset. I thought it might be “the end” for us. We were assembled in a platoon formation just prior to deploying [yes I already had all my weaponry and ammunition in my locker] and I was “standing there” “shaking like a leaf” with a 60 caliber machine gun over my shoulder and holding two ammo [bullets] containers in my hands, and grenades pinned on my chest pockets.

There were also occasions of VCA squads “penetrating” our compounds “under cover of darkness”. My company had a small “ammunition dump” where weaponry and ammunition was kept “under lock and key”. The ammunition dump was located just inside the compound with a narrow gravel road

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alongside and a concrete trench just beyond. On the other side of the concrete trench was an ARVN compound.

I was assigned one night to protect the ammunition dump and that corner of the compound from attack and take over. We had received reports that VCA and NVA [North Vietnamese army regulars] troops had heavily infiltrated the ARVN compound, and to a lesser extent our own. I “set up” my 60 caliber machine gun atop a sand bagged wall of about three or four feet height. I was there for awhile and everything was quiet. Suddenly gun flashes erupted from the direction of the ARVN compound and whizzes of bullets flying by near me. Seeing gun flashes generally indicates that weapons with projectiles are being fired in your direction. I quickly “returned fire” in the form of “bursts” of machine gun fire into every location where I had seen, and was seeing, gun flashes.

After a short time the gun flashes and whizzing sounds, as well as every other indication of my position being fired upon ceased. I thought about the Vietnamese children I had seen, on previous occasions during the daytime, playing in the ARVN compound. I hoped that I had not killed or wounded any of those children, or their parents, that night. At sometime on the next day we received information that the ARVN compound in question was “back in the hands” of the ARVN soldiers.

On a couple of other occasions our compound was infiltrated and we were forced to engage in ‘cross fires’ rather than having our opponents directly out in front of us.

The war became an almost daily experience [I know that’s elitist and spoiled given that many soldiers in the Vietnam jungles, hills and valleys commonly experienced the war on a daily basis] of trying to keep yourself and others alive so that you could survive the war and return to the United States; regardless of who ultimately “won” the war.

By March 1968, Ho Chi Minh City clearly contained many VCA and NVA operatives functioning as an “underground resistance” [not engaging in warfare activities on a constant

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basis] force and, especially at night, launching planned attacks and other attacks whenever they could.

My job was unchanged, however, but my way of doing it changed. As a company our M-14 semi-automatic rifles had been replaced with the new M-16 automatics , rapid fire, lightweight, mud and rust resistant, rifle. Even so, for my assignments outside of the compound, I was issued a French “burp gun” machine gun, or a German M-38 “burp gun” machine gun, and a side arm semi-automatic pistol in holster. These “burp guns” were about half the length of the M-14 rifle and $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the new M-16 automatic rifle.

They were provided with a thick strap that you draped over one shoulder as you held the weapon with both hands and “resting” across your lower chest with the gun barrel pointing downward and a finger on the trigger mechanism. Otherwise if having to use your hands to carry out some other function the strap was kept over your shoulder and the weapon itself was swung back onto your shoulder blade.

It was fairly obvious that if I encountered opposition or attack while out alone, or relatively alone, I would be expected to have to kill or incapacitate numerous opponents “in very short order”. Interestingly enough I felt more secure with these weapons when logically I should have felt less secure, since I would be fighting alone.

I traveled always in a military jeep now, with a Vietnamese soldier driving and another one in the back seat ready to provide “cover”. I felt highly at risk each time I made one of these excursions about Ho Chi Minh City. Sometimes I was assigned to travel somewhere with an officer, and I would be the bodyguard, if you will.

In returning on business to the U.S. embassy in Ho Chi Minh City after the Tet offensive attacks, the embassy was much more guarded by U.S. marines and South Vietnamese special forces than it had been prior to the Tet offensive. During the Tet offensive, VCA soldiers had taken control, for

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several hours on January 31 and February 1, 1968, of the embassy before being counter-attacked, killed and repulsed by elements of our forces. Whenever I was at the embassy after that, I thought about the people that had been killed there during that attack and takeover.

I sustained blood poisoning in one leg on one occasion in Vietnam and was hospitalized for a couple of days in a military infirmary. The bacteria had entered through fissures between the toes of my feet and then entered my blood stream. It was painful. On another occasion, over time, my urination became extremely painful with a burning pain. I was treated for that with some medication and the problem was controlled.

I also experienced “jungle rot” [large accumulations of bacteria in covered and sensitive parts of the human epidermis] in sensitive and unexposed parts of my body “from time to time”. This usually occurred during the monsoon rainy season. I again suffered from blood poisoning in that same leg during the final six months in the army while at the fort sill army base in Lawton, Oklahoma.

I was never wounded during the Vietnam Civil war. I received the Vietnam service medal for two military campaigns and the United States service medal. I was promoted to corporal while I was in the Vietnam Civil war.

One late afternoon several soldiers, while in jungle uniforms and boots, were playing tackle football in front of the hooch where I bunked [slept]. A very tall soldier, unbeknownst to anyone, wore a plastic plate which hosted a couple of false teeth in his mouth. On a given football play he was tackled hard and thrown to the ground. He didn't get up. Instead he squirmed and gyrated on the ground.

Some soldiers made efforts to assist him. I heard the commotion and came outside the hooch. Those attempting to assist him couldn't identify what the problem was. A couple of soldiers “ran for help”, or just ran. The afflicted soldiers' complexion gradually turned red, then pink, then ashen, than

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purple and it was clear that he wasn't getting oxygen to breath and was choking to death.

A soldier declared, "He's gone, he's going to die". Everyone stepped away from the fallen soldier. I stepped forward thinking, "I'm not going to let him die, if I can help it". I tried to pull his teeth apart with my hands and fingers but his teeth were clenched and his jaws appeared to be locked. I pulled out my black comb from my back pocket and forced the comb between his upper and lower set of teeth. I than turned my comb in such a way that it forced his teeth to separate, even as most of the "teeth" on my black comb broke away.

Very emotional I hollered, "I'm not going to let you die, you son of a bitch". I then thrust three of my fingers deeply into his throat. To my, and everyone's, surprise the plastic plate buried deep in his throat passage "popped out" of his mouth simultaneous with my removal of my fingers from his mouth. The soldier's chest resumed heaving up and down with renewed breathing, and a normal color quickly returned to his face and his eyes lost the "glazed over" look.

The soldier was hospitalized for three or four days then returned fully recovered. He later asked me why I had called him a son of a bitch. I believe it was because I considered him to be a son of a bitch. I couldn't answer that, so I made some excuse. I had saved a life but not while in combat.

At an officer and flyer sponsored outdoor barbeque that occurred shortly after this incident, several officers approached me and said they had "heard" about what had happened. They praised me and thanked me for what I had done. I thought maybe there might be "some kind" of a medal for that, but there wasn't.

The first sergeant, who was an aging man, had a severe heart attack one day; it was said while making love with his live in Vietnamese girlfriend. He was "shipped" out of country for treatment and he never returned. He did survive the heart attack, however. Captain Dixon put me "in his stead" until such

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time as a first sergeant replacement could be assigned and arrive.

A very youthful me, and with the rank of only a private first class or a corporal, was basically “in charge” of all of the civilian technicians involved in facilitating the highly technological helicopter and gunship air warfare of the U.S. army in the Vietnam civil war; which the United States government, and its military industrial complex, saw as being a major “boots on the ground” war against a communist ideology. Also part of “my charge” was the safety of the army pilots during the phases of their entering and exiting the country while in the Ho Chi Minh City area.

Many of these high ranking officers served as project officers for army air warfare endeavors in the Vietnam war. For example, the cobra gunships shipped into Vietnam with the components boxed in wooden crates. These gunships were then assembled or “put together”, tested for appropriate technological functioning and battle readiness, and then deployed to pre-determined fighting combat units for active engagement in the ongoing warfare. I was “so busy” in dealing with sufficiently complex matters that I could “hardly raise my head up from work” throughout the day.

My work which also included processing, moving and assigning all the regular “paperwork” and the delegation of its contents entailed to the appropriate persons. Often times the desk from which I worked was surrounded by civilian technicians and army flyer officers and I needed to make “on the spot”, it seemed, decisions and issue instructions and directions; which I did orally, verbally and vocally.

Occasionally a senior technician. or more often a military officer, would become offended by something I might say or do; or maybe it was because, in his pettiness, it disturbed him that I was doing the work of a first sergeant or higher. My captain was usually nearby and he would take that offended individual aside and de-escalate him to the point where an incident, likely to be to my detriment, did not occur.

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More than likely the captain explained that the workload of the position I was “filling” was complex and hectic and there was not time or circumstances for me to conform with the normal and typical deference and military respect that would be shown to higher ranking army personnel around me. After two or three months, a well qualified first sergeant arrived to replace the one who’d had a heart attack and been evacuated. The captain then moved me upstairs to work in his immediate office area as his assistant.

Three or four days after the Tet offensive, as it “played out” in Saigon, had begun we were almost “completely surrounded” by VCA and NVA units. Not in “great strength” but still there. Our units did not have the military capability to “push them back” and “push them out” of the area, to the point where we might be secure again. As units we were not infantry or direct land combat units after all.

The army, therefore, “sent in” “elements” [portions of but not the entire body] of the 25th infantry division mechanized [meaning that it utilized armored personnel carriers [APC’s], armored vehicles [forerunners of the contemporary military humvees], tanks, and armored jeeps mounted with recoilless rifles [a large tubular weapon firing armor piercing anti-tank bullets], and elements of the legendary 101st army airborne division, known as “the screaming eagles” of spectacular World War II successes. Their role was to eliminate, or at least force to substantially retreat, all VCA and NVA elements in the area.

One day I entered the mess hall tent to have lunch. I found the mess hall tent was well populated with paratroopers from the 101st airborne division. I quickly recognized friends and acquaintances from advanced infantry training in Georgia. We shared a large table for the meal, reminisced and “got caught up”. Most of these paratroopers were blacks. They had arrived into the Vietnam civil war about three months after I had, it “turned out”; upon completion of army parachuting school and a short leave home.

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They were deployed “anywhere from” the demilitarized zone [the DMZ] to the central highlands, to portions of the Cambodian border along the Ho Chi Minh trail [jungle routes leading from military bases in North Vietnam to every embattled region of South Vietnam, including the jungle areas in the Mekong delta near Saigon. The Mekong river delta is the geographical region where Saigon is located. In fact, Saigon is built along the Mekong river.

These paratroopers joked that they had parachuted three feet down from their helicopters to the ground in order to “come in” and rescue we urban based units. This was actually true in that the 101st had actually flown over the battle areas with the intent of proceeding from the “inside out” in their military offensive.

They reported that several of the soldiers who had trained with us had already been killed and others severely wounded in previous encounters. They revealed that one of their assignments had been to “relieve” a besieged green beret encampment in the central highlands of Vietnam. They opined that the green berets were inept when considering their reputation.

Several invited me to “trade places” with them or to join them, in a somewhat teasing manner. We had one more meal together and soon thereafter the 101st airborne paratroopers ceased coming to our tent mess hall. I’m aware that after completing their mission with us they were re-deployed to jungle, mountain and valley “hot battle zones” from whence they’d come.

I’ve previously mentioned that 4,100 101st airborne paratroopers were killed in the Vietnam civil war and that many more were wounded.

Throughout my year in Vietnam, except for the two four day R&R’s in Honolulu, Hawaii, I did all of my bathing under an open wide stream of cold water flowing down from a pipe with its only mechanical feature being a pull cord to turn on and shut off the water. The water was always cold, without

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exception. There was no water heater involved. A slab of concrete that served as the floor was “in plain view” and therefore a person taking a shower there was also in plain view. The naked “shower-ee” could be seen, in the full “buff” by anyone passing by.

Because of the coldness of the water I had to “call upon” a tiny amount of my limited reservoir of courage each time I stepped under that open pipe and cold stream of water. It “never failed” that I emitted a short gasp every time that cold stream of water made initial contact with my body. So it was a bar of soap in one hand and a clenched fist in the other. It “goes without saying” that we rarely lingered in that shower.

Many of us never, or rarely, “got a haircut” during that year in the Vietnam civil war. My hair was long but not below shoulder length. We never received a “dressing down” [military scolding] or discipline from superior officers or sergeants in this regard. We also were “never held” to a requirement of clean uniforms; nevertheless all of us kept the condition of our uniforms, mostly so-called jungle fatigues, at or above the hygiene level.

These were the types of protocols I liked, and very much unlike the army protocols one faces in the United States. Allowing one’s body hygiene to deteriorate so as to emit offensive body odors was not allowed, however. This expectation was appreciated and enforced by most everyone.

During my time in the army, I occasionally was subjected to anti-Mexican comments. I always responded with a “tell me something I’m ashamed of” type response. As far as I was concerned, the “days of” the bowed head and hat in hand Mexican were over and finished.

In the latter months of my time in the Vietnam civil war, I wrote numerous newspaper articles in the form of human interest stories and 34th brigade news, that was not classified, for the armed forces newspaper called, Stars and Stripes. I had a cameraman assigned to me that would accompany

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me to take photos as I was working on an article. The Stars and Stripes still exists and has a worldwide U.S. armed forces distribution.

At that time, however, I believe distribution, or at least my articles published, was limited to U.S. military encampments and locations throughout South Vietnam. I don't really know; they might have been distributed worldwide.

Now about that young lady in my office, Le Di Tai, previously mentioned. She was a college educated Vietnamese; partially fluent in English, a strong Vietnamese nationalist [as in I really respect Ho Chi Minh and I want independence for all of Vietnam], a Buddhist, a member of a well off Vietnamese family that owned a villa in Saigon, a plantation near Vung Tau on the Pacific coast, and four vehicles. Her family occasionally hosted parties at their Saigon villa for U.S. military officers. One can only speculate as to the connection between her father and the United States war effort in Vietnam.

Le Di Tai and I had slowly developed a friendship based on mutual respect. She had a good sense of humor, was intelligent, was very dignified, generous, and reasonably pretty. She may have been "in her late twenties" and, therefore, a few years older than I.

After my return from my second R&R trip to Honolulu, Hawaii, in which I returned estranged from my young spouse, "back in" Oakland, California, Le Di Tai and I developed a fondness for each other, than affection for each other, and then we "fell into limerance". The "kicker" was one afternoon when the two of us were alone in the office; we shared a kiss.

After that we were together whenever possible. I warmly remember a couple of lunches she invited me to share with she and some of her friends. These asian friends were others also working for the U.S. army. These lunches took place in Vietnamese restaurants. All of the foods they ordered were authentic Vietnamese cuisine and I thoroughly enjoyed all the flavors and the tea in abundance. Each time a new "dish" was

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placed before me everyone looked to see if I would “like it”, or to “in any other way” react to the tastes of the food, and the way in which it was served and delivered. I liked it all. “Little did” they realize that I was a “food hound” [someone who enjoys most foods] “from way back”.

Le Di Tai and I discussed a present and future life together. She was from a conservative and traditional, but at the same time modern, family background. For example, whenever we walked together in public she always insisted on walking two or three paces behind me, as was the custom in the Vietnamese culture. She “had no intention” of immigrating to the United States, ever. Rather she wanted me to remain in, or return to, Vietnam, and hopefully Ho Chi Minh City, after my military discharge and return to civilian life. She visualized me working for an American or Canadian company doing business in Vietnam; and being with her there. In retrospect, I think the only arrangement she would have found to be acceptable would be a marital relationship with me. She was “as sweet as she could be”.

President Lyndon Johnson, after the first couple of weeks of the Tet offensive, announced that all U.S. military forces in the Vietnam Civil war theatre would remain there carrying out their war duties for the “duration of the war”. I thought about that concept and it conjured up scary images. Nevertheless I was personally convinced that the president would not “hold” to that announcement.

Probably due to political pressure in the United States, it wasn't long before he rescinded that declaration. I also don't think this president wanted to engage in a prolonged war. Instead President Johnson announced that “I will not seek, nor will I accept, the nomination of the democrat party for re-election to the presidency of the United States”. Instead, he said, he would “devote all of my conscious hours to a successful ending of United States involvement in the Vietnam war”.

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Richard Nixon declared his candidacy for the presidency; and for the Democrat party, over time, it was Eugene McCarthy, Hubert Humphrey, and later Robert Kennedy.

In those final weeks, Le Di Tai's eyes always reflected a lot of love for me. When there were only about six weeks left for completion of my "tour" in the Vietnam civil war something dramatic happened in my life. We received notification, thru the American Red Cross, that my nineteen year old spouse, Marcella, had attempted suicide and that she was now being treated in a naval hospital in Oakland, California.

In addition, it was disclosed to me that a month earlier she had overdosed with aspirin pills in a suicide attempt, and she had then been treated at a local army hospital. In that time period, she had also admitted herself to a mental health facility in the San Francisco bay area, but had "checked out" of it after a couple of days. All of this was stunning, heartbreaking, and new information to me. The army had decided I should go home and "see to her" health needs. Later on the army would decide if I should return to Vietnam to complete my final three weeks in the Vietnam civil war.

Le Di Tai was shocked but mostly "fell silent". She looked to me with great confusion and I assured her that I would return to her in Vietnam, if at all possible. I gave her some affectionate reassurances as time and circumstances allowed. I was never able to return, however.

Because the army deemed this to be a family emergency I was ordered onto an air force cargo plane "flying" to Japan, than on to the Philipine Islands, and then directly to the landing strips at Travis air force base in Fairfield, California. My captain, Dixon, "saw me off" at the Tan Son Nhut airport. He said it had been a pleasure serving and working with me and knowing me; and felt I would not be returned to the Vietnam civil war by the army.

When I "boarded" the huge cargo airplane, "on board" was the air force flight crew and four air force officers who were traveling as passengers, as I was. To my great surprise, there

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were also twenty-five coffins or caskets, covered with rope netting to prevent the caskets from being “bounced around”. The coffins contained the bodies of twenty five dead army soldiers. I decided it would be an honor to be traveling home with these dead soldiers of the Vietnam civil war; sort of like an informal escort.

The flight was a long eighteen hours and our seats were made of uncomfortable netted nylon fastened to the sides of the inside walls of the cargo airplane. I became very weary and given the stress of the emotional burden I was carrying, regarding the condition of my young spouse, it was hard to stay awake.

After a time I asked all of the passengers if it was okay with them if I carefully lay down on top of the caskets and netting and tried to “get some sleep”. Everyone said, “go ahead, we think it’s okay”. I then went to the cockpit door and had an audience with a crew member. He said it was okay so long as “the rest” of the crew and passengers had “no problem with it”. So I slept and rested, “from time to time” upon the coffins and rope netting. I told myself that I was escorting, with honor and respect, the dead American soldiers. I periodically recited, silently, a few prayers for them.

While “flying over” the Japanese Islands my eyes “took in” all they could of what Japan “looked like” geographically. At the Japanese military airfield, we were confined to the terminal while we waited for the airplane to refuel. We had a second landing in The Phillipines. That airfield was located somewhere in the Manila, The Phillipines metropolitan area.

I don’t really know if that was another refueling stop or not. It seems to me we should have had plenty of fuel at that point of the journey given that we had refueled in Japan. As I recall a couple of passengers remained there and one or two new passengers came “on board”; so maybe that was the reason for our stop in the Phillipine Islands. These new passengers were also not army but again were U.S. air force military personnel.

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We “flew” over the island protectorate of Guam and from the sky above I could see numerous B-52 fighter bombers “parked” in their protected sandbagged but roofless hangars. Some B-52 airplanes could be seen taxi-ing on the runways. All were painted in camouflaged brown, gray and green. These airplanes were the “air giants” which caused the often all night thudding and thunder of large bomb explosions in the distance so many nights while I was in Vietnam. On those nights, I felt a little reassured that there might be fewer VCA and NVA troops that might fight me and kill me. Silly thought because the supply of antagonists “turned out” to be almost inexhaustable.

“Little did I know” that I wouldn’t be returning to the Vietnam civil war, even though Captain Dixon had made such a prediction. From the beginning of the Tet offensive forward, and thru the Spring bombing offensive against us and beyond, my thinking was that it was either “kill or be killed”. I had lost my humanitarian perspective regarding the various human participants in the war.

Upon “landing” at the air force airport, at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, California, I was escorted to a small military van, I looked back and saw those companion caskets being placed upon the dock, while others were still being ceremoniously unloaded from our cargo airplane. I felt remorse that the lives of those individuals had ended, but hope that my life would “go on” at least for now.

I was transported to the Oakland Army Terminal. What a surprise it was and how different it was from the “departing to the war” portion of the terminal to the “returning from the war” portion of the terminal. Here it was all smiles and warm greetings, refreshments and much welcoming. My mental state of mind, however, was that I was here to tend to my young spouse in a medical emergency, and that I would be returning to the Vietnam civil war; and not that of someone returning from the war.

I “processed in” and I was issued temporary orders which indicated that I was to be assigned to the Oakland Army

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terminal, and to take five days to “see to” my young spouse at the naval hospital in Oakland. I took a taxi to the apartment, in Oakland, shared by Marcella and her roommate and friend, Janice. Janice and I visited briefly. She told me that Marcella had been transferred to a mental health ward at the naval hospital. Our red volkswagon beetle was there and the ignition keys awaited me. I left for the naval hospital as soon as possible.

Over the next three days, I visited with my young spouse at the naval hospital. I was as gentle, understanding, empathetic and supportive as I could be. Her psychiatrist gave me the details of her case, as he knew them. He also stated that while I had been away in Vietnam Marcella had had numerous sexual encounters with men; some in the San Francisco bay area, and some in Seattle, Washington where she had “fled to” a few months earlier after her first suicide attempt. It would seem that this attempt occurred not long after our ill fated rendezvous non-starter in Honolulu. A couple of these men were twenty years, or more, older than she.

The psychiatrist also told me that in private therapy sessions my young spouse had revealed that at the age of two or three she had awakened to “find” her grandfather standing over her with his pants down and his penis exposed. At some point in her young life she had disclosed this to her custodial grandmother; but the grandmother refused to believe her.

The naval hospital contained numerous post Vietnam civil war wounded or ill marines. The hospital staff was all navy. Many of these staff persons and patients observed my army uniform with curiosity, while others displayed outright hostility or alienation toward me. I felt I had no energy to bother with their attitudes toward me. Visiting hours at the oaknoll naval hospital were not allowed after five or six p.m. When that time arrived each day I would drive back to Janice and Marcella’s apartment, in Oakland, to spend the evening and sleep there overnight.

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Sometimes Janice and I had supper together and spent the evening until bedtime in conversations, often about Marcella. There was also something else relevant to talk about. In 1966, Marcella, Janice and a longtime friend of mine named Frankie Pineda had all been senior classmates at a local catholic high school in my original hometown of Walsenburg, Colorado. Janice had lived and schooled there in Walsenburg only her senior year of high school.

Frankie also had a connection to Oakland, California in that he had brothers and sisters living there. Frankie and I had spent time together there in Oakland previously during our teenage years. Both Marcella and Janice had been born there. Often times during their senior year, the four of us double-dated, whenever I was in town.

Just before their high school graduation Frankie died in a car accident while speeding. Janice went into seclusion and soon thereafter returned to California as she continued mourning. Now two years had passed since then.

Marcella spent that summer in 1966 focusing on our relationship and our decision to marry in early 1967. I saw Janice only briefly after the death of Frankie. So on those evenings in Oakland we sometimes talked about those memories.

It was apparent that Janice had some respect for me as a Vietnam war veteran; and some empathy for my present circumstances; and some perturbation about Marcella's actions while I was away. I'm sure she was aware that Marcella had eventually "taken" to seeing other men in my absence.

I gradually began to develop an infatuation for Janice. Janice had directed me to use Marcella's bedroom to sleep in. Finally after bedtime, on the third or fourth night there, my lust for Janice rose to such a "fever pitch" that I walked to Janice's bedroom and entered. She lay in bed with her back turned away from the bedroom doorway but still quite awake. I sat on her bed opposite her and said to her, "Janice, either tell me to

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go back to my bedroom or else let me make love to you". There was a temporary silence from Janice. Then she said, "Roberto, go back to your bedroom". I did and soon fell asleep; somehow feeling much more relaxed.

The next day, and the day after that, Janice continued her kind behavior toward me and displayed no recrimination toward me. At the end of the fifth day, I left Janice's apartment and we said goodbye with a hug and on "good terms". I never saw her again.

When I returned to the naval hospital, the morning of the fourth or fifth day, I was greeted not by Marcella, my young spouse, but instead by her psychiatrist. He said he would like to talk to me about Marcella. He said that Marcella was not doing well emotionally but he believed she would eventually be better and more or less normal again. He said her "seeing me" was aggravating her condition and, therefore, his medical advice was that I not visit with her further.

He said that Marcella had entered a new romantic relationship with a navel enlistee who worked in the hospital as a mental health ward orderly. Marcella was very beautiful, vivacious and charismatic. The psychiatrist said that he believed that our relationship and marriage was irretrievably broken. He also said that although it was improper for the navy orderly to have entered a personal relationship with a patient it did seem that Marcella was responding positively to his presence in her life and that such might contribute to her recovery.

In all fairness to Marcella, she did recover over the succeeding years and in spite of more tragedies to befall her, and much more heartbreak in our marriage and in her life, she "went on" to get educated to a masters degree level, and to become a licensed clinical social worker and therapist in Florida, with specialization in children's mental health issues.

"Meanwhile back at the ranch" I was deeply heartbroken and felt that being drafted, and the Vietnam civil war, was "dealing me" much more heartache than anyone deserved.

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Nevertheless the five days were expired and I reported back to the Oakland army terminal as required. The first day back I was processed into the unit as expected and I was now on a permanent assignment there. The casualness and friendliness of the atmosphere there was emphasized. I was not to salute any officers or anyone, and the officers did not expect to be saluted. We were to be efficient in our work and our main objective beyond that was to “make” returning Vietnam War veterans feel good about their return to the United States and to their families and loved ones.

The division of labor at the terminal was such that each of us would spend a minimum number of hours “on duty” allowed and a maximum number of hours allowed with free time to enjoy San Francisco and the bay area.

Our barracks consisted of cells of four person bedrooms. Under any other circumstances, for me this would have been the ideal assignment for spending my last six months of army obligation. This wasn’t what I wanted right then, however. I took an appointment with personnel and tried to get an additional six month “tour of duty” back in the Vietnam war, followed by an immediate discharge thereafter. I was denied.

The following day, much to my surprise and disappointment, I received military orders that I was to report for duty at army fort sill in Lawton, Oklahoma. For me this was a worst possible assignment; many miles away from California and also not in Vietnam. In addition, it is not unreasonable for me to observe that the state of Oklahoma is an “ugly place”.

Fort Sill was a huge army artillery base in the Oklahoma panhandle region. I was given only five days to “get there”. Given the circumstances beyond my control I nevertheless wanted to “go thru” the state of Colorado to visit my parents, however. In order to get to their home in Walsenburg, Colorado and to have “any amount of time” at all to visit with them I would need to leave “right away”; so I did.

I was going to drive my red volkswagon there. I also wanted to see my siblings, living in Sacramento, California, on

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my journey eastward. I immediately drove from Oakland to Sacramento and arrived at the home where three of my sisters, three nephews, a niece and a brother in law lived. Upon arriving at their home, all three sisters rushed out and embraced me deeply. For me that has been one of the most touching moments of my life. The message I got from that is that they were happy that I would continue to live rather than to have died in a war.

One of my brothers, who also lived in Sacramento and a nephew from Denver, who was stationed there while in the air force, "came over to see me. We had a big family dinner and conversation that night.

Early the next morning I left for Colorado. Instead of driving directly east thru the state of Nevada, than directly east thru the state of Utah, and then driving, more or less, directly southeast across the state of Colorado; I foolishly succumbed to an urge to travel through the southwest region, the classical desert region that I've always loved; so instead of taking the sensible route from Sacramento I traveled south thru California on highway 99; then from Bakersfield, California I "headed" east and into Nevada to Las Vegas.

I calculated that I had little or no time to sleep during this trip to southern Colorado. I passed thru Las Vegas, Nevada at 2 a.m. and there wasn't "much to see". Nothing like the 1.9 million population metropolis that exists there in 2013. It was late 1968.

I than drove across the state of Nevada, in a northeasterly direction. Sometime in the morning after sunrise, I entered the state of Utah and drove, in an easterly direction. I was traveling at relatively high velocities. Given that it was a Volkswagen beetle that I was driving; that may not have been all that high of a speed.

By early afternoon, I entered the state of Colorado, at the "four corners" area, and drove in an easterly direction over the rocky mountain range, than across the wide San Luis valley;

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than over some more rocky mountain ranges, and finally into Walsenburg, Colorado.

I had driven for over a day and a half and had taken only a couple of one or two hour naps along the way. Late that evening, very exhausted and emotionally distraught, but already home, I “broke down” emotionally and couldn’t control my sobbing and despair.

My parents “took me” to the small local hospital and ultimately I was given a sedative by means of a needle inoculation in the buttocks. That “fixed my wagon”. I then rested comfortably the next day while visiting with my parents.

I remember my father asking me for advice regarding the family farms. On the morning of the fifth day, I departed, in my red Volkswagen beetle, for Lawton, Oklahoma and the fort sill army base. I arrived at fort sill that night.

I reported to my assigned unit barracks, as per my “orders”, that if the unit headquarters offices were closed, which they were, I should go to the barracks. I did and was assigned a bunk and I slept deeply.

The next morning I went directly to the headquarters offices for processing. It all felt strange to me, still being in the army, but not being in Vietnam. There was a small “snag” in my “paperwork” so I was directed to go to another office to acquire my army medical records, I think it was.

On the way back from there, I was confronted by a second lieutenant, a young officer, regarding my failure to salute him. It was obvious to me that he hadn’t been in the Vietnam civil war. He proceeded to harangue me, and I ignored him. Finally he ordered me to follow him and he led me back to the headquarters offices of my new unit. He “turned me over” to someone and stated that I needed to be disciplined severely.

That someone was a command sergeant major. There were only thirty-five soldiers holding that high of a rank among non-commissioned officers in the entire army.

The command sergeant major told the officer that he would “take care of it”. The officer left. The command sergeant

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major then told me to go to the mess hall and have breakfast; than to come back and we would talk. I went to the mess hall and obtained some breakfast.

As I was barely managing to eat some of it, feelings of great anger against the army and the U.S. government welled up in me. I concluded that if I remained on active duty right now I would “get in” much more “trouble”. I “wasn’t about” to take orders and harassing from militaristic “spit and polish” assholes. I didn’t need regimentation, I needed “space” and the opportunity to work hard. If I was to remain in the army for the final six months, the only place for me , it seemed to me, was in the Vietnam war zone.

I decided to leave and not return until I felt much better emotionally. I arose from my unfinished breakfast, walked into my barracks, to my bunk and locker area; picked up my personals and duffle bag [military suitcase in the form of a large canvas bag] filled with Vietnam army clothing and gear; walked out of the building; went to my vehicle, and drove off the fort sill army base, out of Lawton, Oklahoma, to and thru Oklahoma city; and didn’t stop traveling until I “got to” Walsenburg, Colorado.

Early on this drive I had decided to go to my parent’s home, and then further decide where to go from there. My third cousin and former girlfriend’s home in northern Colorado at Longmont, Colorado or my cousins in Denver, Colorado were possibilities.

I wasn’t sure that my parents would allow me to remain in their home for “any length of time”. They were strict “law abiding citizens” while I had limited respect for rules and regulations; as I was angry about discrimination, and the often lack of justice, and the unfairness in our society.

Once I drove off that army base that meant that I was absent without leave [known as AWOL], a very serious military offense and violation. I drove “straight thru” to Walsenburg, Colorado. My parents were deeply disappointed in me and acted as if they were harboring a runaway criminal or prisoner.

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Due to my mental state of being emotionally distraught and my physical exhaustion I “slept in” every morning until at least mid-morning. Such is generally not my pattern or habit. Through all this, I knew that once my emotions returned to a semi-normal condition I would return to active duty in Oklahoma or wherever.

A former girlfriend of mine, Marisa Lopez, “came down”, from her home in Pueblo, Colorado, to console me and to “spend time” with me. Both of my parents were outside the home a lot. My mother worked fulltime and my father, retired since 1960, worked part-time.

One afternoon Marisa and I fucked on the carpet in my parent’s bedroom where we had been talking and lamenting. After a while, we fucked a second time. Marisa and I had never made love prior to that.

After a few more days, I began to feel “stuck” emotionally. Finally one mid-morning as I was “sleeping in” and obviously suffering from acute depression, the telephone rang persistently. I finally arose and answered it. It was the local chief of police. He said my father had “turned me in”. The police chief said that he was “putting me under house arrest” on the recognizance of my father, based on the honor and trust the police department had in my father.

Four hours later, at 2 p.m., two state highway patrolmen arrived at the house for me. They took me away in handcuffs. Neither of my parents had returned home before I left. The highway patrolmen drove me north to the much larger town of Pueblo, Colorado. They “turned me over” to the county jail there. The sheriff’s deputies functioning as jailors “treated me like shit” as they did my intake; then put me in a jail cell inhabited by another prisoner. “You’d never know I had “fought a war” for them and their country.

All night long I heard the voices and hollering of prisoners in the jail. I felt no fear of my cell mate or any of the prisoners, or of the guards “making their rounds”. If anything my cell mate seemed to be a little bit afraid of me, but I was harmless really.

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Someone in the cell next door beat up on his cellmate. We heard all of that. We hollered at him to stop. He did stop.

The next morning the same two highway patrolman came for me and then drove me further north to Colorado Springs, Colorado and an army base called Fort Carson. Once again I was in handcuffs the whole trip.

Upon entering the army base, they took me to an unmarked building. They “turned me over” to military police there. The MP’s walked me to a large inner room. There was a cage, yes a cage, in the middle of the room. The cage was crowded with many generally disheveled soldiers. The cage reeked with foul human body odor. All one could do was stand awhile, than sit awhile, than lie on the floor if possible awhile, utilizing whatever space might be available.

At meal times, we were out of the cage and walked, under armed guards, to a nearby cafeteria [it probably served as a mess hall but I can’t be sure]. Each time, we were the only ones eating in the cafeteria. It was clear that the army wanted us completely away from the general soldier population. Each time after eating it was back to the smelly and crowded cage.

I was in that cage all day and overnight. Most of my body ached from the harsh conditions. The next morning I, and some of the other “cage occupants”, were transported and transferred to the camp stockade.

A stockade is a military prison. I was assigned a prisoner number and from then on that was my identity, rather than my name. I can’t remember the number so let’s say that the number was 7980. So I was prisoner 7980. I had no “determinate” sentence to serve, unlike what would “be the case” in a prison “residency”. The stockade contained barracks just like in a typical barracks except that the sleeping area was a very large room, rather public in nature, and the lights were “kept” on at all times, including all night long. We weren’t allowed to go to our bunks except to sleep overnight; rather, when in the barracks during the daytime and before the

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mandatory “bedtime”, we had to remain along the inside walls of the barracks.

During the day, I was with a group of prisoners that were “put” into a grassy hillside area that was enclosed with prison-like fencing. It was called “the back forty”. It was a pitiful existence. We were incarcerated but there really was not any “prison life” “to speak of”.

There were not the cellblocks or cells; there wasn’t the weightlifting area; but there was the exercise area and basketball pick-up games. I usually enjoy, and am fairly good at, basketball pick-up games, but here I had no mental energy for it; so I just watched at times.

Many prisoners in this stockade had already been in the Vietnam civil war, and some were even amputees, but had “run afoul” of military rules and regulations somehow. Others were probably similar to myself; had gone AWOL in order to avoid “getting in” more serious trouble. In retrospect, I had “ended up in trouble” anyway, hadn’t I?

After about four or five days, suddenly one mid-morning, the intercom system blurted out, “prisoner 7980 report to the front”. I proceeded to the front, telling several guards blocking my route that I was prisoner 7980 and that I had been called to “the front”.

When I arrived at “the front” I was told that I would be leaving the stockade and I was then placed in a holding room. Within an hour, two MP’s from fort sill, Lawton, Oklahoma arrived for me. I was quite surprised by this. I was handcuffed, once again, and driven to an airfield.

At the airfield a private pilot, with a piper cub aircraft, awaited us. The two MP’s [military police] boarded me on the airplane and escorted me on the flight. I was handcuffed the entire flight. This thing of being handcuffed was becoming quite a “habit”. I had a fatalistic feeling that with a personality like mine being in the military was bound to cause me to end up like this.

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What had occurred was that the command sergeant major, at fort sill army base in Lawton, Oklahoma, had reviewed my entire army file and had decided, "I want to talk to this young man, in person. I want to know 'what makes him tick' and why he did what he did".

Through the command sergeant major, the army decided to invest in renting a private airplane and pilot, and investing the time of two MP's from fort sill; and "flying" all the way to Colorado Springs, Colorado; two states away; to take custody of me and to transport me back to fort sill; and bring me before that command sergeant major. I guess I was just lucky!

We arrived at night after the headquarters offices were closed; so the military police "put me" in the "brigg", a small detention room, where I "spent" the night to await being delivered to the battalion headquarters the following morning. The next morning the military police did just that. My handcuffs actually were removed the night before just after I had arrived at the 'brigg'.

I came before the command sergeant major. My emotions were considerably more calm then they had been two weeks previous and my state of mind was functioning with much more clarity. The command sergeant major told me to sit down in front of him. He then told me to "give" him my story. I told him everything. When I'd finished he said, "can you paint?"

For the next two weeks I painted the entire battalion headquarters offices including hallways, bathrooms, closets and everything. My work was skillful and efficient, as I'd risen to the level of a painter apprentice while "working my way thru college". They provided me with all the brushes, rollers, other equipment and paint I needed.

Once I'd finished that project, the command sergeant major said that he wanted me to work with him. He said I would be the battalion legal clerk. He took the steps necessary to classify me as such. He also had a couple of clerk typists working in his office and then, of course, there was the headquarters commanding officers contingent.

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I dedicated myself to my new job. I arrived at the headquarters offices each morning shortly after 6 a.m. even though I could have begun work as late as 8 a.m. I worked until “supper time” usually around 5 p.m. or a little after that.

The first assignment I had was to prepare my own article 15 of the uniform code of military justice. The article 15 was administered to me as a result of my AWOL. The punishment contained in “my” article 15 was a reduction in rank and commensurate pay to private first class. I had been a corporal up to that time. I also was to “pay back” a portion of the cost for renting the airplane and pilot that traveled to and brought me back from the army Fort Carson, Colorado springs, Colorado location.

I had slightly more than six months left to be in the army before I would be discharged. A discharge is a release from active military service and a return to civilian non-military life.

Most of the legal work I did were letters of warning, reprimands, article 15’s, and some court martials, both regular and field grade. I coordinated and interfaced with the fort sill offices of the adjunct general, the legal “wing” of the military. This is where all the military lawyers are located and do their work. The lawyers generally represent all parties in matters and cases dealing with the uniform code of military justice [hereinafter referred to as the U.C.M.J.]. The UCMJ is the codified law and regulations for the United States military.

It hadn’t been more than a couple of days after I had finished the two week painting project that we were notified that we would be going to the 1968 democratic national convention in Chicago, Illinois to provide law enforcement security in anticipation of huge anti-Vietnam war protest activity to take place during the days of the convention. The military providing security at an American national political convention was an almost unprecedented historical development.

At those times, the nation was racked with black American race riots, political assassinations, radical left activism, radical

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right activism, including ku Klux klan and John Birch society activism, massive anti-Vietnam war demonstrations and protests, huge civil rights marches and events, violent anti-government and anti-establishment groups operating “underground” [participating, planning and logistics not known publically], and police brutality.

We had less than 48 hours before we were to depart for Chicago, Illinois where the convention would “be held”. There were several thousand fort sill soldiers that were to be sent to the Chicago convention. Many of these troops were Vietnam civil war veterans. In general we were not looking forward to the prospect of having to confront our fellow American citizens in an atmosphere with a large potential for violence. At a minimum, even having “to deal” with restraining and arresting demonstrators passively resisting was uninviting, “much less” violent demonstrators.

We were “rushed” through what was called “riot training”. We practiced advancing in phalanx formations with rifle barrels pointed forward and thrusting marginally at those in our path. We, as troops, “took turns” being the soldiers, than being the rioters.

I did my soldier “phalanxing” practice well but my real forte was as a rioter. As rioters we were given large and sturdy plastic garbage bags filled with liquid garbage. We were to use these garbage bags to deter or stop, if possible, the advancing phalanxed troops as best we could in order to impede the objectives of the troops. My behavior as a rioter was brutal and harassing.

We then departed in lengthy army truck convoys for a military airport approximately 60 miles away at Wichita Falls, Texas, located again in the panhandle region. U.S. air force cargo airplanes flew us to Chicago. We sat on netted benches along the inside wall of the cargo airplanes, while in the middle were army jeeps, pick-ups, trucks, even some armored personnel carriers, as well as other equipment.

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Many of our black soldiers at fort sill were reluctant to “go” to the Chicago convention given the experiences, just a few months before that, of the 82nd airborne division attempting to police, suppress and extinguish the massive black American rioting that took place in Detroit, Michigan and Washington, D.C., at the time of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. assassination. The army, with “wiser heads” prevailing, was able to reassure them; and most of them did go with us to the democrat national convention in Chicago.

Our time in Chicago was nothing like I'd expected. We landed at a partially decommissioned air force landing field, “out” in one of Chicago’s suburbs, and about twenty miles from downtown Chicago and the convention center. There were soldiers already there, and others arriving, from various army bases around the nation. Units continued to arrive for a couple of days. By the time everyone had arrived the tent camp we erected rivaled those of the confederate army of northern Virginia which housed 65,000 troops, in 1863.

A truly gigantic pup [one person] tent camp arose out on grassy and mostly flat terrain. Large tents were used for mess halls, bath rooms and shower rooms, assembly areas, administration, and other communal needs. Portable toilets, bathrooms and showers were in abundance. The troops there may have numbered 30,000 to 40,000 strong. The Illinois national guard [those NG no goods again] were also present in the city, but not at our encampment.

Each morning we received abundant stacks of free newspapers, but always of the previous day’s editions; therefore, we received news about what was “going on” at the convention “after the fact”.

Endearing breakfasts and suppers were served in the mess halls. Sandwiches and beverages were available for lunch; there were two ice cream “calls” per day; and a mid-afternoon soft drink refreshment break. As a youth I had never been to a summer youth camp, but I gathered this might be as good as, or even better, than such! Hollywood ‘mainstream’

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films were shown at night, both within tents and out of doors “under the stars”. I slept quite well almost every night in my pup tent, and there was no revelle.

I thought about my sister and her family in the not too distant metropolitan Detroit and wished this had been an opportunity to visit them, but it wasn't.

Meanwhile back at the democrat convention center itself there was sometimes chaos on the convention floor, massive demonstrations and sometimes clashes with police and national guardsman outside the convention center, and some police brutality. One day there was a large demonstration march through key areas of downtown Chicago. Five to six thousand demonstrators led by the radical group, the Weather Underground, “broke off” from the main demonstration march and “swept through” a principal commercial thoroughfare, looting and ransacking a four mile “stretch”. All demonstrations at the convention were, for the most part, anti-Vietnam civil war demonstrations.

When the convention had ended we returned to fort sill, Lawton, Oklahoma. Afterward in thinking about it, I wondered if I had been a part of history; “what with” the draft, the Vietnam civil war, and the 1968 democrat national convention as highlights; and all within a two year period.

While on military duty at fort sill, I volunteered in civic affairs a lot when off duty. I tutored elementary school age black youngsters in a recently desegregated school district. I served as a tour guide for boy scout troops attending “fire power” displays on the army base. I participated in several amateur theatre productions; functioning as a lighting technician, sound technician, stagecraft technician, and once as an assistant director to a musical production.

After a couple of months stationed at fort sill, a first lieutenant in my battalion invited me to lunch. “Over lunch” he told me that he and the command sergeant major had discussed me. He said he was renting an off-base house in the community, along with an army captain from our battalion. The

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first lieutenant said that really I should have been an officer all along. He revealed that he and the captain were also “against” the Vietnam civil war.

He invited me to live in their house, as there was an extra bedroom, rent free; given that my pay was less than theirs and that I was also currently paying on the cost of that piper cub airplane “ride”.

I accepted his invitation to live with them. For the remainder of the four months that I was in the army I never again slept in the barracks. Once or twice a week, I would go to the barracks to “make sure” that my bunk was “good and tight” and that my two pair of dress shoes, at bunk side, were “spit polish” shiny black and not dusty.

Eventually the “buck” [lowest classification of sergeant] sergeant and his corporal “side kick” “wised up” to this. The buck sergeant confronted me on this and also made a threat. I ignored them and his petty threat. He then obtained an audience with the command sergeant major. The command sergeant major scolded them and told them to “stay away” from me.

In the last three months of my army service, the command sergeant major began to work on “hardship discharges”. These are honorable discharges that are factually based on unusual hardship and other equities that merit being discharged from the army. Most of these were black Americans from the southern, former confederate, states; often married and with children, or with seriously ill parents, needing “hands on” family assistance. It was unfortunate that most of these soldiers had already been in the Vietnam civil war whereas they probably should not have been drafted and inducted “in the first place”.

I was fortunate to have a pretty active social life in Lawton, Oklahoma. My young spouse was estranged from me at that time. She filed for divorce while I was at fort sill and I was “served” there with a summons and complaint for divorce. She, however, did not ultimately “go thru” with the litigation and

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the legal action lapsed, and a dissolution decree was never finalized or issued.

I did a lot of socialization with a small circle of friends that included a few fellow soldiers, local artists, local counter-culture hippies, Oklahoma Indians, and the lieutenant and captain I lived with.

With the amateur theatre companies, I connected with a couple of teenage girls who were in the theatre company, daughters of officers, and I socialized with them; sometimes engaging in some hugging and kissing. Eventually I met a young woman, of my more immediate age group, and we settled down into a relationship with each other. Our relationship advanced to the point where I was occasionally invited to family dinners in her home and visited her there.

She was a person of high values, idealistic, and strong social consciousness. Her father was an army warrant officer and she was attending a local college.

We also had a strong mutual physical attraction. We often enjoyed making love and having sex in either my vehicle or hers at night. When I was discharged she "sent me off" with a huge lunch for my long drive home; and promises that we would write letters to each other often, which we did. She eventually transferred to the University of New Mexico and was involved in the violent clash, between college students and Chicanos, against the New Mexico national guard; that actually had "drawn" bayonets onto their rifles in confronting the students and Chicanos.

Among my casual friends in the fort sill battalion were two soldiers from Mississippi, who were ku Klux klansman. One day someone asked them, "Why are you a klansman?" One of them answered, "Well my grand daddy was a klansman, my daddy was a klansman, and now I'm a klansman".

Also while at fort sill I received dental services. The dentists found 27 cavities in my teeth. They inserted 27 fillings. Those fillings lasted me for years.

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One item of army clothing that I liked were the “field jackets”. These are a type of winter or cold weather jackets that are just below waist length and can be worn in rain or snow. The discharge process involved “turning in” most of your army clothing and equipment. By that time I had accumulated two field jackets. One of them was the type issued to, and worn by, officers.

At the discharge process, I happened to be wearing that field jacket. Near the end of the check out line the army personnel saw a field jacket in my duffle bag and saw that I was also wearing a field jacket. He said that I could have and take only one field jacket. I “whipped off” the field jacket I was wearing and gave it to them; for me this was an act of defiance aimed at their obsessing over a field jacket.

Sometimes during off duty and free time my girlfriend and I would drive to the nearby Wichita mountains wildlife preserve. There we would climb up a hill and onto a rock ledge and watch soaring hawks, or walking armadillo, or jaunting antelope while I sketched them. We mutually felt the closeness to nature, and to each other.

In spite of my young spouse, Marcella’s, estrangement from me and the dissolution filing, we continued to send her the spousal living allotment; and I also may have sent her all or part my pay. I did this the entire two years that I was in the army.

I hadn’t been working for the command sergeant major for very long before he prepared a promotion for me “back up to” corporal. After a certain further amount of time went by, he presented and received approval for my promotion to buck sergeant [specialist 5th class]. My personnel file was “filling up” with the community and on base volunteer activities letters of commendation. The command sergeant major and others were also very pleased with my work with the battalion as their legal clerk.

About two months before my discharge date the command sergeant major prepared another promotion for me to the rank

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of staff sergeant [specialist 6th class]. It was “unheard of” in that time period for a draftee to reach the rank of staff sergeant within two years. What’s more in my case I had been “busted down” from corporal to private first class as a result of the article 15 I had received.

The command sergeant major “walked or hand carried” the promotion request to the commanding colonel. Momentarily I could hear the command sergeant major hollering at the colonel in the colonel’s office. A few minutes later the command sergeant major returned to his desk, but said nothing. The next day he told me the promotion request had been denied. It didn’t “really matter” to me much, but it certainly had mattered to the command sergeant major, and in a way, I could understand that.

He had initially, where I was concerned, made a decision regarding whether he should “believe in me” and he had been vindicated. Getting me that first sergeant promotion would have verified and certified his judgment. This man is one of the best men I have ever known. He also treated me better than almost any man ever had, or has since then.

As previously mentioned, my young spouse, Marcella, had begun communicating with me by letter a few weeks before my discharge. We decided to arrange that after discharge I would drive to Rialto, California and we would spend four or five days together at the home of one of her aunts.

Marcella wanted to see “how that felt”. I was very enthusiastic about the prospect that we might reconcile. “With any luck” our Vietnam civil war and army tragic experiences had ended, and we had survived.

If a reconciliation, didn’t happen I had decided that “for a change” I was going to select where I wanted to live and that was San Francisco, so I would be San Francisco bound.

CHAPTER 6:

DISTILLED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I believe that the best way to begin an autobiography is to reveal and discuss what one might know about one's ancestors. My biological mother was Lucia Avila, a Latina. She was, at least throughout her adult life, known as Lucy. She was born in 1907 in a coal mining camp named, Rouse; located in southern Colorado.

My father was Anselmo Vallejos. He was born on one of five farms that belonged to the Vallejos family and were all that remained of a land grant given by the Republic of Mexico, in its northern territory called, El Teritorio De Nuevo Mejico [the New Mexico territory]. These five farms, and the entire land grant for the most part, were located near the coal mining camp called Walsen.

Near Camp Walsen later on, in 1878, a town was granted a town charter by the state of Colorado government and it was named Walsenburg. The area where Walsenburg was founded was originally a Mexican village named, Plaza de los Leones [town of the mountain lions]. Other say it was named for a Leon family. There is "no telling" how long ago this village had been established. Colorado was a U.S. territory until 1876; at which time it became a state.

Maria Lucia Avila was the oldest of two daughters. She was born in 1907. There were no brothers. Her younger sister was named Margarita Avila. Lucy and Margarita's mother was Santana Sandoval. She was born in 1889 in a coal mining camp, that later came to be known as Farisita, located in the vast southern Colorado coal fields. Santana Sandoval Avila died in 1956.

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Santana Sandoval's mother was Maria Inez Salas, who was born in 1869. This was only four years after the American Civil War, in the east, south and Midwest, ended with the surrender of the confederacy. Santana Sandoval's father was Juan Joaquin Sandoval, who was born in 1864. The American Civil War was still raging that year.

Santana Sandoval's husband was Juan de Jesus Avila. He was born in 1884 and died in 1948. Lucia Avila's father was this same Juan de Jesus Avila. After a few years he left the marriage with Santana Sandoval and "went off" with another woman. Toward the end of his life he returned to his wife, Santana. He was very ill by then and Santana cared for him, for two or three years, until he died.

My grandfather, Juan de Jesus Avila's mother was Juanita Baca, who was born in 1864. His father was Encarnacion Avila, who was born in 1859. This was before the American Civil War had even begun. The mother of Maria Inez Salas, Santana Sandoval's mother, was Norberta Salas, who was born in 1849. This was just one year after the Republic of Mexico ceded the New Mexico territory [part of which eventually became the modern state of Colorado] in 1848 to the United States. This occurred when the Mexican government was compelled to sign a peace treaty with the United States after defeats at the hands of U.S. military forces that had successfully invaded the nation of Mexico. She was my great-great grandmother. Other surnames on the maternal side of my family were Gonzalez and Lobato.

At some point in time, Lucy Avila "ended up" living in Walsenburg, Colorado. As a child she received an education up to the 6th or 8th grade, considered rather high at that time in history, and especially for a Latina.

At many times throughout her life she demonstrated an intelligence that was beyond her years of formal education. She would write letters for some people and explain the contents of letters people received. She also did the federal income tax filings for some people.

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Anselmo Vallejos was born in 1900 as the oldest of six brothers. He received an education up to the 3rd grade. The other brothers were Benjamin, Kirino, Alfredo, Santos and Abel.

Santana Sandoval was my grandmother. She had married Juan de Jesus Avila at the age of thirteen. As far as is known she had no formal education. As far as is known Juan de Jesus Avila also had no formal education.

Lucy Avila married Aquino Tomas Manzanares. They had two children, both daughters. Their names are Dorotea Manzanares and Ida Evangelina Manzanares. They are my sisters. They are at this writing 85 and 83 years old respectively. They live in the Detroit metropolitan area and Fayetteville, North Carolina respectively. They both were quite successful vocationally as legal secretaries; later Evangelina with Dupont Corp. and Dorotea as a probate clerk in the court system of Oakland County, Michigan.

Lucy was "ahead of her time" and she learned to drive cars. One night she and her husband, Tomas, her sister, Margarita, and Margarita's fiancée or boyfriend were returning home from a dance. Lucy was driving, for whatever reason. As the vehicle was being driven over a railroad crossing suddenly a train appeared "out of the night". The year was 1928. The vehicle stalled on the railroad crossing. The train hit the vehicle on the passenger side. Tomas pushed, or kicked, Lucy out of the vehicle on the driver's side. Everyone except Lucy Avila died.

Santana Avila Sandoval "took" the death of her daughter, Margarita, "very hard". This was a family tragedy that deeply affected both my grandmother, Santana, and mother, Lucy.

Lucy was awarded a railroad settlement for the death of her husband and she purchased a house from a coal mining camp that was going defunct. She moved the structure from the camp a short distance into the coal mining and steel town of Walsenburg, Colorado. Santana Sandoval was still living in the coal mining camp of Rouse with her husband.

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I don't know in what town Lucy and her husband, Tomas Manzanares, and the two daughters, Dorotea and Evangelina, were living at the time of Tomas and Margarita's death as a result of the train crash; or when Lucy moved her coal mining camp house into the town of Walsenburg, Colorado. Margarita did not have children when they died.

In 1988, my sister, Maximiliana, wrote me a letter, a couple of months after Lucy's death, at 79 years of age, talking about Lucy and her life. The following is taken from that letter:

"With this letter I hope to give you some insight. The loss of a mother is very painful. We have had to endure it twice. Santana was a mother to us all but more so to you. Three years ago, when I had a lengthy conversation with Lucia, she revealed a lot to me about herself. She was extremely dependant upon Santana. Santana's death, in 1956, devastated her. Santana had told her how to live, who to marry and how to raise her children. Lucia was unable or unwilling to make these decisions for herself. She also lacked the confidence or knowledge to nurture her children. Thus she gave her attention to Dorothy, Carl and Marge who responded the most readily. This probably came about because you, Vange and I felt more of a kinship to Santana and were more independent [or so Lucia felt]. Lucia felt that we rejected her "late mothering" and we were not willing to accept her as the nurturing parent. She did not know how to overcome the barriers we had constructed. Santana was an extremely powerful woman. She was opinionated but greatly respected. She did things her way. She had left a husband when it was socially unacceptable to do so. She had reared two daughters alone. She had experienced the loss of her favorite daughter, which was not Lucia. She was able to control Anselmo, Lucia's second husband; a difficult thing to do by any measure. She doted on you. You were sheltered and protected from many things. You were too good to play with the neighborhood boys and she kept you close to her. She distrusted men. She felt

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superior to them, and generally was. She had a need to dominate. Lucia clung to Santana, Quino, and likewise Anselmo. She, in many ways, was like a child. After Anselmo's death, in 1978, like a child she clung to Dorothy, Carl and Margie; 'who took care of her'. After Santana's death, when you and I were entrusted again to her, she was incapable. I contested her about you. I felt like you were mine and I was the parent; but I was soon 'caught up' in the events of youth and left home a year and a half later. I was unaware that I had in essence also abandoned you, as had Santana by her death. You could not help but feel rejection; first by the abandonment of Santana and then me. Lucia did not know how to compensate. She didn't know you; how could she meet your needs. This cycle has continued in your life. I believe Lucia loves us, but we intimidated her. She did the best she could with the limited resources she had."

My father, Anselmo Vallejos, meanwhile had been "raised", along with his five brothers, on the Vallejos land grant farms. His mother's name was Eulalia Tafoya. She was born in 1868. This was only three years after the American Civil War ended. Eulalia Tafoya died in 1956; the same year that Santana Sandoval died. Eulalia Tafoya's mother was Eufemia Medina. Eufemia was born in 1848.

That was the year that the Republic of Mexico ceded the New Mexico territory to the United States. That means that she was probably born as a citizen of Mexico; than by operation of treaty became a citizen of the United States. Eufemia's parents would clearly have been citizens of Mexico, living in the Mexican New Mexico territory when they were born.

Eulalia Tafoya's father was Francisco Tafoya. He was born in 1843 as a citizen of the Republic of Mexico. The Republic of Mexico had begun, as an independent nation, in 1821. Eufemia Medina's father was Jose Leon Medina, born in 1823. He was a citizen of the newly formed Republic of Mexico. He became a citizen of the United States by virtue of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848.

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Anselmo Vallejos's father's name was Carlos Vallejos. He was born in 1873, eight years after the American Civil War ended. He also, of course, was born on the Vallejos family farms; probably near the land grant village of Cucharas. He lived on the farms through most of his life. He was a United States citizen. He was essentially monolingual Spanish-speaking.

When he was around seventy-five years of age at a wedding dance, a fist fight "broke out" that may have involved several or all of his five remaining adult sons. Carlos Vallejos, my grandfather, intervened in the fight and was struck on the skull with a fist blow. Shortly thereafter he died as a result of that blow.

Carlos Vallejos's mother was Juanita Chavez, born in 1853. His father was Kirino Vallejos, who was born in 1848. The historical significance of that date has been previously discussed. My son's name is Anselmo Kirino Sandoval. My son was born in 1980.

One son of Carlos Vallejos, Abel, was killed after being "shot off" a horse. The assassin was thought to be a member of a mafia called "la Mano Negra", the "black hand". It was, I believe, either a Syrian, Lebanese or Italian mafia group active in the coal mining regions of the nation; at the "turn of the century", from the 19th to the 20th century. The killer fled and was pursued westward by the Vallejos brothers and cousins. He crossed the border into Utah and was not pursued further. A male offspring of one of the Vallejos brothers was later named in Abel's honor.

Anselmo Vallejos "took up" seasonal agricultural migrant work traveling to the sugar beet fields of northern Colorado and western Nebraska. Only the men did this. The other family members did not go along or participate in the farm work.

He eventually entered the occupation of being a coal miner in the southern Colorado coal fields. He worked as a coal miner for almost twenty years. He was then "laid off" from his job in the coal mines and never returned to coal mining. He did

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mostly truck driving work for the remainder of his working years before retirement.

On this issue, two stories are told. One is that he obtained a less hazardous job as a road construction and repair truck driver; and that is why he left the trade of being a coal miner. The other story is that the coal companies would “lay off” or terminate Mexican coal miners before they could complete twenty years of work, which would qualify them and make them eligible for coal miners retirement pension upon retirement.

Although I did not live in the house my father occupied until my thirteenth birthday, I well remember seeing him arrive at his home, at the end of the work day, from his coal mine work. He would “step out” of his pickup truck or car; and his face, neck, hands and wrists would be black from coal dust. He would often be wearing a coal miner’s helmet with a mounted light bulb. His shiny green gray eyes would glitter through the coal dust. I was “no more than” a small boy when he last worked as a coal miner.

My father, Anselmo Vallejos, at about the age of twenty-five, had married a beautiful woman [this was not to be my biological mother]. They gave birth to three children. The oldest was named Erlinda . Erlinda died in 2006. The next to be born was named Ester. She suffered a hip injury in childhood and had a severe limp throughout her life. Ester died in 2010.

The youngest of the three was Anselmo Vallejos II. Throughout his life he was known by the nickname of Chemo. He participated in both World War II and the Korean war. He was later a coal miner, than a “blue collar” municipal worker and was also heavily involved in Democrat party politics, but never himself “ran” for political office.

His son, Anselmo Vallejos III, always known as Jackie, did enter politics and became a school board president of a medium sized coal mining town on the Colorado-New Mexico state line. He has also pursued a career as a social worker.

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All three of these children of my father; Erlinda, Ester and Chemo [Chemo died first from a heart attack in 2001, at the age of 71] possessed attractive physical features. All three of these children were “raised” substantially by their grandparents, Eulalia and Carlos Vallejos, on the Vallejos farms.

Anselmo Vallejos, their father, had lived on the farms throughout his youth and continued to live there, for the most part, until his first marriage to their mother.

Erlinda married her second cousin, Joseph Tafoya. They gave birth to eleven children, the oldest being only several months older than I. Therefore I have a niece that is older than me. Erlinda lived all of her life in Walsenburg, Colorado.

Her husband, Joe Tafoya, died several years before she. He had been a member of an army tank crew in World War II and sustained shrapnel wounds, which caused him to limp throughout the remainder of his life. He was a friendly, but jealous, type of man, and was prone to boastfulness. He worked a “good job” so Erlinda and the children were well cared for.

Ester married a man named Romero. They gave birth to three children; they being Leroy, John and Rita. John grew up to be a moderately high ranking fireman in Denver, Colorado, specializing in chemical fires. Leroy became an industrial electrician in the steel industry in Pueblo, Colorado. Rita has lived most of her adult life in flagstaff, Arizona. She and her spouse have long been associated in their employment with the Purina food company. Two of their offspring graduated from Northern Arizona University. These three children of my sister Ester are among my favorite nephews and nieces. They are close to me in age as well.

My sister Ester divorced their father fairly early in the marriage. They would later remarry, but divorce again. In the course of her life, Ester married and divorced eight times but had children only in that first marriage.

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The reason my father, Anselmo Vallejos' three oldest children were partially raised by their grandparents was because he and their mother were divorced. She moved to Denver, Colorado where she later remarried and had a "second family"; and my father remained in Walsenburg, Colorado. Overall the three oldest children appear to have had a difficult childhood. Anselmo Vallejos had apparently obtained "custody" over them as a result of the divorce.

As the story goes, my mother, Lucy, had been very ill shortly after my birth. It appears that the problem may have been very severe post-partum depression or a psychotic episode of some sort. Some members of the family talk about her having a "nervous breakdown". There is some information that this was a term used for either psychotic breaks or bouts of depression.

In any event, by the time I was around two or three weeks of age I was "turned over" to my grandmother, Santana, for rearing. I may not have been the first sibling to have come under the care of grandmother, Santana Sandoval.

The two most notable are sister Maxine [Maximiliana] and brother Carl [Juan Carlos]. Santana also may have "had a hand" in helping "raise" two of the oldest siblings in Dorothy [Dorotea] and Vange [Evangalina]; the two daughters of my mother and her first spouse.

As for me, the result is that I was principally raised by Santana for the first thirteen years of my life until her death in late 1956.

I was born "in the middle" of World War II on January 13, 1944. This would have been about the time that the planning for the allied invasion of the coasts of German Nazi occupied France was proceeding in earnest. "Little did I know" that this war would take the lives of over seventy million people in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Pacific World and North America. The United States would incur 425,000 war deaths.

As a child my milk consumption was with the use of a "baby bottle". At some point syrup became a part of my milk

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formula. This was a bit unusual. What seems to have been very unusual was the following. I would attempt to give my grandmother [mother to me] instructions or recommendations as to “how to fix” my baby bottle milk formula. I seemed to be particularly interested in my bottle milk having just the right amount of syrup in the milk.

I remember well many features of my grandmother Santana’s house. There was the very small enclosed porch that wasn’t used for “much of anything” really. In later years, a washing machine may have been placed in there. Next came the kitchen; rather large as was the case with most kitchens of that era.

The highlight of the kitchen was a coal and wood burning stove. Food was cooked on stove top. You placed paper underneath the chunks of coal, than lighted the paper which in turn caused the coal to catch on fire or ignite. The heat from the stove was sufficient to cook most any food, as well as to warm up the kitchen. With much less efficiency it could emit some partial warmth to one or two adjoining rooms.

Often a combination of coal and wood was used as fuel for the stove. The stove also contained a small oven. The oven did not have its own independent source of heat; instead heat would have to travel downward from the portion of the stove that hosted the burning coal and wood. Many foods could be prepared in the oven including baking bread, some meats and even a Thanksgiving turkey. I believe that meat could also be turned into jerky in the oven. I distinctly remember that deer meat jerky was prepared in it. Stove-top cooking resulted in very adequate breakfast foods, including oatmeal and cream-of-wheat, hot chocolate, coffee, stews, soups, potatoes variously prepared, beans, corn on the cob, meat loaf from the oven, tortillas, chilies, lentils [lantejas], and of course all the boiled foods.

Saturdays were usually the days on which bread was baked in the stove’s oven. Bread was made in the form of

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loaves, bread rolls, and deep fried bread [which my family called bunuelos], Apache and Navajo style.

Mexican dessert foods were also cooked with that stove, including Mexican capirotera [hot bread pudding], atole [made from purple corn], and panocha, a pressure cooked, brown wheat and highly sugared and pasty dessert; which was delicious hot but even more so when eaten cold. Warm and thick flour tortillas were very enjoyable to eat with a thin spread of melted butter.

I enjoyed sitting in a chair close to the warm stove and next to a wall. My grandmother, Santana, in the winter, served me coffee at an early age and “spiked” with whiskey to ward off winter illnesses.

Having a coal stove created chores for me of having to break down the coal rocks into chunks to a size that would fit into the stove; then to haul it into the kitchen by hand in large buckets. At first it was “all I could do” to handle the coal filled buckets and maneuver my way from the coal shed, where a large pile of coal was kept, into the kitchen.

The coal shed was located “clear across” the “yard”. I spent most of my time in the kitchen when indoors and not sleeping. This meant that all of my conversations were in the kitchen; all of my eating was done in the kitchen, as the little adobe house had no dining room; my school work of later years was in the kitchen; I indoor played most of the time in the kitchen; and so on.

Santana didn’t have a bathroom in the house until years later. We had a bath once a week, on Saturdays. It was done in the kitchen; in a metal tub brought in for each individual bathing occasion; placed in front of the kitchen stove, with hot water, that had been heated on the kitchen stove, poured into the tub. Each person bathing was given “privacy of the kitchen” while they bathed.

It could be that it was only my grandmother and I that bathed that way, I don’t remember. For the most part, I don’t remember anyone else living in that house except for my

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grandmother, Santana, and myself. I'm told, however, that a brother and a sister, both most immediately my seniors in age, also lived in that house.

Now what about the need to use a toilet? We had an outside toilet located some distance from the little house in which I lived but, of course, within the property. It was a small and narrow shed-like wooden structure with a slanted roof, and chicken wire near the ceiling in order to ventilate the tiny structure.

The structure had a slanted roof. There was a door which fastened with one latch on the outside and another latch on the inside. There were two openings on a platform. People sat on those openings in order to urinate and defecate. In other words, you sat your ass down on one of these openings and you shit or peed down into a hole that was almost the size of the outhouse structure itself.

There was no flushing mechanism or process; in fact there was no flowing water, or water at all, of any type anywhere inside the toilet. When finished, and properly wiped, you let your soiled toilet paper drop down into the hole. "More often than not" newspapers and sheets of paper torn out of magazines were used to "wipe your ass".

During warm weather you had to be alert for spiders and bugs that were likely to be crawling or climbing about in the outside toilet shed. In the Winter, if it was snowing or raining, one still had to go out to that outdoor shed to relieve oneself. If it was snowing and in the daytime, I enjoyed sitting on the toilet seat, opening the door slightly, and looking out at the falling snow.

The house had three other rooms, in addition to the kitchen. There were two bedrooms back to back. The first bedroom was where Santana slept. She often slept with a loaded twenty two caliber pistol under her pillow. Sometimes when returning to bed I would be suddenly gripped with fear that she would mistake me for an intruder and shoot me.

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Up to a certain age, I slept with her. When I reached an older certain age, and I suppose when the one or two other siblings were no longer living there, I was moved into the second bedroom. Santana's bedroom contained a small coal and wood burning pot-bellied furnace which heated that bedroom and provided some heat into the second bedroom.

Santana's bedroom had plenty of light coming in from two windows. The second bedroom, however, was dark and uninviting. It contained only one window and it was always kept very well shaded. The room was also not very warm, not having its own independent source of heat.

The final room in the house was a small living room which contained what was technically the front door to the house. Rarely was this room used as a living room. Rarely was this room used at all. The room had three doors. One door was the outside door. Another door opened to the back bedroom. The third door was to the kitchen.

All three doors were kept shut all the time. There was no heat in the room. It was very cold in there during the cold weather months and cool during the summer. Milk and other food needing refrigerating were placed on the floor in that room. The house did not have a refrigerator. In essence the room served as a walk in freezer compartment similar to what one might find in a café or restaurant.

The most expensive piece of furniture in the house was kept in that would-be living room. It was a large oak stand up piano. My understanding is that it had been purchased by one of the older sisters, probably Dorothy. She and Vange loved their grandmother, Santana, very much. One or both of them actually could play some piano.

I was "growing up" in Walsenburg, Colorado at 6,171 feet elevation. This is the southern Rocky Mountain region, and this mountain range is also called the continental divide of the nation. It's also sometimes described as "the backbone" of the nation due to the high elevations and numerous peaks of this mountain range. This southern range region also hosts a

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certain amount of semi-arid vegetation and animal life; and is often called the “ gateway to the Southwest. The weather is severe throughout the year here.

The winters are very snowy. Snows fall quite often, usually as part of a snowstorm, rather than just a snowfall. Sometimes one snow storm is followed closely by another. Often the snowfall accumulates from six to twelve inches deep. Then there are the snow flurries. Sometimes when the snow is falling, but usually after the snowfall has ceased, the wind picks up considerably and proceeds to blow the snow about in flurries.

The snow blows up against obstacles forming embankments, called “snow banks”. These snow banks would sometimes rise to heights of four to five feet. Once the snow fall and snow flurries have ended, then the cold temperatures “set in”. Overnight temperatures would “drop” to as low as twenty degrees below zero. As the daytime “warmed up”; say the middle of the day, the temperature might rise to five degree below zero. At these temperatures the snow was not quick to melt.

It often would “take” a week or two for a given snowfall to melt. What happens to the snow then? It accumulates dust particles and other fine debris. The shade or color of the snow becomes gray in color and sometimes even a light shade of black. The unmelted snow then turns to ice as it refreezes each overnight.

Then ice forms at the “bottom” of the snow with new fallen snow in its flaked form up and above the ice; and serves to conceal the ice from the unwary walker or driver. This becomes a hazard for those having to walk about in the snow. Suddenly one is “slipping and sliding”, and then falling to the ground with a thud.

It’s not much better if you are driving. On the roads, the snow becomes “packed down” first; then turns to a slick form of ice due to the very slow melting process the temperature of

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tires rolling over the snow on the road causes the snow to partially melt and form into ice at the same time.

Each overnight as the temperature drops the ice and snow refreezes. It doesn't take much for the vehicle to begin to skate and slide; and the driver will lose control of the vehicle.

The final stage of a snowfall is the mud that forms as the melting snow mixes with the dirt or absorbs into the ground. For pedestrians muddy shoes and cuffs become "the order of the day".

Winter weather is followed by late Winter and early Spring weather. Things get quite windy. I mean really windy! So windy that if you're walking "facing the wind" the wind "takes your breath away". The only way to deal with this is to walk backwards, while occasionally turning toward the wind to see where you are going. Needless to say twigs and branches get broken and knocked down by the winds. Property damage is not uncommon as a result of these winds. It's day after day of cold weather until at least mid-April.

During the Spring and first half of the Summer, everything grew very rapidly. In "no time at all" everything became thick with vegetation. The same things seemed to apply to insects. Flies, ants, bees, grasshoppers, praying mantis, moths, worms and several other insect species were especially notable for growing to enormous size as comparable to what one might expect.

I particularly recall seeing grasshoppers on a tall blade of grass or on a tall weed. It would seem that they were so big "they could look you in the eye". If you attempted to get a closer look at the grasshopper it would rotate away from your line of vision. There was something eerie about that. If you were walking through tall wild grass grasshoppers would jump up so high that they rose to eye level or even above your head.

In addition, there were some grasshopper species that had wings and could first jump than fly some considerable distance.

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The most spectacular phenomena of nature in the summer was the occasional fall of balls of flying ants. In some way associated with Summer cloud bursts, but not during the actual heavy but brief rainfall, ants clinging together to form the shape of a ball would fall from the skies.

These were large red ants with wings. When these “balls of ants” hit the ground the balls would break apart somewhat; the ants would separate and some would take flight immediately. Others would crawl about but didn’t really fly off. I remember watching my grandmother, using a kitchen broom, just sweeping the decomposing balls and swarms of ants away in an effort to get them away from the door entrances to the house and off the sidewalks. My best explanation of why this phenomena took place is that the natural habitat of this species of ant was the high mountain peaks nearby.

Summer rainstorm clouds would “pick up” these ants much the way that a storm front moving across the ocean picks up water, than deposits it in the form of rains over the dry land. Usually this phenomena, when it occurred, was followed by a summer cloud burst, which is a sudden and heavy rain and which lasts for just a few minutes but leaves behind a considerable amount of water; including flooded water in low lying areas.

When I was about four years of age there were a couple of deaths in the immediate family. One was a younger brother who was six months of age when he died. I don’t know the cause of his death. He would have been our eleventh sibling. I know that his name was William. Only the youngest two siblings had been given English birth names.

William was the last infant that my mother Lucy [Lucia] gave birth to. This was in late 1947 or early 1948. It was in that year that both of my grandfathers died. Neither grandfather was “close to me”, and I don’t believe I “knew” Juan Avila at all. I do remember Carlos Vallejos before he died but the memory is brief and sparse.

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I don't remember the developmental stages of my life; my first sitting up, my first crawling, when I spoke my first words [they had to be in Spanish], when I first walked.

When I was born my grandmother, Santana, was fifty-six years of age. From within a few weeks of my birth I was placed in her care until her death twelve years later.

I have memories of Fourth of July observances in Colorado. As a pre-requisite it should be known that my father "never ever" "took us" camping or picnicking "outside of" the Fourth of July outing. My mother and grandmother did not drive. Here it should be mentioned that we were an "immediate family" living in two houses and two households. One household was headed by mother, Lucy, and father, Anselmo.

The second household was headed by grandmother, Santana. So when it came to observances, such as the Fourth of July, Christmas "and so on" then the entire immediate family members did things together; except for those that might be away in far away places visiting one of the older siblings. My father also never "took us", by the way, boating, or any other outdoor recreational activity. We also never ever went on a family vacation; although there was one or more road trip visits from Colorado to California. A big reason for this, of course, is that we were part of the "working poor".

My father's wages as he neared retirement, in 1960, were somewhere in the range of \$250 –to- \$400 per month. Santana was sustained on a meager state pension. Another reason is that my father never really received paid vacations from the work he did. I suppose he could have taken unpaid vacations. He was always well liked, as far as I know, by his employer's and likely could have received the time off.

If the Fourth of July picnic outing was going to be somewhere into the nearby mountains, my father would "take us" and we would travel there in his "dump truck". My father owned and used a "dump truck" during the many years that he worked "in" highway construction. The dump trucks of that era consisted of a large cab, with one step up to mount into the

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cab. Within the cab, there was space for the driver and two passengers, so long as they were not too big of individuals.

The passenger sitting “in the middle” would have to compete for leg space with several mechanical sticks whose purposes were to shift into several gears, required in “hauling a load”, a stick for the emergency brakes, and two or three sticks for operating the part of the vehicle that accommodated the “bed of the truck” where the “load” was being carried. The truck had a large box shaped bed with high sides to accommodate the load, which usually consisted of dirt, rocks, or other material that would be placed on the road then “black topped” over.

The back of the truck bed was equipped with a tailgate that released, using the levers or sticks inside the cab of the vehicle next to the driver. The tailgate released from the bottom so that the load spilled from or out of the bottom allowing the load to “slip out” and be placed at its desired location. In order to prepare the dump truck for the Fourth of July outing, my father would sweep out and water rinse out the bed of the truck so that there would be little or no debris from the loads that had been “handled” remaining in the truck bed.

Riding in the cab of the truck would be the two most favored family adults. The children, and everyone else, would ride in the truck bed. There was no method by which the “bed riding” passengers could secure their safety other than to remain seated in the truck bed, with your back “up against” a side of the truck bed and the palms of your hands “flat” on the bed floor in order to balance and stabilize yourself somewhat. A ride in a dump truck is bouncy and bumpy at best. It particularly became a bumpy ride at the point that the vehicle would leave the asphalted highway and travel onto unpaved mountain roads.

My father also had a habit of visualizing where we would picnic but not actually planning for whether there would be a “picnic spot” available for us. The result would be that it was not uncommon for us to arrive at several mountain locations;

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than discover that there was no room for us and to then drive on to another location looking for a place to picnic. There were times when it seemed like it was two or three p.m. before we found an available place to picnic.

Each time we reached a location, found it to be uninviting, and moved on, my youngest sister would declare “here we go again”. This became amusing to us riding in the bed of the truck.

Our Fourth of July picnic edible and drinkable “delights” consisted of cold chicken, potato salad, cold can pork and beans, macaroni salad, soft drinks, beer and cool watermelon. The watermelon and beer would, upon arrival, be placed in fast running cold mountain streams until time for consumption.

Despite the “hardships” inherent in these outings I delighted in these infrequent picnic outings and my memories continue to be enriched by them.

Other less glamorous Fourth of July picnic outings were held in the parks of nearby small mountain towns, such as LaVeta, Colorado, or in the much larger steel producing town of Pueblo, Colorado, located about forty miles north from where we lived in Walsenburg, Colorado. In these outings we were joined by extended family members from the households of various Vallejos uncles. It’s curious to me that we never seemed to invite the few local relatives that we had from the maternal side of the family.

The principal household from the maternal side consisted of a beloved great-aunt, her daughter, a single mother, and her four children. That family was very poor and did not have a car or a driver. Today those four children are relatively prosperous adults and “I’m happy for them”.

The city park in Pueblo, Colorado offered a playground, a duck pond and a small zoo; which were nice additions to our Fourth of July experience. We always arrived back home before night fall and did a modest amount of fireworks. A very humble display, by most standards, as we couldn’t afford much.

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In the summer, I would occasionally get an opportunity, as would one or two of my siblings, to accompany my father “to work” and ride in his dump truck all day. I loved doing this. It would usually involve a drive to a nearby mountain highway. The day consisted of my father receiving a load of “something or other”; than hauling it to some other location where he would “dump” the load; then return to the original location for still another load. When it came time to “empty the load” he would sometimes allow me to manipulate the levers, next to his right leg, that controlled the movements or stationary condition of the truck bed.

A “lunch bucket” meal at midday was enjoyed by my father and I. The lunch bucket was packed in the early morning at home and eating that lunch, along with my father, was a highlight of the day for me.

My favorite aroma, on those mountain road drives, was that of the skunks. Then and now I associate a skunk aroma with the mountains, and with nature in general; and am not offended by that odor.

Also in the summers, when my father was working with a highway construction company project that was far from home and required overnight stays near the work site, he owned a small residential trailer home which could “sleep” two adults and a couple of children; so he would bring family members along.

He would usually park the trailer in a mobile home park near the construction site. Each of we siblings that were interested would in turn accompany my father and mother to “spend” a week or two with them in a distant place; and living in that trailer home. This usually did not involve, for me, daily outings “to work” with my father in his dump truck. I imagine my mother, Lucia, was tasked with thinking of children’s activities for the day. One can expect that in that era these “things” consisted of chores that could be assigned to a child; and the remainder of the day left to the child’s imagination. I remember one instance, when upon arriving near the work

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site, we spent the first night in an abandoned barn, and after that lived in a tent.

My favorite locations for these trailer home episodes were Manitou Springs, Pagosa Springs, Grand Junction and Durango, all in Colorado. I particularly delighted in Durango and Pagosa Springs where many Indians lived on Indian land [reservations]. The Indians were southern mountain Ute for the most part.

One time when walking through the mountain woods, with a couple of local youngsters, we encountered ,and then were chased by, a bear; but we escaped to a road, and “civilization”, beyond.

In Durango at night we could, at times, hear the constant and enchanting drum beat of Indian pow-wows. At Manitou Springs there were some limited opportunities for horseback riding.

Even though we never experienced summer camp I suppose these trailer home living episodes served as some substitute for that.

Wild and domestic animals were not uncommon in my childhood. At various times I, with the help of friends, captured and collected squirrels, minnows, spiders, tarantulas, grasshoppers, frogs, butterflies, lizards, an owl, various types of small birds, and pigeons. The parents managed to bring home for my care guinea pigs, sheep, goats, chickens, rabbits, dogs and cats. Understandably most of the wild animals didn't survive long, and died in my captivity [I wish I hadn't done all that]. Other of the wild animals were released, probably after one of my parents prevailed upon me to do so.

As for the domestic animals, I certainly had a fondness for the goats we had. I enjoyed the way they butt you with their head whenever they want something. I never cared much for cats but one or two were usually allowed to be “in residence”. There was no spaying service in existence in Walsenburg, as far as I know.

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If an unwanted litter of kittens “turned up” I was required to ‘terminate’ the kittens by placing them in a disposable “gunny sack” and drowning them in a nearby irrigation ditch the size of a creek. If I was emotionally incapable of doing that, then my father would do it.

I was allowed to have as pets up to two dogs at any given time. Usually I kept just one. No animal was ever allowed to be in the house, by the way, so these were not house pets, and so our dogs and cats always lived outside and outdoors at all times. During those bitter cold days and nights, those pet dogs and cats had to “figure out” a way to survive the severe weather. The dogs usually had a dog house structure available to them which may have provided some relief from the cold weather. The cats undoubtedly slipped into various accessible nooks and crannies to escape the cold. These pets were well fed even though kept outside, however. My biggest project was the rabbits, and their tending to and care. Some of this is discussed in Chapter 1.

When I was ten or eleven years of age I was first given charge of caring for up to more than forty rabbits. This included all of the feeding of the rabbits. Alfalfa bales and rabbit pellets were provided to me by the family adults. I also had to keep all the rabbit hooches, cages and other rabbit areas cleaned out and clean. This usually involved gathering and getting rid of rabbit manure and rotten food. To supplement the purchased rabbit food, and in order to minimize the family’s financial outlays, I was required to seek out and retrieve wild grass to feed to the rabbits; and to go about the neighborhood and local grocery stores seeking discarded lettuce, cabbage and other raw green vegetables to feed our rabbits.

The hooches also needed to be occasionally “hosed down with water” to reduce, if not eliminate, the urine residue from the rabbit cages. I was also charged with attempting to keep the rabbits as clean as possible.

I handled, and sometimes mishandled, all of the breeding of the rabbits. I delighted in the birth and growth of the young

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rabbits; but I lost too many of them as a result of my ignorance of it. If opportunities presented themselves, I enjoyed watching the adult rabbits fucking after being caged together for the purpose of breeding.

Otherwise the male and female adult rabbits were caged and kept separately. I was amazed that a rabbit could breed with a sister or a daughter and still produce a healthy litter.

The most difficult thing for me, regarding the rabbits, was when I had to kill one or more of them as part of the sale of a rabbit for meat, or to provide rabbit meat for our family dinner table.

My father had taught me how to slaughter [kill] a rabbit but I was never confident or comfortable with the process. Actually I would have preferred to kill one of the older rabbits that had already lived a longer life but it always had to be one of the younger ones that had to be slaughtered because those who ate rabbit meat wanted it when it was more tender. I admit that even I, to this date, do like the flavor of rabbit meat, although I rarely eat it.

My favorite pet dog, over the years of my youth, was a medium small dog that a sister named, Jigger. He was somewhat furry with straggly hair ends, hair on his forehead that hung over his eyes to some extent, sparkly eyes, and dark gray and white fur.

Given the severity of the weather we lived in we often had to play indoors as children; and for long hours at a time. Most of the games I played called upon the use of my imagination. Most of my games also consisted of conflict of some sort.

Santana owned a set of marbles that were contained in a large shiny oak box. Half the marbles were white and half were black. This had probably originally been used for club or association voting of some kind. I would play pretending that the white marbles were fighting against the black marbles in some kind of warfare.

One Christmas I received a circus set of toys. I had previously had occasion to “see” the film, The Greatest Show

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On Earth starring the reactionary right wing [we didn't know it at the time] actor, Charles Heston. The highlight of the film was a train wreck in which many circus animals and people are killed and injured. Instead of playing circus with my circus toy set I played train wreck. I simply used imagination to construct a lengthy train from paper, with box cars and passenger cars to transport all of the circus animals and people.

Another Christmas I received an army toy set. It didn't take any imagination to play war with that set. In case you're wondering, the only time I received toys was for Christmas. My grandmother, Santana, and family couldn't afford to purchase toys with any frequency; and they didn't have the skills to make toys, as in a wood working shop.

I obliged my sisters by playing "paper dolls" with them, at their request. I was in charge of making the automobiles that the paper dolls would ride in; and in chauffeuring them around. This game had been in the family since 1936. I was hopeful that my participation in this game wouldn't be mentioned to my neighborhood boy friends.

Out of doors I played several games that relied heavily on imagination. These games required my physically moving about with some degree of vigor; running forward and backward, jumping, falling to the dirt ground, rolling about and suddenly jumping back up. I used a stick for a horse and tied a string near one end to use as a rein.

As previously mentioned, I was being raised by my grandmother, Santana Sandoval. My biological mother, "Lucy" Avila, provided logistical support services to my upbringing; and she lived nearby, with my dad and a few of my sisters.

It was 1956 and I was twelve years of age. Santana was sixty-eight years of age. The time was January of the year. Santana slipped on a patch of ice, falling and injuring her hip. Recovery was very slow, at best. When she resumed walking, she was required to use a 'walker device'. Suddenly one day she became quite ill. She didn't seem to get better. Then one

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day in November of that year she was hospitalized. I was never to see her alive again. She died while hospitalized.

During her hospitalization, I was not allowed to visit her and be with her. I don't know why. Maybe it was because of my youthful age. It was reported to me that she died from ulcers in the stomach. I was told that while Santana was hospitalized she expressed concern about my future well being.

I don't recall she ever receiving medical care before that hospitalization. Medical insurance may not have existed at that time. In any event, she was poor throughout her life. I knew her only to economically survive by working in Great Depression programs and in later life on a state sponsored pension for the elderly; and with the economic help from immediate relatives.

She was a tobacco smoker throughout her adult life. She also used whiskey with her coffee; but that seemed to be in moderate amounts. During her funeral week, and to allay my grieving, my family purchased for me a "state of the art" racing bicycle. For a time it was one of the best "bikes" in town. Riding the bicycle did distract me for a time.

I was moved into the home of my biological mother and dad. It was difficult for me to adjust to living in a new home. There was no adult available to live with me in Santana's home, however; and it is possible that there were already plans to sell that house and property. Eventually the house in which Santana and I lived was let out to renters. Some years after that the house was sold. I often looked longingly toward that house; and sorted out my memories.

There were two or three sisters living with 'Lucy' Vallejos and my dad. Maybe not all at once, but over the next two or three years three sisters lived there, along with me. There were only two bedrooms in the house. The youngest sister slept in her own bed; but in our parents' bedroom. I shared the other bedroom with two sisters. I had my own small bed, and the two sisters slept together in a larger bed. Beyond that, the

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house contained one small bathroom, a small kitchen, a 'good sized' dining room, and a large living room. The dining room had a linoleum floor, just like a kitchen floor. A table that served both as a kitchen table and a dining room table was situated roughly in the middle of the room.

Emotionally I struggled with between not wanting sympathy for my loss, but yet needing sympathy, empathy and understanding for same.

Two months later I entered my teenage years. I, of course, was accustomed to the expectations Santana had for me, and to her disciplinary system. With her 'there was no shortage' of harsh discipline and punishment. Now living with my biological parents I was reminded that there existed expectations, discipline and punishment as well. A few years had passed since they had been raising a boy; and in retrospect I realize that they were probably refreshing and re-learning how to most effectively raise a boy; to the extent that it might be different from raising girls.

I felt cheated. I was accustomed to Santana's regimen and now I had to adjust to, and comply with 'Lucy' and Anselmo's [father's name] regimen. Also complicating things was the normal tendency of teenagers toward rebellion from their parents.

I experienced many frustrating and angry moments. Often the only thing I could do was to lie in bed for long periods of time thinking about 'things'. I was also developing a growing sense and realization that I was living in a tiny and isolated place, which was Walsenburg, Colorado ; and for me this was a negative circumstance. I recall on some summer nights lying on the lawn, looking up at the brilliant 'Colorado' night sky, and 'escaping into the universe' from the little place from which I only had opportunities to leave sometimes in the summers. At other times my frustration would cause me to 'pass on' joining my parents at the family supper meal. This began to occur in my mid-teens. They did not insist that I come to the meal table.

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Another way in which I rebelled was the 'use' of alcohol, and my continuing to smoke cigarettes; which I had begun doing casually since the age of nine. Some friends and I would persuade an identified alcoholic to go into a liquor store and purchase for us alcoholic beverages. Usually all we could afford was cheap wine. On special occasions it might be vodka or whiskey. We would reward the alcoholic with a dollar for his services.

Somewhere around the age of sixteen my negative actions toward them became chronic; and there would be lengthy periods of time in which I would not speak to one or both of them. Luckily their pride would cause them to also cease speaking to me; so there were no episodes of either of them pathetically imploring me, coaxing me, pleading with me, or begging me to resume speaking to them. Years later my mother would tease me, especially in the presence of other family members, of these episodes. At this time only four of us lived in the home; my two parents, a younger sister, and myself.

Fortunately my parents were able to console themselves that I was 'maturing' in the right direction as evidenced by my being an excellent student, involved productively in high school extracurricular activities, having occasional part-time employment, a seemingly normal social life with peers, including girlfriends, traveling out of state to pursue summer employment, and avoiding coming into conflict with the criminal justice system. Also by the age of seventeen it was becoming obvious to them that I was 'college material', and this was something that pleased them.

During my early teens, along with my neighborhood friends, I spent much time exploring and roaming all the hills near town, along with our dogs; as well as walking to the Cucharas River to extract frogs and minnows; and to bring them home.

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We also occasionally went to the local courthouse building; climbed up into the vast attic and captured pigeons; which we also took home.

In addition to that, there were lizards, tarantulas, owls, robins and small fur bearing rodents that we occasionally captured. All of these animals were kept at my home because I had access to rabbit hooches which served as cages that these animals could be kept in.

My father also provided me with an occasional goat or sheep to care for during 'fattening' and before slaughter.

On a few occasions, during cold weather, my friends and I captured robins out in the hills; and cooked and ate them 'on the spot'.

My grieving for my deceased grandmother eased during the Summer of 1958; while I was living in the Detroit, Michigan metropolitan area. My older sister and brother-in-law living there were good parental substitutes for me; I appreciated their youthfulness; and it probably helped me to become more accustomed to two parents instead of just one. Upon returning home, I was launched into the teenage phase of "boyfriend-girlfriendism".

In fact, my only 'extra curricular activities, during the ninth grade of high school, were participation in the El Fandango dance troupe and socializing with girlfriends. I was a heart patient on restricted activities during that school year. I will discuss this in detail in Chapter 8 on athletics.

In the tenth grade, I became heavily involved with high school football. I regained my focus 'in the classroom' and began a climb in my academic performance, over the course of the next three years; which culminated in my graduating ranked in the upper 10% of my class. Of the top ranked seven students in my graduating class, only I and one other eventually graduated from college. Of those students ranked 8th through 15th, however, several did eventually graduate from college. These classmates were probably what might be called 'late bloomers'. Most of them were Latinos.

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Socially I experienced setbacks because that tenth grade year I suffered from acute facial and neck acne. I had jet black hair and during the football season my head perspired profusely inside of the football helmet. The perspiration would, in turn, pour down my forehead, cheeks and face in general. I always wondered whether that did aggravate my acne condition. The social consequences were that girls 'passed on' relationships with me; in favor of acne free boys.

That Summer my family did send me out of state again to be with family. I believe it was to adult siblings in northern California, probably Sacramento. During the Summer after my freshmen year of high school, it had been to an adult sister in North Carolina. In fact, during every Summer of my teenage years I was sent somewhere out of state for the Summer. The idea was for me to 'see more of the world' beyond Boulder, Colorado, to be taken care of by adult siblings that were young parental role models; and to earn some money, if possible. I actually worked at these places during three of my four high school Summers.

I remember my Summer in the state of North Carolina where I was stung on the penis by a bee; drank huge amounts of iced tea; learned how to home make ice cream; did lots of running and sprinting in preparation for trying to 'make' a high school football team back home; and 'running around' at night, with Summer neighborhood friends, while being bare footed. No, I didn't meet Huckleberry Finn or Tom Sawyer!

Each time I returned home to Walsenburg I again felt mildly depressed being in that isolated and backward place. Sixty-two years later I've 'made my peace' with Walsenburg; and I enjoyed being there recently [August 2012] to attend high school reunion festivities.

During the eleventh grade of high school, things for me seemed to settle down into normality. My facial acne condition receded considerably; and by my senior year of high school was completely 'cleared up'. My academic performance was impressive. Girls were displaying quite a bit of interest in me

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again; and by the Spring of my 11th grade year I was getting involved with my first long-term girlfriend. My involvement with high school football was also going well. My other extra-curricular activities had increased a lot; and my health was relatively good. I continued to enjoy my membership in the El Fandango dance troupe.

There were other youth activities available in the community but I didn't know about them, and as was the case with most Latino youth there, I wasn't invited to them. The only difficulties and sputtering that did continue were those at home with my parents. Even so, all the essentials of life were quite functional at home. In some ways it was hard to believe that my 'mother' [grandmother] had died less than four years before that.

By the age of seventeen, and my senior year of high school, all things were going quite well. During the Summer preceding, I'd had a very productive Summer of work, and physical and mental growth, while in the Detroit, Michigan metropolitan area. Physically I grew a great deal and I returned home to Walsenburg, Colorado fully prepared to have my best, and last, year of high school football.

There was general peace and harmony in my home. My parents were becoming increasingly proud of me in several ways. My academic performance in high school was soaring; and I had decided to apply for admissions to college; and my chances for admission 'looked quite good'. I was in a stable girlfriend relationship with a very loving person. My social life was relatively rich and rewarding.

In the Spring of 1962, I graduated from high school 'without a hitch'. I was admitted to, and scheduled to begin my college studies in September of that year, at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado [now Adams State University].

Once in college I became aware that student activism was beginning 'on both coasts' and it wasn't long before it effected the societal climate at the college I was attending. Previous to

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that, I had not been aware that student activism existed at America's colleges and universities.

The issue, at my college, was a tuition increase and many students organized to resist the increase. I joined in that. My mentor, back in my hometown of Walsenburg, Colorado was in the state legislature. His name was Star Caywood. He advised me against participating in the student demonstrations; but said he would do whatever he could in the legislature to attempt to reverse or reduce the student tuition increase. Actually this development did not occur until the Winter of 1964. Within a year or so, my mentor drowned in a lake near my hometown, while attempting to rescue someone. His business had been as a local real property insurance man and realtor.

I transferred colleges, from Adams State College [now Adams State University, as of August 7, 2012] to Colorado State College [now The University of Northern Colorado] for the Fall term of 1964. I write much more about this in Chapter Seven on Education. Suffice it to say here that I had many experiences during my years at Colorado State College [the University of Northern Colorado].

During my not too infrequent road trips home to Walsenburg, Colorado I would 'give a ride home' in my vehicle to friends Carol Lessar and Sharon Biggi; whenever they requested that of me. Otherwise the lengthy 200 mile bus ride was tedious for anyone. They both reminded me of this at our recent All-Walsenburg Class Reunion gatherings in Walsenburg. These college years were years 1964 thru 1967. The years 1967 thru 1969 are written about in detail in Chapter Four on In the Vietnam Civil War.

From the Summer of 1969 to the Summer of 1970, my wife and I lived and worked in Santa Paula, California. Santa Paula is located in San Buenaventura county, California; and Santa Paula is within ten to fifteen miles of the Pacific Ocean. We appreciated the mild climate there. We also enjoyed being relatively near to Los Angeles; and thus being able to partake

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of some of the attractions and cultural offerings of that huge city.

We lived in a nice apartment complex that had been 'cut away' from lemon and orange groves. The coastal foothills in that area contained some rustic villages that I enjoyed being in. The ocean beaches at the town of San Buenaventura, and at Point Hueneme, Point Magu, Santa Barbara, Isla Vista and Carpinteria were fabulous. I discuss, in greater detail, my life in southern California in Chapters 10 and 11 on Marriages and Jobs and Careers .

In 1970, at the age of twenty-six, we moved to Sacramento, California to attend law school. I attended law school there from late 1970 thru early 1974. These years are discussed, in great detail, in the Chapter on Education and Chapter Ten on Marriages .

After I had graduated from law school, in early 1974, I continued to live and work in Sacramento, California until late 1975. This is discussed, in some detail, in Chapter Eleven on Jobs and Careers. I was between the ages of twenty-six and thirty-one during those five years.

I enjoyed living in Sacramento during those years. I perceived it as a quaint and somewhat "sleepy" small city. My activities, when not working or studying the law, were quite varied. I did river rafting activities, dancing in night clubs, partaking in large cinema complexes, family activities with my siblings living locally, activities in the San Francisco bay area, some weekends in San Jose, California with my friend, Armando Venegas, lots of social activities with young women, enjoying and developing the relationship with who was to be my second spouse, exploring and enjoying the Sacramento River delta, with its river and island towns and villages, exploring and enjoying the Sierra Nevada mountain range in the Lake Tahoe area, and visiting the Los Angeles area where I had previously lived. I also visited quite a bit in the Livermore valley, and on the northern California coastline near Eureka and Trinidad, California.

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I moved to Seattle, Washington in late 1975, to take an administrative job with the University of Washington. My girlfriend, Cassandra Kravichovich, joined me there in early 1976. I undertook the Washington lawyers' bar examination in the Summer of 1977; and was licensed to practice law in November 1977. We were married in April 1978. Our daughter was born in August 1978. I was now thirty-four years of age, and this was my first child.

I became very involved in local and state politics with the Democrat party. This continued through 1982. In the early Fall of 1980, Cassandra and I attended the Democrat party national presidential convention in New York City. I quickly came to love New York City. Also in 1978 we befriended Guadalupe and Norberto Medina, and that friendship has continued for me throughout my life. My father died in July 1978. I began an exercise program in jogging, in the Fall of that year. My weight had 'ballooned' up to as much as 180 pounds. Cassandra cooked and ate a lot; and I joined in. My son, Kiko, was born in June 1980.

I continued working at the University of Washington until February 1978. I worked as a lawyer from then until 1999. Cassandra, also a lawyer, began a private law practice by early 1979. These things are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five on Civil Rights Movements, Chapter Ten on Relationships, and Chapter Eleven on Jobs and Careers.

By 1980, I was thirty-six years of age. I enjoyed living and working in Seattle, Washington during those years. It was a large city, and very exciting to me. For years I was able to use public transportation there to travel to work. I always lived within the city limits. There were large bodies of water everywhere. There were interesting islands nearby, as well as a huge peninsula; something called the Olympic Peninsula. It was so large that there was a mountain range on it. Two very attractive Canadian cities were located roughly within 100 miles; namely Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia. We often visited Cassandra's relatives living in the Yakima Valley;

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roughly 130 miles east of Seattle. We also visited my sister and her family living in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area; roughly 120 miles south of Seattle. We visited and explored the Pacific Ocean coastlines of the state of Washington.

In Seattle, we were active in the legal community, the Mexican and Mexican-American community, and the liberal community. I enjoyed the many festivals Seattle had to offer throughout the year. We were often the dinner guests of, or hosted, friends in Seattle. We received and hosted out of state relatives and friends come to visit us.

By mid-1979, my work became that of being a federal government lawyer. This continued until early 1990. In early 1981, Cassandra separated from me and a dissolution process began which culminated in the Fall of 1982. She chose to not obtain the final dissolution decree until then. My best recollection is that this had to do with she maximizing her economic position that had begun and accumulated during the marriage.

My exercise running program began in February 1981 and quickly became prolific. This exercise program continued, in earnest, through 1995; then tapered off but maintained a solid level of exercising through 2010. In mid-2010, and upon my retirement, it increased very dramatically again; and has continued that way up to the present time. Specifically since June 2010 I have been jogging and running fourteen hours per week; at the rate of two hours per day.

I began receiving mental health therapy, in early 1981, and this continued, 'off and on', through 1999. I again resumed mental health treatment and therapy from July 2007 until May 2010.

I functioned as a 'single parent' whenever my children were in my physical custody, from 1981 through mid-1996. My 'girlfriend', Elena, assisted me with parenting during those 'early years'. My daughter, Santana, also continued to return to my home from being away at college, during her 'school breaks', from 1996 through 2000.

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In 1982, I vacationed in the state of Colorado for the purpose of introducing my 'tender age' children to the many relatives living there. There were also a number of Mexico city vacations with my children; from 1982 through 2002. We were always in the company of Santana's catholic godparents, and their families, who lived in Mexico City.

My children accompanied me to many of my running events, from 1981 through 1996; and they participated in a few of these events. I was between the ages of 37 and 52 during those years. Also during those years my children lived with me during the majority of their Summer vacations from school. Involvement with my children is discussed in much more detail in Chapter Ten.

My biological mother died in November 1987; at the age of 79. In 1993, my daughter, Santana, came to live with me; at the beginning of her sophomore year of high school; and remained with me, as her principal residence, through the remainder of high school; and through most of her college years, up through 1999. I had continued to live in the 'family home' from 1981 through 1998. During my last year of living in Seattle [late 1998 to mid-1999] I lived in a large duplex near my previous family house.

From 1991 through 1999, I attempted to earn as much income as possible in order to maintain the 'standard of living' we were accustomed to; and to finance child support for Kiko and the considerable college costs for Santana, and later Kiko as well. Santana's mother refused to contribute to college expenses because Santana had declined to attend the in-state university that her mother wanted her to attend and instead attended an elite east coast college.

From 1997 through mid-1998 Kiko didn't exercise any visitation with me. He was angry with me because of a serious dispute that had occurred, in early 1997, when he lived with me for a few months. He reported me to the government alleging child abuse, but the matter was never investigated, probably based on the complaint not meeting the criteria

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required to launch such an investigation. Kiko resumed visitation with me, in 1998, and continued that until leaving for college, in the Fall of 1999. All of that visitation, however, occurred only in Mount Vernon, Washington where he was living with his mother; and not in Seattle.

My parenting of Santana was 'left wanting'. By early 1995, 'way too much' of her adult supervision was carried out by parents and guardians of her friends; and 'all too often' Santana functioned independently without adult supervision. Contributing measurably to this situation was that I was working 70 to 80 hours per week. I was never able to conclude whether it was because I felt the need for the income it generated or because Santana was home so infrequently that I had decided that since she was not home I 'might as well' be out working.

On the positive side, she and I 'made the most' of the times we were together. Those times were nearly always harmonious. This included meeting in public places for meals together, at cinema theatres to enjoy a film together, exercise jogging together, being together for festivals, and to shop for food for the house together. I made sure that she always had 'plenty of money' in her wallet.

Nevertheless in spite of my work hours, I attended all of her high school functions, and often gave her a ride home, or to whatever friends' house she might be sleeping for that night; and often gave her rides to her high school in the mornings.

Santana was attending a charter high school. I helped the functioning of the school 'in any way I could'. I was instrumental in helping her apply to, and be admitted to, the best universities in the region; and to some of the best liberal arts colleges in the nation. Her charter high school faculty was also extremely helpful in that regard.

While Santana was away at college, I visited her regularly there. I also generally financed her travel back home, to the West Coast, whenever she should, or needed to, or wanted to

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come home. Santana was not 'forced' to remain at the college during holidays and college vacation breaks.

After she left to attend college, on the East Coast, in August 1996; and other then the few months when Kiko was living with me; I increased my work hours even more. This continued until I embarked on a two month cross-country family and friends visiting road trip tour, in mid-September 1999. I was now 56 years of age. I closed my law practice and resigned my final positions in Seattle. I have never lived or worked in Seattle since then.

Previous to this, and by 1997, I had made my final decision to 'move away' from Seattle. Part of the plan had been to NOT leave Seattle until both Santana and Kiko were well ensconced in college. That had occurred by August 1999. Maya, for that matter, had left for college to the state of California, in September 1997. Also I had not been in a serious relationship in Seattle since at least 1997.

Over the years, there had been 'mutual neglect' between myself and my closest relatives and friends who were living at great distances from my home in Seattle. They were, in fact, living in the states of California, Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Michigan and North Carolina. I also inserted in my travel plans a visit to Washington, D.C.

The day for the adventure to begin arrived. I drove south 60 miles to where Kiko was attending The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. He and I spent a few hours together between his classes and studies. I knew that it could be a long time before I would be able to see him again. I was pleased that he was attending a very good college, however; and one that seemed a good fit for his personality. I then proceeded to drive the approximate 650 miles southward to my next stop in Sacramento, California. I had 'given away' most of my belongings before leaving Seattle. Some momentos were left in the care of Elena Flores, who owned a house at the time. What I took with me, in my vehicle, was my

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wardrobe and a few personal items. I spent an overnight in a motel, somewhere in the state of Oregon.

In Sacramento, I spent four days; and I split my time between my sister there and my long-time friends, Tony and Cindy.

Upon completing my visit in Sacramento, I continued my journey; driving south through California. It is a very big state, north and south.

My next destination was Las Vegas, Nevada, about 550 miles from Sacramento. It was 1999 and I had last been in Las Vegas in 1968. The city had grown tremendously during those 30 years. I, of course, knew something about its growth. As of this writing the Las Vegas metropolitan area has now grown to a 1.95 million population.

I was not going to Las Vegas to gamble; because I don't gamble. I also was not going to Las Vegas to attend the big entertainment shows. I was going there to urban hike and to observe the size and nature of the population growth there; and the behavior of those who visit Las Vegas from other places.

I spent four days in Las Vegas. I took a room in the municipality of North Las Vegas. I noticed that there was a large and prominent Latino population there. During the daytime, I drove around throughout the Las Vegas metropolitan area, including Henderson, North Las Vegas, and the developments near Lake Mead and the Hoover dam. I toured several of the new housing areas and noticed incredibly reasonable prices for new houses. In North Las Vegas, for example, new two bedroom houses were selling for \$80,000. The weather is, of course, very hot in Las Vegas in the Spring and Summer months.

At night, after 8:00 p.m. was when I would begin my urban hikes in Las Vegas. My objective was to get plenty of exercise [after all I had been pursuing a physical exercise program since at least 1979] ; and to explore the hotels and casinos of Las Vegas, particularly those located along Las Vegas

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boulevard; referred to as the 'Las Vegas Strip'. A lot of stripping goes on in Las Vegas, but none of it along the public streets, boulevards and avenues. I was also interested in 'people watching'; as in 'what kind of people come to Las Vegas?'

Each night I would urban hike from 8:00 p.m. until 4:00 a.m. I would walk down 'the strip', enter a hotel, explore the hotel common areas, then walk into the casino portion of the hotel, walk around the inside perimeter portion of the casino; then exit through a casino main entrance, come out onto the street, again walk down the street, enter the next hotel and casino, and repeat the process. After four hours of this type of urban hiking, I would stop and eat some hamburgers. After eating I would continue my urban hiking until four in the morning.

I would, of course, take time to walk through all available exhibits and displays; such as the pirate ship attack at the Treasure Island Hotel and Casino. One night I began my urban hiking-walking through the mall near the space tower at the far end of Las Vegas Boulevard. Afterward I would go to my motel room and sleep until 10:00 a.m. or noon the next morning.

On the fifth morning, after breakfast, I departed for Phoenix, Arizona. My plan was to visit my long-time friend, Armando Venegas, and his spouse, Elizabeth, at their second home in Scottsdale; a southwestern décor suburb of Phoenix. Also there visiting would be several of Armando's sisters. Their father was currently hospitalized in Phoenix; and one daughter lived there. It was a very enjoyable three or four day visit with Armando in Scottsdale. We did a lot of sight-seeing as well as dinner parties at their home and in quaint Scottsdale restaurants.

Upon leaving the Phoenix metropolitan area, I traveled north through Arizona until reaching Flagstaff, Arizona; where I would visit my favorite niece, Rita, and her spouse and family. I spent four days there of family visiting. It was a very pleasant visit.

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On the fifth morning when I left Flagstaff, Arizona I 'was in for' a long 900 mile drive; as my next destination would be my home state of Colorado. In Colorado, it would all be family visits. I would be visiting relatives in Trinidad, Walsenburg, Pueblo, two family households in Denver, and Loveland, Colorado. I would be spending twelve days visiting these close family members in the state of Colorado. I would allocate two days each to each of the households I would visit; with the exception of Loveland where I might spend a little more than two days if the situation warranted it so.

On the road trip from Flagstaff, Arizona to Trinidad, Colorado I spent one overnight and it was likely to have been somewhere in the western portion of the state of New Mexico. The route of travel I selected was Route 66; through Gallup and Farmington, New Mexico; and then on east to Albuquerque, New Mexico. I would then travel on Interstate 25 northbound through Santa Fe, New Mexico, Las Vegas, New Mexico, Raton, on the northern border of that state, and on into Trinidad, Colorado. This was to be my family grand tour; as I believed it might be the last time I would see many of these people. As it turns out, I have been able to see many of them at family funerals of other members; and by other means.

In Trinidad, Colorado, I visited with my brother and two households of adult nephews. Everyone was very appreciative of my visiting them. My brother was a very good cook and the breakfasts he prepared were particularly delicious. As it turned out, he died less than a year later from a heart attack. This was Anselmo "Chemo" Vallejos and he was only 71 years of age at the time he died. I visited there for two days.

I then continued my journey north, but traveled only 35 miles to reach my hometown of Walsenburg, Colorado. In Walsenburg, I visited my widowed older sister. She did have a boyfriend at that time. I also spent some time with a former girlfriend. She was consistently distracted and set in her local lifestyle; and as a result our communications did not go very

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well. I also made contact with a couple of old friends. In all, my visit in Walsenburg was for four days.

I then proceeded another 40 miles north to Pueblo, Colorado. There I visited a younger sister. She, and her significant other, were very happy with my visit. I 'folded myself' into their normal daily activities and things went quite well, and were very loving. My sister was ill at times, but she did as much as she could to enjoy my company. I also spent a lengthy breakfast with an old friend, Phillip Valdez. I remained in Pueblo, Colorado visiting for three or four days.

I then continued my journey northward through the state of Colorado. My destination now was Denver, Colorado, approximately 90 miles north of Pueblo. I would be visiting two family households there; one a nephew and family, and the other a cousin and family. Where their homes were located allowed me to gain some familiarity with two divergent sections of the Denver metropolitan area; but both reflecting the burgeoning middle class of that metro area. One of the highlights of the visit with the cousins was that for dinner one evening two other sibling adult cousins joined us for dinner in order to visit with me. All the visiting in Denver was very successful; and I visited for three or four days.

Upon leaving Denver, I traveled again northward 60 miles to the town of Loveland, Colorado. This would be a visit of maternal cousins [as the Denver cousins visit had been]. I hadn't been there in 17 years. The cousins were dispersed among four households; and both parents were still alive. I visited for two days; and there were large gatherings of cousins who saw me and visited with me. On the morning when I departed I had been in the state of Colorado visiting for sixteen days. I've never seen the Loveland family since then.

I continued my journey. Rather than traveling directly east I instead traveled 60 miles south in order to take I-70 E which is the fastest and safest route east to Chicago, Illinois; and points east and north from there. My destination now would be western Indiana to visit one of my sisters and brother in law.

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That was a two day drive. I spent four days there visiting since this is the sister closest to me in age. My nephew and his two children also traveled from Indianapolis, Indiana to visit me on the weekend.

My next destination, after leaving the state of Indiana, was Detroit, Michigan. There I would be visiting three households of family 'around' one of my older sisters. During that visit, we did some sightseeing to northern Michigan. I enjoyed the Michigan visits immensely.

The next part of my journey would again involve a considerable amount of driving. I would be traveling from Detroit to Fayetteville, North Carolina to visit my older sister. There was also a nephew living there. Everyone there spent a lot of time visiting me. We did sightseeing in the countryside quite a bit; including my sister's second house on a pristine lake. I also visited there for four days.

After leaving the state of North Carolina, I traveled north to Washington, D.C. I would be visiting and staying with some friends in that metropolitan area, which includes D.C. and Baltimore. We enjoyed some very nice private dinner parties in their home in the evenings.

In the daytime, both friends went to work. I took the subway system into the city; and divided my time between exercise walking on the capitol mall and visiting some of the museums of the Smithsonian Institute. I was truly inspired by what I saw; and 'fell in love', once and for all, with Washington, D.C. The Institute currently consists of at least 19 distinct museums.

I then departed for my final destination, New York City. By leaving relatively early in the morning, I was able to get to northern New Jersey that day. It was a very rainy drive. It was now past mid-November and I had been on this traveling and visiting adventure for almost two months.

I wanted to arrive at the home where I would be boarding, in Queens, New York City, in the middle of the day. The residents were an older couple and they had fragile

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sensibilities. I followed a AAA routing map and it 'took me' over the Verranzano Bridge in the southern portion of Brooklyn and circled me way around the marshland area of Brooklyn and onto Queens Boulevard, from its far east end. I then needed to drive west on Queens Blvd. until I reached the neighborhood where the house was located. It was situated in the Rego Park district of Queens, New York City.

It was just before Thanksgiving and the family quickly integrated me into some of their family activities; although I actually spent Thanksgiving that year with my New York City daughter; which included a house wedding that night. The "holidays" soon arrived and I spent it with my hosts on Christmas Eve and with my daughter later that month, and some of her friends; when I wasn't engaged in job search.

For the Christmas holidays, my daughter went to France for a few days. The family where I lived generally included me into their Christmas plans and so Christmas was enjoyable. I realize now that it also would have been stimulating wandering the streets and neighborhoods of Manhattan, for example, to observe activities on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. As it was, for Christmas Eve and Christmas night we were guests for dinner parties at the home of a Romanian heart surgeon and her spouse. My daughter returned home from France before New Year's Day; and she and I spent New Year's Eve near, but not in, Times Square.

I had begun my job searching as soon as possible. It often required me to ride on the city's subway system for long distances in order to appear for interviews. I was a 56 year old competing for coveted jobs and positions in probably the most dynamic big city in the world. I was bereft of any state or city licenses for that labor market. I finally 'connected' with an employment agency and was able to 'land' a job at Kennedy International Airport, working with computer data entry, and import and export documents.[Page 366]

In order to keep up my exercise program in New York City, I would allocate two to four hours at the end of each day to do

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urban hiking [walking], as time allowed. This form of exercise also gave me the opportunity to become more familiar with the city. My daughter and I would have supper together at mid-week often and spend Sundays together every weekend. I would periodically take a little time off to explore Manhattan and Brooklyn; and to get reacquainted with parts of the city I had come to know from previous visits.

After 'the holidays', and after I had been living in their home for only a month and a half, the older couple hosting me indicated that it was time for me to rent my own place to live. I had become quite comfortable there and had not been in a hurry to leave. I had been a good house guest and was invited over for supper on a couple of occasions after that.

I immediately began to search in earnest for a place to rent. I would have only limited funds for paying rent. My searching took me to Brooklyn and The Bronx. The cost of rentals in Manhattan were well beyond my price range; and no prospective rental listings emerged for Queens. I finally settled on a large apartment, with a shared kitchen and bathroom, in The Bronx. Each bedroom offered 'pirated' television reception. Each time one entered the kitchen and turned on the lights mice scurried out of the garbage containers. The apartment was located in a building that had probably been a tenement building at one time. It was situated near the corner of 182nd Street and the Grand Avenue and Concourse.

This was certainly an old historical area of New York City. Historical, however, doesn't mean that 'things' hadn't changed. Decades previously a working class European ethnic father typically lived with his spouse and family in a small apartment here. Through hard work and savings many were able to eventually purchase a modest home either in The Bronx or some other part of New York City. This was in the early and middle of the 20th Century. By the late 20th Century, the demographics of The Bronx had changed dramatically and the residents became overwhelmingly of black and Caribbean origin. Many of the households were single parent, or single

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grandmother and grandchild[ren] ; and much of the population was characterized by economic and educational underachievement. By 1999, the entire White population of The Bronx was down to only 7% of the total population. By 2010, however, the White population had 'bounced back' to 11% of the total Bronx population.

The building in which I lived had an aura of not being safe. Nobody would 'talk about it' at least not to me. In the morning sometimes, I would see fresh blood stains in the stairwells or in the elevators of the building. I was never 'bothered' by anyone while living in The Bronx. The building was old, but solidly built of stone. The nearest major shopping area was along Fordham Road, about a mile north of there.

The businesses along the Grand Concourse nearby were small, but friendly. The diner on the corner was no exception, and the breakfasts and lunches there were tasty and inexpensive. As with most diners in New York City, it 'went out of its way' to get your coffee 'just right' for you. The Puerto Rican restaurant, across the street, was friendly and the food, although previously unfamiliar to my palet, was flavorsome, wholesome and substantial. In my spare time, I explored The Bronx just as much as I had Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn.

I had my vehicle with me in New York City but I kept it parked and out of use most of the time. I did use it, on a couple of occasions, to explore nearby Long Island; but I usually traveled even there by train.

To get to work at Kennedy International Airport my first subway station was very convenient; just around the corner from where I lived. Beyond that the work commute got complicated. I had to change subway trains underneath New York Yankees stadium, still in The Bronx. Again I had to change subway trains, in midtown Manhattan. Upon reaching the Jamaica district of Queens, I then had to leave the subway system and ride the city bus system to the international airport, located in the southeastern most part of Brooklyn. I then walked the final distance to the building in which I worked at

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the airport. The length of the entire commute was an hour and half, one way. When still living in Queens the length of the commute to work had been much less. I read a lot of books and New York Times editions while commuting on New York City subways.

All of my work was on the 'graveyard shift', from 10:00 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. In early February, that job ended. I didn't get much work for some time after that. Telephone access was limited so job searching was difficult. I noticed that there were a lot of security officer job openings, so I took a day off from job searching and undertook a course and examination to obtain a required license to do that kind of work. I did obtain such a job; but by then I had decided to leave New York City and move to the state of California. I was 'running low' on money.

It was a difficult decision to make as I didn't want to leave my daughter in New York City after she had become accustomed to my living there. I actually wasn't really leaving her there alone because she had been living there for three years already. I had enjoyed being able to see her often though. I also loved living in New York City. Moving to California seemed like the most secure thing to do in the interests of myself and my daughter and son, both of whom were attending college. I hadn't lived in California for 25 years.

Before leaving the City I took time off to visit my favorite places; central park, Coney Island, the world trade center and Greenwich Village. I left New York City and traveled to the state of California while dealing with sorrow over leaving my daughter and New York City.

I traveled westward across the state of Pennsylvania [first time ever] ; across the state of West Virginia; across the state of Ohio; and into the state of Indiana. Once again I stopped at my sister's home and spent four days there. My mental health was 'not that good' at that time. Upon leaving Indiana, I traveled across the state of Illinois; then the state of Iowa; and then the states of Nebraska and Kansas; and on into the state

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of Colorado. There I visited another sister and spent two or three days there. This journey was definitely another low point in my life. Upon leaving the state of Colorado, I 'dropped down' into the state of New Mexico in order to get to Flagstaff, Arizona.

I again visited my niece in Flagstaff, Arizona, and spent four days there. I got to feeling much better during this visit with my niece. Upon leaving Flagstaff, I crossed Arizona westbound and entered southern California. From the Los Angeles Basin, I turned northward and traveled as far as Fresno, California, where I visited an old friend and his family for a couple of days. After that I reached my final destination of Sacramento, California.

Once there I quickly settled into living with my sister, making contact with old friends and relatives locally, telephone contact with other close relatives in faraway places, and getting reacquainted with Sacramento. I had not lived there in 25 years; and it had grown and changed a lot. A high priority, of course, was job searching.

My approach to job searching was two pronged. Quick acquisition of a reasonable job was one prong. Obtaining a teaching position, more for the long run, was the second prong.

Within four months I was working fulltime. Within seven months, I had two jobs, one of which was teaching. Two jobs 'had me' working seven days per week. This profile of working two jobs and seven days per week continued for the next eight and one-half years. My work history is covered, in great detail, in Chapter Eleven of this book.

I lived with my sister for a year. She then moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in order to be near her daughter and friends. The relationships I had, while living in Sacramento, are discussed in detail in Chapter Nine.

During that December Christmas holiday season, my daughter, Santana, came to visit and vacation; and we spent a very pleasant Christmas weekend in San Diego, California.

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Hotel rates are incredibly reasonable at Christmas time in San Diego, by the way. We also visited Santa Barbara, California on that trip.

In 2001, I began working for the Stockton Unified School District. I worked there until my retirement in mid-2010. I also continued to work my second job [AAA emergency road services dispatching] until early 2009.

In 2001, I had moved into a 1,000 square foot flat in downtown Sacramento. Previously, upon moving to Sacramento, I was able to resume extensive exercise running; and this has continued up to the present time. These essentials of my life continued through 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005. Much of this is discussed indirectly in Chapter 9. During these years, I was between the ages of 57 and 62.

In 2006, I moved to Lodi, California with the purchase of a new home there. Lodi is a northern suburb of the Stockton metropolitan area. There is also a lot of relevant discussion of this in Chapter 11. From 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010, I continued to work hard, be with close family as much as possible, exercise prolifically and stay as healthy as possible, and love and lose, and love again. When not at work I spent a lot of time visiting my daughter and family who were also now living in California.

I buried a brother in 2000; a sister in 2006; and another sister in 2009. My age during these years was 63 to 67 years of age. One brother and five sisters remain alive; but one of these siblings have 'disowned' me.

In 2010, I retired, at the age of 67. I had planned to work, and not retire, until June 2011; taking me almost to the age of 68. My income was a comfortable \$86,000 per year. My employer school district, however, "made me an offer I couldn't refuse". They offered me a 'golden handshake' [early retirement incentive] of an extra \$56,000. I 'ran the numbers' and the only practical thing to do was to accept, and retire. The Great Recession was going full steam, downward. During the

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last eleven years of my work history, I earned over \$686,000; quite a comeback from the difficult years of 1995 to 1999.

Since then, in retirement, I have had six projects which I pursue. They are 1] exercise for health 2] as much time with family while still maintaining 'my independence' 3] travel when possible 4] the casual reading of California law 5] a great amount of reading and research of choice and 6] writing this book. My adult son lived with me while working and studying, from December 2011 through January 2013. I no longer transition through relationships.

CHAPTER 11:

JOBS and CAREERS

In total I have had, in my life, at least thirty- two different jobs, and at least five or six different careers. Some fifteen or twenty years ago some experts predicted that those in my generation would average seven different careers in their lifetimes. The number of different careers in my lifetime suggests the prediction had some accuracy.

My first youthful job was gathering “scrap metal”, along railroad tracks and wherever else it could be found. I would then divide the scrap metal by whatever type of metal each item was; transporting it to a junkyard; and selling it there. Yes, there were “junkyard dogs” in that junkyard! I did this kind of work up until the age of ten.

My next job was as a shoe shine boy. A man in the neighborhood, namely Jacobo Quintana, made the wooden “shoeshine box” for me. I then equipped the box with black, brown, and tan wax shoe polish, a clear polish, a shoe brush, and several shining rags; which were usually discarded but appropriate cloth.

I “made the rounds” of every liquor tavern in town, within the downtown area anyway, and shined the shoes of any tavern patron who was willing to have me do so; for a fee of course. Generally I did not shine the shoes of women. Sometimes while walking “up the sidewalk” on the way from one tavern to the next, I would shine the shoes of anyone who approached me and wanted me to do so. I did not solicit patronage out on the sidewalks. The risks of offending people were too high. I did this kind of work up to about age twelve.

My next job was mowing lawns and raking leaves for customers. This job is self-explanatory. I usually used the

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customer's lawnmowers. All of them were "push mowers" and not gas or electric powered. For leaf raking I carried my own rake.

Sometimes I was employed to burn a pile of leaves. I've always enjoyed burning things. This job involved resisting the temptation to "jump into" the piles of leaves raked. I did this kind of work from age ten and up to about age thirteen. This job often required walking extensively about the town soliciting customers. In the barrio, where I lived, very few neighbors were able, or willing, to employ a child lawn mower or leaf raker.

The next job I did was being the clean-up man in a car dealership. I was about sixteen years of age then. My job was to clean all of the mechanical repair areas and the show room floors. I cleaned up spilled or leaking oil and other auto fluids, swept all floors, mopped all floors, waxed the show room floors, cleaned up all work tables and benches in the mechanical repair area, and washed all show room windows. I liked this job because it had an "adult feeling" to it.

I lived on a property that "faced" railroad tracks and the accompanying railroad easements. Across the "tracks" from where I lived one of the easement areas consisted of wild grass. In this little town, and at that time, circuses and carnivals would 'come to town'.

In my late pre-teens, I worked in the circus and in the carnivals. I would make myself aware of when a circus or carnival would 'come to town'. Both usually arrived incrementally but more often at night. Each would not begin to 'set up' until 'first thing in the morning'. I would awaken 'bright and early' and 'head out' to the circus, in that grassy field, just as soon as I saw 'any signs of life'. I would approach any seemingly responsible adult and tell him or her that I wanted to work helping 'set up' the circus.

The first performance of the circus was likely to be at 1:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m., on the very same day the circus had arrived. Everyone, therefore, had to 'work fast' in setting up the circus.

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The work I usually did was to bring drinking water to the elephants, to feed them by placing hay in front of them, and bathing the elephants with a water hose; to supplement the self-bathing they engaged in.

I also helped to erect and 'raise' the 'big tent' as well as some smaller tents that were used for lesser purposes. Some of this 'tent work', of course, only adult men could do; but I did lighter work that I could handle. A lot of workers are involved in the final 'raising' of the 'big tent'. Just as you may have read in literature, or 'seen in the movies', elephants are indeed sometimes used to assist in raising the 'big tent'.

After the last circus performance, there is 'work to do' in taking down the tents; as well as other minor tasks. In some instances, I had already been asked, at the end of the circus 'setting up' work, to return when the circus was being 'taken down'; where I would be provided with more work. Large spotlights are provided when carrying out the work under the night sky. The work included loading the circus equipment onto the circus trucks. The next morning after the circus was gone, I would look upon the now empty grassy field and have a melancholy feeling.

With carnivals the approach to getting the work in the first place was similar to that of getting circus work; but the type of work I would do was somewhat different. The carnivals were staged in that same grassy field I talked about pertaining to the circus; but also at times at the county fairgrounds in town.

The carnival work I did involved setting up the tent stands; of which there might be numerous. These are the game stands and the food stands that might involve more than just the food vans. Most of these also involved a small tent with the game apparatus placed inside of that. There were small side and overhead beams and metal attachments that had to be dealt with. 'Setting up' a carnival involved working all day; and sometimes the work went on for a couple of days.

Once the carnival was open and the public was flowing through the carnival grounds it was interesting to me to see the

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game tents, that I had helped to set up, now being with 'live' customers. I was never involved in 'setting up' the 'rides'. This was heavy and somewhat specialized work that only experienced carnival workers could do. After all, the amusement rides involve high safety factors. The same protocol and principle was involved in 'taking down' the amusement rides. Imagine a ferris wheel ride being 'set up' and then later 'taken down'.

These carnivals always had their final session at night. That session would usually 'close down' around 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. I obviously needed the permission of my family elders to be there working. By then my age was in the early teens.

The way it usually worked was that some of the tent stands would begin 'closing down' and disassembling by around 9:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. The more popular stands would continue operating until absolute 'closing time'. The work included loading the carnival equipment into trailers, vans and trucks.

The 'taking down' work continued until nearly every tent stand, as well as nearly every other carnival feature, had been taken down and loaded. This work often 'went on' until 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. in the morning. As a result I would then have to walk alone through town and on home if the carnival had been located at the fairgrounds. I wonder if my family elders ever worried that I might 'run away with the carnival'.

You may have heard that sometimes people, even youngsters, are invited to 'join the carnival and travel with them as workers. Well I was indeed, on at least one occasion, asked to 'join the carnival'. I declined the offer or invitation, as I had other ambitions.

While in Pontiac-Detroit, Michigan for the summer, at age fourteen, I worked with my brother-in-law, Bill Young, there in delivering milk to the homes of customers. This was in the era where the milk truck was driven with the driver and helper standing up inside the truck; and the accordion doors left open to allow for quick access and egress in and out of the truck.

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the milk was contained in clear glass bottles with cardboard caps. The milk was carried in the truck in refrigerated compartments.

The milk bottles were placed at the doorstep of the homes, or at a given designated place, or in a tin milk box that had a top. The milk delivery work shifts were something like 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

That summer I also worked baby sitting in the evenings for children in the neighborhood. At times the oldest child in the household, being baby sat, was not much younger than me.

I did a little bit of farm work at about the age of sixteen. On one occasion it was on the Corsentino farm near Walsenburg, Colorado. The work I did there was what was called 'bucking bales' of hay or alfalfa. The bales were held together by sharp wire. I would lift the bale to 'belt level' then 'walk the bale' to a nearby flatbed truck or a flatbed trailer being 'pulled' by a tractor. I would then 'buck' the bale by lifting it to 'chest level' with a sudden lifting of my leg thigh; while almost simultaneously with my arms and hands 'tossing' the bale up onto an appropriate place on the flatbed.

Later on at the farm barn I would be up in the loft of the barn where bales were stored. A pulley would bring the bales up to the loft. Working in tandem with another worker I would remove the bales from the pulley and toss them onto a stack of bales that was being developed as the work proceeded. The 'bucking of bales' was very hard work for me.

On another occasion I worked with irrigation on a farm near Sacramento, California. I had a co-worker. The equipment we handled were lengthy aluminum portable irrigation pipes with cast iron fastenings to which were attached water sprinklers. The pipes were laid out across the agricultural field in sets covering several rows of crops.

We would begin at the first row and uncouple one length of pipe. Working in rotation one of us would lift our end of the pipe well above our head in order to drain the heavy water out of the pipe. We would each then simultaneously lift the pipe

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and bring it to rest on our forearms. We would then walk in tandem across often muddy rows of crops until reaching the next row of crops that was yet to be irrigated for that day.

Sometimes there was still water left in the pipes which made them even heavier to carry. The process took about an hour. We would then lay underneath the electric generators, mounted on four wheels, and elevated slightly by the attached wheels, to escape the scorching Sacramento valley sunlight. These generators are what forced the water in the pipes to flow to the attached sprinklers and thus to irrigate the crops.

We lay underneath the generators and engines for about an hour until that section of row crops was fully irrigated. We would repeat the process of again moving the irrigation pipes for an hour; and then lying under the engines for an hour; so we 'moved pipes' for five hours and 'escaped the sun under the generators for roughly five hours.

This was a ten hour shift. This work was hard and very dehydrating work. Modernly this type of irrigating features engines that move the pipes contraptions along the rows in a semi-circular fashion. Lightweight wheels are attached to the pipe mechanisms.

At the age of seventeen I was again back in Pontiac-Detroit metro for the summer. I worked with my brother-in-law in the wholesale delivery of milk and in my sister and brother-in-law's vending machine business. The wholesale milk delivery work involved the delivery of crates of milk, and other liquid dairy products, to retail outlets; i.e. grocery stores, mom-n-pop stores and small supermarkets. We used a large wholesale truck. With each stop on the route I mounted the inside of the truck and lifted and placed the milk crates where they could be lifted and carried into the establishment. What I was doing was the work of an adult.

Still in Pontiac-Detroit metro for a couple of days per week I worked the vending machine route with my brother-in-law. He and my sister had come to own a small vending machine company. The vending machines were placed in various light

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industry factories and shops throughout the metro area. The machines were stocked with the usual dairy drinks, but also ice cream products. There was a relationship between the Nye Dairy and the vending machine company. My job was to help in restocking the vending machines in the factories and shops. We traveled in a smaller wholesale type truck, and there was a lot of travel involved.

Still in Pontiac-Detroit metro I was working seven days per week. Up to three days per week, I also worked at the Orchard Lake country club as a golf caddie. The job was to carry the heavy golf bags of the club members. This was similar to what you may see in a golf tournament being telecast. The golfer walked the entire course, as did the caddie. Golf carts and golf bag carts were not used. I got plenty of exercise on this job. I enjoyed the outdoor nature of the job; and occasionally looking at the beautiful teenage girls, who were the daughters and guests of the country club members.

We caddies were not allowed to fraternize with them, however. I worked my way up to the designation of a 'captain caddie', which was the highest category in skill. All of these summer earnings I saved for college expenses.

My sister and her spouse, therefore, assisted me indirectly with food and lodging. They may also have paid for the train travel costs from Colorado to Michigan.

At the country club golf course, my last name was brutally mispronounced throughout the summer by the adult supervisor in charge of the caddies.

The day after my high school graduation ceremony I traveled by bus to Denver, Colorado where I had obtained a job for the summer. It was now imperative that I continue to earn and save even more money for college expenses. It was a 160 mile bus trip from my hometown to Denver, Colorado. My job was as a dishwasher and bus boy in a coffee shop that was part of a motor inn complex, called the DeVille. It was located close to a United States mint facility [a place where U.S. currency is made] and in the general downtown area.

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I was eighteen years of age. My sister, Ester's, spouse was the swing shift manager of the coffee shop. The swing shift is the working hours generally between 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.; or something closely akin to that. For the most part, I worked the swing shift and was supervised by Frank Drogheo.

My job was to wash all dishes, eating utensils, and pots and pans. In addition I carried the trays of dirty dishes into the room where the dishwashing machine [commercial one] was located. I also, when necessary, helped the waitresses 'pick up' the dirty dishes from the eating booths and lunch counters.

I generally enjoyed the work; and the food and beverages of the coffee shop. I enjoyed quite a bit living in Denver that summer. I worked for just about three months.

The length of that summer vacation was four months; and I had intended to work almost the entire four months; but the manager/brother-in-law fired me for preaching communism and socialism to some customers. I was philosophically an avowed socialist [but not a communist] at the time.

That summer I had lived with my sister, that brother-in-law, and a teenage nephew and niece for a little more than the first month of the summer. After that I rented a room close to downtown and lived alone. Actually my sister's house was not much more than a mile from downtown and I enjoyed occasionally walking the distance to where I worked.

After being 'fired' I returned home and enjoyed the remaining three weeks, with my girlfriend, before leaving town, in late September 1962, to attend college. I had been a 'hard worker' on that job, as I had been with all my previous jobs.

I'd had previous experience in janitor work in assisting my parents in a night janitor job for a local real estate company. That work had also 'earned me' a modest rotary club scholarship.

As discussed in Chapter Seven on Education, the first college I attended was Adams State College in the state of Colorado. I sold cartons of cigarettes at the dormitory in which

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I lived until that 'operation got shutdown' by dormitory management.

By early winter I obtained a job as a janitor in the college library. I would begin my work after the library closed for the evening. The job involved doing most everything a janitor normally does; and certainly included sweeping, mopping and vacuuming.

My next job was in the late summer of 1963. I had completed my first year of college; and was now nineteen years of age. I obtained a highway construction manual labor job. On that 'work crew' [a group of employees working together and at the same time.] I was reunited with three of my former high school football teammates. The 'pay' was good. The work was often under a hot sun. Some of the workers drank beer for lunch. I ate baloney sandwiches and etc.

After a few weeks I was 'bumped' [replaced by another worker] by the foreman so that he could hire a nephew who needed a job. I was the only Mexican-American on that work crew.

I wrote in Chapter Seven that I perceived that I didn't have enough money by the end of the summer of 1963 to 'return to college'.

I next obtained work 'pumping gas' and replacing road vehicle fluids in the form of oil, water and transmission fluid. I also checked the air pressure on vehicle tires and pumped air into the tires as needed. 'In those days' laws and regulations did not allow customers to 'self service' their vehicles.

With an aggressive and assertive customer who insisted on doing these things him [her] self I would not 'get into a fight over it' to disallow a customer from doing these tasks. I was also required to 'wipe' [clean with a squeegee instrument and water] the windows of the vehicle as much as the customer would allow.

A lot of women and girls as they remained seated in the vehicles, 'showed me their legs' as I did these tasks.

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This business consisted of a tiny gas station, and was a 'one man [person] operation'. I 'opened' the gas station at 7:00 a.m. and closed it at 8:00 p.m. Thus I worked thirteen house shifts at five shifts per week; [13x5 = 65] which totaled 65 hours of work per week.

I 'made' plenty of money; saved most of it, and was able to return to college, at Adams State College, in January 1964. I was twenty years of age by then.

I returned to college with my own first automobile which, however, my dad had purchased for me; as best I can recall.

At times there were rather long periods of time between customers. I would write short stories, sports articles for the local newspaper and read during those times. Friends would sometimes 'drop in' to visit; but I didn't encourage that. They never stayed 'that long'.

The owner of this gas station also owned and operated a large Firestone tire store. I believe he was the one who worked the gas station during the two days per week that I was 'off' [not working]. I worked at that gas station for four months.

In the summer of 1964, my father had obtained a really good job for me with the Habib Brothers gas stations in my hometown. The pay was good. I would again be working alone. This time it was the 'graveyard shift'. This shift 'ran' from 11:00 p.m. until 7:00 a.m. in the morning. My duties were 'pumping gas, oil and transmission fluids installation and 'fixing' [repairing a hole or leakage in the 'inner tube' of a vehicle tire] tire 'flats' [the tire has lost its necessary air pressure] during the first two or three hours of that shift. By 1:00 or 2:00 a.m. that type of work 'slowed down' considerably.

Then the work would also include repairing the 'flat tires' of large semi-truck long haul carriers. Electric powered equipment was used for this, but there was also a certain amount of 'wrestling' with these huge tires. There were often twelve tires on a truck, with sets of two tires 'rolling abreast'. The 'flat tire' was often on an inside tire.

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Some nights I also struggled with 'staying awake'. I earned 'plenty of money' for college and also obtained a more 'road worthy' automobile as my new college would now be 220 miles from home. It was on this job, during late summer; and during the first couple of hours of my shift, that I 'met' my first spouse.

In the Fall of 1964, I 'transferred' [changed colleges] to a much better college' which was the University of Northern Colorado, in Greeley, Colorado.

During the 1964-1965 college school year at the University of Northern Colorado [hereinafter UNC], I had occasional odd jobs there. One job was scrapping off large billboards with my cousin, Tom Talmich. He had moved to Greeley, and moved in with me because he had 'nowhere else to go'. Tom always had jobs while in Greeley. I worked with him regularly as the janitors in a health club. There are lots of carpets to vacuum in a typical health club. We 'wiped down' all club equipment, and moped and swept floors.

During the Christmas college vacation break, in December 1964, and the Spring vacation break in March 1965; my father had obtained about three weeks worth of work for me each time with the Huerfano County road maintenance crew, in southern Colorado. Once again the pay was good. By December 1964 and March 1965, I was twenty-one years of age.

On a few occasions, I had an opportunity to work with the other men [for most of these men it was a fulltime job] on repairing small bridges and railroad trestles; usually replacing rotted lumber and railroad 'ties' on trestles. Mostly the work I did, however, was cutting weeds and brush, piling it, stacking it, hauling it, and sometimes burning it with a 'controlled fire'. In doing this repetitive work, I was able to 'day dream' a lot about how I would socialize that night, or the nights to follow; or to engage in other dreams regarding my future.

One day while I was out cutting weeds and brush another worker came for me and told me to come along as we were going to go fight a house fire. We went to a warehouse and,

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along with others, mounted a fire truck and 'off we went'. The house that was burning was 'out in the countryside' and this accounted for county jurisdiction; and apparently firefighting was done by volunteers there. The house was substantially, but not fully involved, with flames. Still there was more smoke than flames. I can't remember exactly what my role was in fighting that house fire; but I do remember being told to 'punch' a hole in a ceiling with a crowbar tool or axe; and I remember being inside the house for a time. I don't believe I 'got to' handle a fire hose.

Another interesting job occurred a couple of days before Christmas. I was involved in loading a dump truck and then delivering bags of groceries and small boxes of toys to poor families. This work 'made me feel good'. I seem to recall doing this for two different Christmas 'seasons'; but I can't place what year that second time would have been.

In the Summer of 1965, I went home to Walsenburg to 'look for work'. I worked in tandem with my friend, Albert Galvan, who was also attending college. The first job we got was a one day job hauling bricks. Albert then arranged to do sidewalk building at a mountain resort in the not too distant Sangre De Cristo mountain range located about 60 miles southwest of Walsenburg, Colorado. We worked for about three weeks building stone sidewalks and doing light landscaping, such as ground wood, wood chips, and small plants, for relatively wealthy people who had summer vacation, and winter skiing homes, in that resort area. The resort was called Cucharas Camps.

One day I received a telephone call, or letter, from the UNC. The institution was notifying me that there was a fulltime summer job available to me back on campus because a program, called work-study, had just been activated by the university.

In spite of the fact that there had recently been floods and tornados through central and northern Colorado [Walsenburg is located in southern Colorado] I nevertheless left almost

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immediately for Greeley. I regretted having to not being able to date my new girlfriend in Walsenburg; but earning money for college expenses was of the essence, and the mountain resort job seemed much less secure. I took all the flood and tornado detours to make it back to Greeley. The detouring involved five or six extra hours of driving. Even so, I observed, from the road, numerous instances of flood and tornado devastation.

Once back on campus I reported to the financial aids office. The provisions of the work-study program were explained to me by the director. Someone from the office then drove me out to a workshop area on the edge of campus, near the college football field. I was introduced to the foreman of the university paint crew. His name was Woody. He interviewed me for awhile then drove me out to one of the work sites where workers from the paint crew were already into the afternoon portion of their shift. I was 'turned over' to the next most senior member of the painting crew. All the 'regulars' on the crew had worked there anywhere from 12 to 30+ years. He assigned me to do sanding in bathrooms.

I worked vigorously on this for about three and a half hours. As the end of the shift approached the foreman 'found' me in one of the bathrooms still sanding. He said, "Let's go, it's quitting time". He asked me if I had taken an afternoon coffee break. I told Woody I didn't know if there was an afternoon coffee break; although it had occurred to me that there might be one. None of the journeymen painters had come to me to tell me to take a break. After that Woody 'went around' bragging that I had sanded for almost four hours without stopping.

The unintended consequence was that I had, right at the outset, 'earned' a reputation as a hard worker. This is something that is highly valued in the construction trades. In the two and a half years that I worked as an apprentice painter I never did anything to diminish that reputation.

One day, during a school term, I reported to work for my four hour morning part-time shift. At the coffee break we

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settled down for our coffee, and probably donuts. Woody said, "Should I tell him?" Someone said to go ahead. We were painting and doing woodworking in campus apartments that were occupied by retired faculty.

Woody said that yesterday an occupant had told him that someone on the paint crew had stolen her wristwatch. She said, "I'm sure it was that Mexican working on your crew."

Woody said that he and his entire crew had stopped the work they were doing and had "turned the place upside down, twice" looking for the missing wristwatch. Woody, and at least some of the others, refused to believe that I had stolen it. They found it and returned it to the retired faculty occupant. She was unapologetic. I have rarely felt as proud of fellow workers as I did of Woody and his paint crew.

I painted with brushes of every size, rollers of every size, including rollers attached to twenty foot length pole handles for painting auditorium and lecture hall ceilings. I sanded everything, removed and reapplied hardware, varnished and stained woodwork, painted walls, ceilings, doors and windows. I painted in apartments, classrooms, kitchens, hallways, lecture halls, auditoriums, stairways, stairwells, cafeterias and offices. I painted the outer surfaces of buildings, and outer windows and ledges; using scaffolding for elevated and hard to reach areas. I also spray painted. As I was approaching my college graduation I was offered a permanent position, as a journeyman painter. I felt proud of that.

I also had a second job at this university town; at least up until when I 'got' married. On three nights per weekday, and for two shifts on weekends, I was a bus boy and dishwasher at a 'white linen' restaurant called the Village Inn. Income to pay for all college and living expenses during my last two years of college was 'not a problem' for me. I even purchased a Volkswagon Beatle, even though I already had a vehicle.

When I completed my undergraduate education I owed very little money in the form of college student loans. I was now twenty-three years of age.

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My next job was the next two years in the U.S. army. My assignments were as an infantryman [trained to fight and kill with weaponry]; later a clerk typist; and finally a legal clerk; known affectionately in the military as a “legal beagle”. These two years are thoroughly and exhaustively discussed in Chapter Four of this book.

After discharge from the army, I worked, for three weeks, in a gas station in Sacramento, California.

My next job began in August 1969. I was then twenty five years of age. It was as a teacher in the Santa Paula Unified School District located on the southern California coast. I worked there for one year. I was a classroom teacher in the subjects of remedial reading [high school sophomore level] and world history [mostly sophomores]. I also worked in a number of extra-curricular activities.

I worked at four different jobs while attending law school. One job was some building construction work on the campus of the law school.

The next job was as a dishwasher at a newly opened Carrow’s restaurant located in downtown Sacramento. I worked so fast on this job that I was being given pay raises every couple of weeks. There were two negatives to this job. One was that in working so fast I often poked my fingers on fork prongs. The job actually was dishwasher and bus boy. There usually was one other person working ‘in tandem’ with me.

The other negative was the bus boy duties whereby I would go out into the customer seating areas of the restaurant to pick up trays of ‘dirty dishes’ and carry them into the kitchen where the dishwashing machines were located. On a couple of instances I encountered law students that knew me. I felt embarrassed by these encounters. Most law students are sufficiently ‘well off’ that they don’t need to wash dishes to help pay for law school and living expenses.

During the first two summers of my ‘law school years’ I worked as an intern with the Law Students Civil Rights

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Research Council . I discuss this further in Chapter Nine of this book.

The next job I had, still while attending law school, was as a social services case manager. I went to a Latino social services agency and asked if they had any work I could do. "As luck would have it" there was 'an opening'. The supervisor interviewed me. She offered me the job almost immediately after that. She understood that I could work only part-time whenever law school classes were in session; otherwise fulltime. I could work fulltime during breaks between terms.

I 'took very well' to the concept and principles of social services. This particular program did not provide tangible resources directly to the clients. The idea was for the case manager to first identify the needs of the client. Next the case manager would identify what resources existed 'in the community' to meet the client's needs. The case manager would then 'broker' those resources to the client.

The case manager did not then 'continue to follow' that client into the future. If a given client returned to the program, the same processes would then be repeated. If a given client was 'graduating' to higher levels of coping, referrals would then be made.

My next job was again with this agency [the Sacramento Concilio Inc.] and organization. I was offered, and 'took', a position 'solo operating' a new program which was to serve the area of non-institutionalized developmentally disabled clientele. I discuss this work also in Chapter Nine of this book; under the California Association for Retarded Citizens [CARE]. I was very successful in this job as I generated numerous innovations into this type of service. I even gained some state and national recognition in this regard; one of which was being nominated to the national council on mental retardation. [I can't remember if I was appointed].

Just prior to my completion of law school studies and graduation, the organization offered me a full-time administrative position as the special assistant to the executive

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director [CEO] of the organization, Sacramento Concilio Inc. I was now twenty-nine years of age.

Over the course of almost two years I 'grew' that position to one of assistant director of the organization. Necessity was part of the reason, due to frequent illnesses of the executive director. I had mixed results with this position and job. I discuss this position thoroughly in Chapter One, under Sacramento Concilio. This position evolved into a wide range of administrative and office duties, including being a liaison to the board of directors and coordinating with the numerous program managers of programs located in six northern California and San Francisco Bay Area counties; as well as the tedious task of signing the paychecks of hundreds of organizational employees. In addition I was responsible for the management of many organizational facilities and was a liaison to city government, county government, and state government legislative branches.

I also took the time to co-found a legal clinic with the organization; and to assist in setting up a weekly first triage medical clinic. Finally I functioned sometimes as a political liaison for this very large and active organization.

I was now thirty-one years of age. My next job was at the University of Washington, in Seattle, Washington. I pursued and obtained a position as a supervisor-administrator of an academic and personal counseling unit; which also had cultural enrichment responsibilities. I discuss this work experience thoroughly in Chapter One of this book.

My next job was my first lawyer's job. It was with the Evergreen Leal Services organization in the state of Washington. I discuss this position thoroughly in Chapter One. There is also some discussion of this job in Chapter Ten on marriages.

My next job was my first 'stint' in a private lawyer's practice. I discuss this position thoroughly in Chapter Ten, on marriages under the Kassandra Kravichovich marriage and in

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Chapter Twelve on Highlights of My Law Practice. It was late 1978 and early 1979 by then; and I was 34 years of age.

My next job was as a federal tax lawyer with the IRS. This is a position that I actually never 'reported to'.

My next position was as a federal lawyer with the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare; and then later with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. I practiced law in this position from 1979 to early 1990. My age during those years was from age 35 to age 46.

I handled cases and practiced law in the areas of civil rights, constitutional law, public health service law, Indian health law, social security law, administrative law, disabilities law, bankruptcy law, freedom of information act law and employment law. This is discussed further in Chapters One and Ten.

My second stint in the private practice of law was from 1990 thru 1999; at the ages of 46 thru age 55. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Twelve.

From 1990 thru 1994, I also worked as a community mental health psychiatric social worker, and a community mental health clinic manager and supervisor with an organization called the Northwest Mental Health Services Inc. This was a partially employee owned for profit corporation, authorized under appropriate federal legislation and regulations. I was very successful as a psychiatric social worker; but not so much as a community mental health clinic manager. I discuss the latter in some detail in Chapter One.

In terms of this being an employee of a partially owned for profit corporation I 'rose' to the position of being a member of the advisory council to the ownership of the corporation. At the end of my employment I sold back my stock in the corporation; as required under this type of for profit corporation. I received several thousand dollars for this sale.

Two years later, however, this corporation went into liquidation and ceased to exist; the surviving components of

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the corporation continued operating under private non-profit ownership.

From 1995 through 1999 I worked as a licensed counselor with three different social service agencies. I did this while also pursuing my private practice of law. This necessitated working seven days per week at 70 to 80 hours per week. I did this in order to satisfy my desire to practice law as well as work in community mental health and counseling; and to provide significant support to one offspring in college, and one in high school. I will discuss my law practice during these years in the next chapter.

The principal organization that I counseled in was an organization call The Compass Center, in Seattle, Washington. It operated homeless programs with employment and addiction components.

In 1999, I 'moved away' from Seattle, Washington and to New York City. I closed my law practice over the course of the year before leaving Seattle, and also resigned from the remaining social services organizations that I was employed with. A huge luncheon was held in my honor by The Compass Center employees.

In New York City, I possessed no professional, or any other type, of licensing; except for a New York state driver's license and a security guard's license. I obtained a job at Kennedy International Airport, in Brooklyn, working for DHS, a company similar to FedEx and UPS.

My assignment was working with exports and imports dealing with medical laboratory testing and other medical matters. The work tools were mostly computers and export-import documents.

Later on in the year 2000 I moved to Sacramento, California. After researching and surveying the situation and circumstances for me in the state of California, I decided that it would not be feasible, professionally and economically,

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for me to undertake lawyer examinations to obtain a California license to practice law there; and to finance a solo practitioner law practice.

Without a 'stellar' legal career in my background; and being already 56 years of age, I concluded that I was just not going to be hired by a law firm. I was not interested in being a government staff lawyer once again.

Also preparing for the California bar examination would cost several thousand dollars. I calculated that I would need \$250,000 to start up a solo law practice and to operate it, for a year to a year and a half, before it could be operating 'in the black' economically and professionally. In addition, I had two offspring attending college, and that was expensive. It 'looked like' my lawyer practitioner career might be over.

Now twelve years later that question is still not decided. I have done large amounts of pro bono [free] law practice during the past 13 years. Also now in retrospect I have missed the practice of law; but fortunately I have been able to use my education and knowledge of the law in other ways.

Instead I, relatively quickly, obtained a fulltime job as a member of an emergency road service dispatch team with the California State Automobile Association [AAA]. I did this work at 40 hours per week. The compensation was 'pretty decent' because of the large amount of overtime hours that were being worked in 2000 and 2001.

After that I reduced my hours to 32 hours per week; then to 28 hours per week; and then down to 22 hours per week. Years later, due to 'business necessity', my hours were increased to 28 hours per week.

During that first year at AAA I earned \$40,000, which was very respectable for a call center job. By the summer of 2001, this became a part-time second job for me; but even so my income from this job eventually rose to \$24,000 per year, including bonuses.

I, and other employees, also received a lot of 'gift perks' including cash, from this non-unionized employer.

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In January 2009, the entire operation outsourced to Phoenix, Arizona and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; where the wage scales for these work skills were considerably lower than in the state of California. Quite a bit had, in the months previous to that, been provided to the employees in the way of transitional services. There were severance pay packages as well. I received \$8,000 in severance pay.

I was fortunate in another way. Due to my age of sixty-five years at that time, I qualified for pension from this AAA employer, The California State Automobile Association. Since then I have been receiving from it a lifetime pension payable on a monthly basis. Even though I had been a part-time employee for 88% of my employment with AAA, here I am receiving a modest lifetime pension from it.

“Meanwhile back in August 2001” I was committed to working seven days per week, once again, if possible. In this instance it was primarily because I wanted to maximize my retirement funds.

For background, I had been granted, by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, a Lifetime Secondary Credential in 1973.

In the Fall of 2000 I was hired, by the Sacramento City Unified School District, as a ‘guest teacher’. I thus arranged my AAA work schedule to work two eight hour shifts on weekends, and the remaining three eight hour shifts on weekdays. I was then able to work two weekdays per week as a ‘guest teacher’.

During the academic year of 2000-2001, I taught at every ‘level’ from kindergarten thru adult education. The pay was \$130 per day.

In July 2001, I was hired to a fulltime teaching position with the Stockton Unified School District in Stockton, California. I was offered two positions actually; one at the high school level and one at the middle school level. I chose the middle school level position at Hamilton Middle School. I chose

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it over high school 'for the wrong reasons', but 'that's another story'.

Early in that school year I was offered a high school teaching position in Sacramento, California, where I was living at the time. I declined that position, probably also 'for the wrong reasons', but 'that's also another story'.

At Hamilton middle school I was assigned to teach two sections of Spanish as a foreign language [nowadays called world languages], one section of world history and one section of United States history. This was a heavy work assignment. One section of beginning Spanish was composed of academically advanced students, as was the intermediate Spanish section.

In 2002 my subject schedule was the same as 2001.

In 2003 my subject schedule was also the same.

In 2004 I was assigned to teach a section of advanced Spanish, and two sections of United States history, and two classes in beginning Spanish.

In 2005 my subject schedule was the same as in 2004.

In 2006 I was assigned a United States history section consisting of advanced students [an honors class], one section of students that were relatively fluent in "street English", but still exhibited significant Latino and Asian cultural traits, in United States history, and two United States history sections composed of English-learner Latino and Asian students.

In 2007 I joined the faculty at Cesar Chavez high school in Stockton, California. This was a new and large high school with an enrollment of 2,700 students and a faculty of 125 teachers. The 'school day' at this high school consisted of four ninety-four minute classes.

I was assigned three classes and the fourth class period was used for course preparations and evaluations. There was also one-half day per week for curriculum development and assessments. The school day for students was seven hours and eleven minutes; and the workday for teachers was seven and one-half hours. Both of these school day lengths were

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measurably longer than other high schools. The academic performance of the 'student body', as whole, was higher than other comparable high schools in the area.

In 2007, I was assigned to teach two sections per semester of comparative governments, two sections per semester of economics and one section per semester of sophomore level world history.

In 2008, I taught two sections per year of a course entitled Introduction to Law. I rearranged the course content to present a survey of American law, both civil and criminal law. I also that year taught four sections of government and four sections of economics.

In the Spring of 2009, the administration asked me to develop three more law courses. One was an advanced constitutional law course; the second was a consumer law course, which the administration liked to call 'Every Day Law'; and a course in trial advocacy, but not to include a moot court competition component.

I was given time out of the classroom teaching to develop these curriculums and courses. These courses were eventually approved by all school district higher authorities and are now in the course catalogues for the district.

In 2008 and 2009, I 'ran' a trial advocacy model which consisted of students as courtroom lawyers working in tandem, the analyzing of fact patterns in various subjects of the law, arguing court motions, making courtroom objections, practice as a presiding judge in a courtroom, practice as a bailiff in a courtroom, and the cross examination of witnesses.

In 2009, I taught two sections per year of survey of American law, two sections per year of constitutional law, four sections per year of comparative government, and four sections per year of economics. I also did the work for chartering a 'Justice Club' for students interested in law and law enforcement.

During my ten years of teaching in the Stockton Unified School District I was 'on a sharp learning curve' in the first few

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years. Although I had graduated from a “wall to wall teacher’s college” at the undergraduate level, it had been thirty-three years since I had completed that college education. I had taught one year of high school in 1969-70; but that had been thirty years before 2001.

To attempt to compensate for this lack of exposure to teaching I worked upwards of 60 hours per week on the courses I taught and on teaching in general; where by comparison most teachers invested 30 to 35 hours per week on their teaching work.

I worked year around on planning, preparation and updating of my courses. For the most part, I also worked on these things through all school vacations as well as all of the summer vacations.

I wanted to expand the courses I taught well beyond the assigned textbook. For some courses I engaged up to fourteen different mediums of learning in teaching the course; and I always utilized at least four or five mediums beyond the textbook.

By 2005, I had significantly increased my use of technologies in teaching delivery of knowledge and information to the students. From 2007 through 2010 my use of technologies covered at least 90% of my lessons. Particularly prominent was my use of power points, word perfect, excel documents, internet inspired lessons and the internet in general. I created all of my own power points, word documents and excel documents. I computerized everything including my grade books and evaluations.

I had observed that teacher grading was very subjective. I didn’t want that for my students. I felt that students were entitled to be objectively graded and evaluated. Through ‘trial and error’ I developed my best version of an objective grading system.

I identified ten different categories of lessons and evaluations. The categories were 1. Citizenship 2. Participation 3. Written lessons 4. Quizzes 5. Unit exams 6. Advanced

MEMOIRS OF A NONDESCRIPT PERSON

assignments 7. Warm up lessons 8. School work to be done at home [SWDAH] 9. Note taking and notebooks 10. Final exams.

I assigned a weight to each of the ten categories, by percentage so that all 'percentage weighting' totaled 100%. The highest weighting was assigned to unit exams, quizzes, written lessons and notebooks. The lowest weighting was assigned to citizenship, warm-up lessons and SWDAH. Moderate weighting was assigned to all the other categories. The final exams category was 10% of the term grade [which was the minimum allowed by the school district]. The citizenship category consisted of following class rules and classroom behavior. Some categories received points during every class.

I assigned 15 to 20 quizzes and 10 to 15 unit exams during a ten week term. The total points possible accumulating from all ten grading categories was 24,000 to 27,000 points; depending on the applicable course . This system necessitated a huge amount of effort from the students, and from the teacher [me].

A student willing to 'accept' a C- grade, for example, for the course could accumulate 70% of 27,000 points and thus earn a C- letter grade. Most students were motivated to earn a much higher course grade than that. Since all ongoing point accumulations were calculated and 'tracked' in the computerized grade book, all students were updated weekly on how their grade and progress was evolving.

There were completion and 'make up' deadlines for all lessons and tests. It was almost impossible for a student to allow herself to 'get way behind' and pass the course with a grade above a D. The school district letter grading system involved thirteen different letter grades, including the 'F' grade.

I allowed up to 45 students to be enrolled in my class sections, even though no more than 32 students were required. Once I became known many students would make

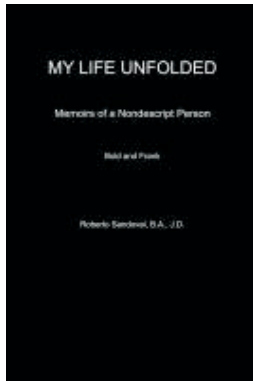
MY LIFE UNFOLDED

efforts to get enrolled in my classes; even up to a year in advance of when they would be taking the course.

I hadn't planned to retire from teaching until June 2011; at the age of 67.5. In April 2010, however, the school district 'made me a financial offer I couldn't refuse', under the auspices of an early incentive retirement program; influenced by budget constraints caused by the Great Recession of 2008 – 2012, and possibly beyond. I, therefore, retired at the end of June 2010. I was then 66.5 years of age.

Before retiring, and just after, I created a course outline in trial advocacy. I donated this outline to the law and order career pathways program at Cesar Chavez high school, and at other district high schools.

Over the course of a 43-year fulltime working life period, I had careers as a lawyer, a teacher, a mental health professional, a counselor, an administrator, a social service case manager, an emergency road services dispatcher and a customer service representative. That comes to seven different careers.



The memoirs in this book are, in many ways, somewhat different from typical memoirs. The book is arranged topically and not chronologically. It is not a celebration of the individual's life. Rather, it is highly descriptive, colorful, emotional, and honest. The author is sincere, and may have engaged in a self-discovery of his life. He quite bravely, and with pride and understanding, reviews the main facets of his life. The story is told with a depth of feeling that is remarkable.

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